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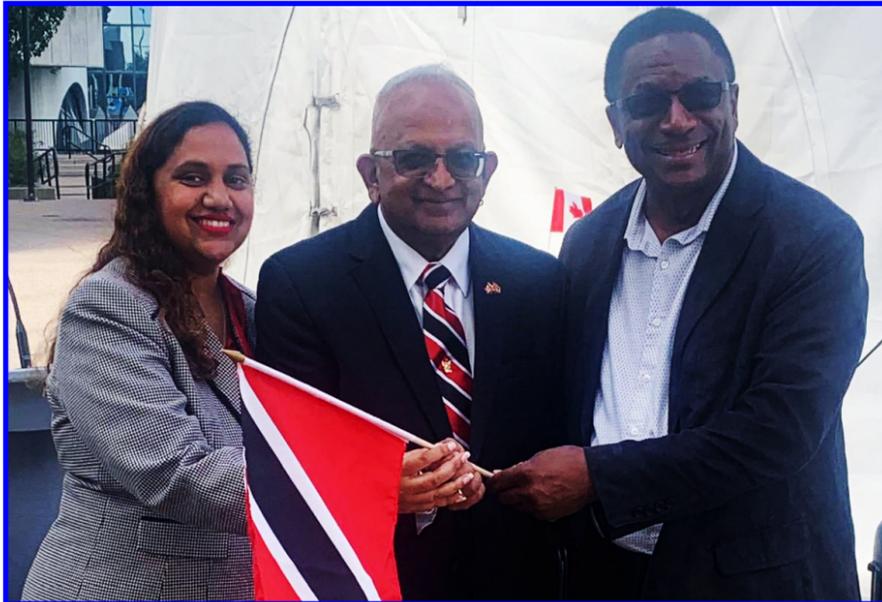
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Trinidad and Tobago's national flag is displayed by Acting Consul General Tracey Ramsubagh-Mannette (left to right), Shane Suepaul, President of the 50-Plus and Seniors Association, and Michael Thompson, Councillor for Scarborough Centre. The event was celebration of TT's 62nd Independence anniversary, which was held in Scarborough last week. More on page 14.



MP Chandra Arya visited New Delhi on August 12, where he and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke on Canada-India relations. India is a significant and growing market for Canada's exports and investments, and it serves as a key source for fulfilling Canada's critical talent needs, MP Arya stated afterwards, adding, "As the outgoing Canadian High Commissioner in India said a few months back, 'In the long-term, Canada's strategic interest and India's strategic interest are absolutely aligned'. We all need to work to realise the full potential of our relationship." *Facebook photo*

Diaspora mourns passing of 2 luminaries

By Romeo Kaseram
LJI Reporter

The Caribbean and its diaspora are mourning the loss of two distinguished luminaries that took place within a span of days last week, with Sir Shridath Ramphal, an esteemed Caribbean diplomat and statesman, passing away on August 30 at the age of 95.

Days earlier saw the loss of revered philanthropist and cultural advocate, Ameena Gafoor, who died on August 26 at the age of 83.

The passing of both Sir Shridath and Gafoor has now left behind their legacies that have profoundly shaped not only their homeland of Guyana, but also the wider Caribbean, the diaspora, and other global communities.

Born on October 3, 1928, in New Amsterdam, British Guiana (now Guyana), Sir Shridath was a towering figure in global diplomacy.

His career spanned several decades, during which he served in many critical roles, including Assistant Attorney-General of the West Indies Federation; Minister of Justice and Foreign Affairs of Guyana; and most notably, as Secretary-General of the Commonwealth for a record-breaking 15 years.

His leadership in the Commonwealth was instrumental in the global campaign against apartheid in South Africa.

As the media in the Caribbean reported last week, the late South African leader Nelson Mandela himself once praised

Ramphal, stating that he was, "One of those men who have become famous because in their fight for human justice, they have chosen the whole world as their theatre."

Born in 1941, Gafoor was a distinguished philanthropist and cultural advocate whose contributions to the arts and education have left a lasting impact on Guyana, the Caribbean media also reported last week.

Rising from humble beginnings, Gafoor became a respected educator and champion of the arts. Notably, she was the Secretary of The Arts Forum Inc, and Executive Editor of the *Caribbean Review of Books*, where she provided a platform for under-represented artists and writers.

Her legacy is cemented by the establishment of the Ameena Gafoor Institute, which continues her mission of

cultural advocacy. Following their passing, leaders across the Caribbean paid tribute to both remarkable individuals, underscoring the local, global, and monumental impact of their collective work, and now its legacies.

Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali described Sir Shridath's passing as "the end of an era, not only for Guyana, but for the entire Caribbean and the Commonwealth of Nations".

He also lauded Sir Shridath's unwavering commitment to defending Guyana's territorial integrity before international bodies like the International Court of Justice and the United

See Page 5: Caribbean



Ameena Gafoor



Sir Shridath Ramphal

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



\$1,049,900

A Pleasure to Treasure

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



\$779,000

What a Sun-Sational Delight!

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



\$569,900

Truly Delightful

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



\$739,900

Bright and Spacious!

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



\$497,000

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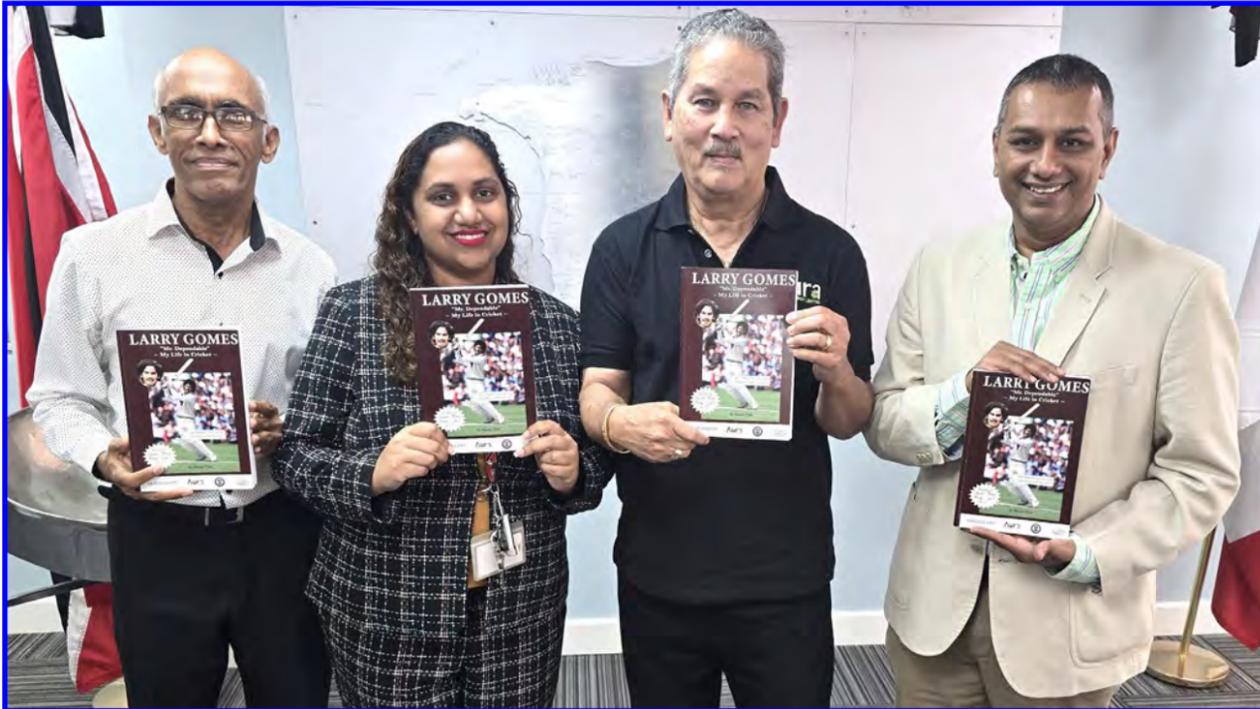
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One Love Table held its Golden Series last month at the Karahi Point restaurant. The monthly meeting saw a diverse attendance of about 30 seniors, who while socialising, also learned about financial and digital literacy from presenters Maxcine Telfer, and Audmax's Aundre Green-Telfer. Funded by the Canadian Horizon Fund, the educational event was part of One Love's mental health programming.



At the pre-launch of the book, *Larry Gomes, 'Mr. Dependable', My Life in Cricket* are author Nasser Khan (left to right), Acting Consul General Tracey Ramsubagh-Mannette, Larry Gomes, and Dr Rolph Balgobin. Ron Fanfair photo courtesy the Trinidad and Tobago Consulate General, Toronto

New book explores cricketing life of 'Mr Dependable'

Toronto – Under the auspices of the Consulate General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in Toronto, a pre-launch ceremony took place on August 27 for the forthcoming book, *Larry Gomes, 'Mr. Dependable', My Life in Cricket*.

In attendance were Toronto's Consulate General of Trinidad and Tobago Acting Consul General Tracey Ramsubagh-Mannette; Larry Gomes and his family, now residents of Toronto; Dr and Mrs Rolph Balgobin, Executive Chairman of the book's sponsor, the Quicksilver Group of Companies; Nasser Khan, the book's author; and other distinguished guests.

Larry Gomes, 'Mr. Dependable', My Life in Cricket, is foreworded by Trinidad and Tobago's Dr Nyan Gadsby-Dolly, Minister of Education; Shamfa Cudjoe, this nation's Minister of Sport and Community Development; and by cricketing legends, Sir Clive Lloyd, Deryck Murray, and Michael Holding.

Following the official launch, which is set for later this year in October in Trinidad and Tobago, all schools, libraries, The University of the West Indies, the University of Trinidad and Tobago, Trinidad and Tobago's National Archives, and other institutions will receive copies.

A launch is also planned for Toronto before the end of 2024, after which copies will also be given to the Ontario Schools

Cricket Association.

At the pre-launch function last month, Khan commented that, "Through the pages of this book, readers will be captivated and inspired by a sense of nostalgia for the West Indies glory days. The West Indies cricket fraternity, especially in Trinidad and Tobago, should be proud of this unassuming, reserved son of the soil, who through determination and an unrelenting work ethic, rose to become an international cricket hero to many."

During his career, Gomes scored 12,982 First Class, 3,171 Test, and 1,415 ODI runs. He also took 107 First Class, 15 Test, and 41 ODI wickets, and held on to 77 First Class, 18 Test, and 14 ODI catches.

Also noteworthy in the book is its exploration of the more personal and challenging aspects of Gomes' career, with a particularly insightful chapter titled *Blood Money, I Can't Do It!*, which promises to shed light on some of the difficult decisions this top cricketer faced during his tenure in the game.

As the cricketing world, and fans of Larry Gomes anticipate the book's release, *Larry Gomes, 'Mr. Dependable': My Life in Cricket* is expected to offer a compelling and inspiring narrative that celebrates one of Trinidad and Tobago's, and the cricketing world's, well-regarded and eminent sports figures.



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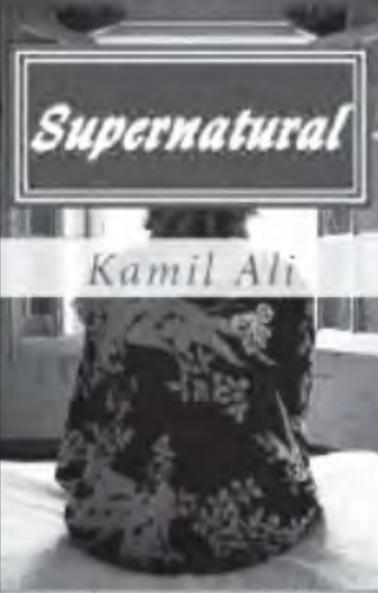
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Summer of community celebrations

With the season of picnics and barbecues now shifting to the brilliant painting of the leaves of fall, we take a look at the celebrations of community and togetherness that took place during the summery month of August.

Among the events were celebratory summer events put on by Scarborough's MPP Raymond Cho, Brampton Centre's MP Shafqat Ali, and Brampton West's MP Kamal Khera.

As MPP Cho noted in a Facebook post, it was an amazing turnout at his 2024 community barbecue, which was held at Rosebank Park, Scarborough, on August 24.

Said MPP Cho: "Thank you to all those who came out for an afternoon of good food and great company; and to Premier FordNation for gracing the event with his presence."

A shout-out of gratitude was also sent to Team Cho, and all the volunteers for making the barbecue a success.

In Brampton West, MP Khera also followed up on Facebook after her August 11 event, which was held at Damatta Park.

"A heartfelt thank you to everyone in Brampton West for making our annual com-

munity barbecue so special. It was a joy to reconnect with familiar faces, welcome new ones, and share some amazing food together," MP Khera wrote.

She added, "Here's to many more days like this, where our community comes together and reminds us why we love calling Brampton West home!"

Also hosting a summer event was Brampton Centre's MP Shafqat Ali. After the turnout for its first annual barbecue at Chinguacousy Park, MP Ali took to Facebook to thank the community for making the event a resounding success.

"I am so humbled and honoured by the overwhelming participation," he declared.

MP Ali added, "I am thankful to our community in Brampton and all across the GTA for their love, support and participation in our barbecue. The turnout was beyond our expectation, and I can't thank everyone enough for joining us."

He also expressed "heartfelt gratitude to my friends, the Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland, and our amazing Mayor Patrick Brown for their special appearance at the event".



Sporting Meadowbank Stingrays' shirts (left to right) are Meadowbank CEO Rawn Lakhan, Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie, and OTSCL's Azeem Khan



Prize-giving following a glorious weekend of competitive cricket

Cricket, lovely cricket at Ashtonbee

The second edition of the Canada Cup softball tournament, organised by the Ontario Twilight Softball Cricket League, took place at the Ashtonbee Reservoir Park in Scarborough last weekend. It featured cricket teams, and players, from across the GTA, Guyana, and New York.

As in the previous years, the tournament featured three categories of competition, the Open All Stars, the Masters Over-40, and the Legends Over-50.

Among the sponsors this year was Meadowbank Asset Management Inc, led by Rawn Lakhan, and Canadian journalist and financial writer, Dwarka Lakhan. The group is made up of a successful team of financial services professionals with extensive depth and breadth of experience in the financial services industry. The Meadowbank Stingrays played in the Masters Over-40.

With a weekend attendance of over 200 players, families, and supporters, and warm, supportive weather, Ashtonbee was awash with the thrills of competitive cricket, and

cheering supporters all having a good time.

Speaking with *Indo-Caribbean World* earlier this week, one of Twilight's organisers, Feizal Bacchus, noted the spirit of camaraderie among the players that pervaded the weekend.

At the same time, Bacchus also commented on what he described as a nice blend of supporters enjoying themselves, even as they cheered on their teams.

"And the weather! It was glorious weather all weekend long," he declared. He also thanked the many volunteers who worked together to make the event a success.

Prior to the Ashtonbee takeover, Twilight held a reception and registration event at the Tropical Nights Restaurant on the evening of August 29.

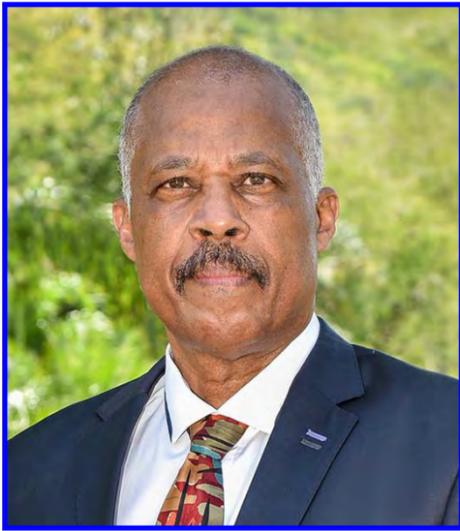
Attending the event were Toronto's Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie; team sponsor of the Meadowbank Stingrays, Rawn Lakhan, President & CEO of Meadowbank Asset Management Inc; OTSCL Azeem Khan, and many others.



Winners and the celebration that followed



OTSCL Executive members with Meadowbank sponsors (left to right): Dickey Singh, Feizal Bacchus, Amlanjyoti Chowdhury, Rawn Lakhan, Azeem Khan, and Nicholas Balkissoon



Sir Hilary Beckles



Mia Mottley



Patricia Scotland



Irfaan Ali

Caribbean, diaspora lose luminaries, advocates in Ramphal and Gafoor

From Page 1

Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Guyana media reported.

“These were not just services to the nation; they were acts of supreme and selfless devotion to the land that nurtured him,” Ali emphasised.

At the same time, Ali added that Sir Shridath’s legacy will continue to inspire generations.

Barbados’ Prime Minister Mia Mottley also paid homage to Sir Shridath, lauding him as the quintessential “Caribbean Man” and a “Global Citizen”.

She noted that his service to the region and the world spanned nearly three-quarters of a century, leaving “a formidable footprint in virtually every nation of this region”.

Reflecting on his intellect and influence, particularly his participation in the 50th anniversary Conference of Caricom heads in 2023, Mottley praised his clarity and sharpness of mind even in his later years.

“Though born in Guyana, his impact was felt across the Caribbean, and his name will be forever etched in the annals of Caribbean history,” she stated.

In Trinidad and Tobago, Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley expressed deep respect for Sir Shridath, calling his death the “retirement of a Caribbean stalwart”.

Rowley also remarked, “He soared with the intellectual best and carried us all on his wings. We were never as strong as when he stood up for us, and we were never better presented than when he represented us.”

Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland described Sir Shridath as “a giant of the Caribbean and one of the Commonwealth’s brightest lights”.

She acknowledged his pivotal role in coordinating international opposition to apartheid, which helped guide the Commonwealth into the modern era.

Caricom’s Chairman and Grenada’s Prime

Minister Dickon Mitchell also praised Sir Shridath’s contributions to regional integration and development, saying, “We laud his pivotal contributions to regional integration and development, as an eminent jurist, minister of government and attorney-general in his native Guyana; chancellor of the University of Guyana and UWI; and chief negotiator for Caricom on external trade relations.”

UWI Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles honoured him for both his scholarship and statesmanship whose contributions to the Caribbean were unparalleled.

Said Sir Hilary: “[He] contributed much to the development of Caribbean civilisation and institutions. I am sorry for his passing, but I am proud of his contributions. In every sense he was one of our greatest leaders and impactful citizens.”

Sir Shridath’s life was marked by numerous prestigious honours, including the Order of the Caribbean Community, and the Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George.

He remained active on the international stage even in his later years, becoming the first lawyer to appear virtually before the International Court of Justice during the Covid-19 pandemic at the age of 92, representing Guyana in its border dispute with Venezuela.

Similar to Sir Shridath’s legacy, Gafoor’s life was a testament to dedication, generosity, and the enrichment of her community through cultural initiatives.

She too was honoured with numerous accolades during her lifetime. Among her honours were the National Medal of Service that recognised her tireless efforts in promoting literature and the arts in Guyana. Her passion for education was evident in her early career, where she taught literature, French, and Latin at Central High School and Tutorial High School.

Gafoor’s contributions extended beyond

education. *The Arts Journal*, which she founded and edited, became a vital platform for Guyanese artists, writers, and scholars, showcasing the work of luminaries such as Philip Moore and Bernadette Persaud.

Gafoor’s literary career included the publication of the first major study of Roy Heath’s fiction, and her memoir, *Lantern in the Wind*, which has been praised for its insights into Muslim life in Guyana.

In his tribute to Gafoor, Ali highlighted the profound loss felt by the nation, stating, “In her passing, Guyana has lost a true literary luminary and one of its kindest souls. Her legacy will continue to inspire kindness, generosity, and a love for the arts. May Allah’s divine blessings and mercy be with her.”

Professor Ben Richardson and Professor David Lambert, Co-Directors of the Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies at the University of Warwick in the UK, also paid their respects to Gafoor, emphasising her invaluable role in advancing the study of Indo-Caribbean

Indentureship.

“Her support for Caribbean scholarship has been instrumental,” they declared.

The University of Guyana, where Gafoor once lectured, also mourned her loss. In its tribute, UG described her as “a symbol of endurance and enlightenment”, celebrating her as a mother, wife, literary critic, researcher, and a philanthropist.

UG also acknowledged her foundational role in establishing the Ameena Gafoor Institute and the Gafoor Foundation, which alongside her husband, has funded numerous charitable projects, including a soon-to-be-completed multi-purpose centre.

Gafoor’s influence reached global heights with the establishment of the Ameena Gafoor Institute for the Study of Indentureship and its Legacies at Cambridge University. The Institute has since become a key centre for research and dialogue on the legacies of Indentureship, further solidifying Gafoor’s role as a pivotal figure in cultural and intellectual development.



Gafoor (centre) was conferred with an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters by UG in 2022. Also in photo are Chancellor Dr Edward Greene (right); Vice-Chancellor Dr Paloma Mohamed-Martin (left), and Dr Sattaur Gafoor back row

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Editorial

End of two eras

With profound sadness, we acknowledge the passing of two Guyanese luminaries, Sir Shridath ‘Sonny’ Ramphal and Ameena Gafoor.

Sir Shridath died on August 30 at the age of 95. He was born on October 3, 1928 in New Amsterdam, British Guiana (now Guyana). From these humble beginnings, he rose to become a respected figure in international diplomacy. His life was a testament to commitment and service to humanity.

He was educated at King’s College London and Gray’s Inn, London. He then set out on what would become a lifetime’s journey in public service, with his first step taken as the Assistant Attorney-General of the West Indies Federation.

From there he climbed upwards to serve as Guyana’s Minister of Justice and Foreign Affairs, eventually becoming the longest-serving Secretary-General of the Commonwealth from 1975 to 1990. During his tenure, he played a critical role in the fight against apartheid in South Africa, earning global respect for leadership and advocacy.

Sir Shridath’s contributions also extended beyond politics. He was Chancellor of the University of Guyana, the University of the West Indies, and Warwick University. His work on global commissions addressing the environment, development, and disarmament between 1980 and 1995 left a lasting impact. His 1992 report, *Time for Action*, remains a cornerstone for Caribbean development.

Even in his later years, Sir Shridath remained active in international affairs. At 92, during the Covid-19 pandemic, he made history as the first lawyer to appear virtually before the International Court of Justice, representing Guyana in its ongoing border dispute with Venezuela.

Sir Shridath was honoured with many prestigious awards, accolades that are a testament to his legacy. Among these awards are the Order of the Caribbean Community, the Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael and St George, and the Order of Excellence of Guyana.

His passing marks the end of an era.

We also mourn the passing of another Guyanese cultural giant in Ameena Gafoor, who died on August 26 at the age of 83.

Her life was a beacon of dedication to the arts, education, and the betterment of her community. While we mourn her loss, we also celebrate a legacy that will continue to inspire us for generations.

Gafoor was born in 1941, and rose from humble beginnings to become a respected educator, literary critic, and cultural advocate in Guyana. Her impact extended far beyond her homeland, touching many lives across the Caribbean and the diaspora.

As the founder and editor of *The Arts Journal*, Gafoor created a platform that gave a voice to Caribbean artists and writers, ensuring their talents were recognised and celebrated. Her passion for the arts was evident in every aspect of her life, and her contributions were unparalleled.

Gafoor’s commitment to preserving Caribbean history and culture led her to establish the Ameena Gafoor Institute for the Study of Indentureship and its Legacies at Cambridge University. This institution reflects her lifelong dedication to advancing the study of Caribbean heritage, particularly the experiences of indentured labourers and their descendants.

She was recognised for her immense contributions to literature and culture by the University of Guyana with an Honorary Doctor of Letters in 2022.

Beyond her work in the arts, Gafoor was deeply involved in philanthropy. Alongside her husband, Sattaur Gafoor, she co-founded the Gafoor Foundation, funding numerous medical, educational, and sports projects.

One of their most significant contributions is the Ameena Gafoor Medical and Dialysis Centre, established in November 2022, which provides affordable dialysis treatment to those in need. Her work with organisations such as the Doobay Medical Centre further demonstrated her commitment to supporting vulnerable communities and improving lives.

Like Sir Shridath’s, her passing too is the end of an era.

Spread the word: Dhal Pages now a ready source

The vibrancy of the modern metropolis is in its growing presence of a diverse population. This is especially true of cities in North America.

Mass migration over the last century has contributed to the evolving demographic composition of many towns and cities.

The influence of people from around the world has not only altered the social and economic variables, but has impacted the visual appearance of streetscapes in many communities.

For centuries, the formation of ethnic enclaves through migration has been a direct outcome of a variety of socioeconomic factors that congregate immigrants into similar spaces in their new homelands.

Ethnic enclaves were mostly established through waves of immigration, where new residents from a variety of nations would settle in close proximity.

Historically, ethnic clusters have been associated with ghettoization of newcomers, which forces them to reside in less desirable locations, in many cases in affordable, but sometimes unfit housing.

Also, social dynamics, including prejudice and racism, concentrated and then consolidated new residents from similar cultural communities.

The simplicity of many wanting to reside with or near family has also contributed to the growth of ethnic enclaves.

Today, in many major cities, there are many community cultural corridors. “Little China” is a leading example, with many modern cities hosting a cluster of Chinese storefronts.

The largest overseas Chinese population in any city in the Western Hemisphere is found in New York City. With over half a million Chinese residents, large Chinatowns were established in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens, becoming thriving economic and community hubs.

Toronto is also the home of multiple Chinatowns, including the more popular Chinatown along Spadina Avenue and East Chinatown located in the city of Toronto’s east-end neighbourhood of Riverdale.

Along with the example of Chinatown, Toronto is the home of many thriving ethnic enclaves. Examples of these include Greektown (the western section of Danforth Avenue); Koreatown (Bloor Street between Christie and Bathurst Streets); Little Portugal (Dundas Street West and College Street near Lansdowne Avenue); Little Italy (College Street, between Bathurst Street and Ossington Avenue); and Little India (between Coxwell Avenue and Greenwood).

There is no shortage of these community clusters. And despite origins associated with ghettoization, these cultural corridors have emerged as identifiable locations for community gatherings and celebrations, and provide accessibility to culturally appropriate items.

These ethnic enclaves have become tourist attractions, and



Ryan Singh

provide a marker on a city’s map of that community’s legacy.

Through urban sprawl, and the earlier accessibility to housing across the suburbs, many communities, including the ones listed above, have experienced the spread of people from their communities.

However, unlike the communities mentioned above, the present-day Indo-Caribbean community does not have a notable ethnic enclave.

Without one historical geographical cluster, the broader Indo-Caribbean community has settled across the Greater Toronto Area, and expanded beyond.

The present-day Indo-Caribbean community has been immersed in various locations, with notable footprints along the Highway 401 corridor between Kitchener to Oshawa.

Many times, the Indo-Caribbean community has emerged in specific locations that are incorporated with other relevant communities, including the South Asian diaspora.

A variety of stores, restaurants, services, and businesses are sprinkled across the GTA, providing accessibility to the community. However, the lack of a centralised cluster limits the Indo-Caribbean community from being an identifiable force on a map.

Unlike communities that have a historical cultural enclave, the Indo-Caribbean group at times remains blended into communities across the region. And is, therefore, invisible to many outsiders.

As the community does not have an obvious gathering point, or a location to provide for outsiders who may want to experience the community and culture, it is a further challenge for assembly.

With a community that is stretched along a larger region, it is vital to facilitate space to ensure accessibility for consumers, and to ensure small businesses are amplified.

Consequently, the Indo-Caribbean Canadian Association has launched *Dhal Pages* – a virtual directory, which is a repository for Indo-Caribbean-led, and/or serving businesses and service providers to ensure that they are being seen.

Ensuring the community is aware that culturally appropriate businesses can be located, and fostering a larger sense of community, have been benefits that are derived from physical cultural corridors. This is what *Dhal Pages* is aiming to achieve for Canada’s Indo-Caribbean community.

A nod to the former *Yellow Pages* business directory, *Dhal Pages* has become a leading destination for identifying services for the community, by the community.

Small businesses that are interested in being listed in the *Dhal Pages* directory can email the Indo-Caribbean Canadian Association at connect@indocaribcdn.com.

The directory itself is accessible to the public – click here to check it out.

Happy days when tops spun memorable yarns

The best wood for making a top, I recall being told as a young boy, came from the guava tree. The advice was from none other than a seasoned professional in the finer art of top-making – a young man at the ripe age of ten.

He was almost twice my age and far superior in the crafts that made boys like him stand out from the mundane world of school, where we endlessly recited multiplication tables under the shade of the spreading almond tree in the schoolyard.

This young craftsman was making his way in the world as a buffalo-herder. At the same time, he was a master top-maker.

While he herded buffaloes, often barebacked in the burning sun, we would be stuck under the almond trees with our hands extended, palms upwards, waiting for the teacher’s descending lash with a guava cane for not knowing our nine-times table. The air was thick with humidity, too stifling for learning, but not for this boy who lived for the outdoors and its freedom.

He surely enjoyed his youth. While we lugged knapsacks stuffed with First Primer readers and sang hymns in the morning lineup before dutifully filing into our classrooms, he was leaping among the branches of the neighbour’s mango tree next door.

Walking nonchalantly along its thick boughs as if along the street outside, he picked the juiciest mangoes and dropped them into the bedsheet his mother held below. At recess, she sold them to us for a penny apiece, and we savoured each bite, knowing it was forbidden fruit from questionable labour.

Then one day, just as seasons shift in the life of a child, it was top season. Every boy had a top, and each top was a unique creation, homespun from a piece of wood.

The crafting was a ritual – carved with a sharp knife, scraped smooth, sometimes varnished. A nail would be driven upward into at the tip of its cone, then cut and sharpened to a point.

But to spin it, one needed a piece of string. This led us to the village shop, where the shopkeeper, a grizzled old man, eyed us

suspiciously as we approached the counter.

“What string you want?” he barked at our wandering eyes.

It was here that our worldly friend intervened, sitting on a stool like an adult and drinking noisily from a large bottle.

“They want marline to spin top,” he said, burping like an adult and accompanying it with a wiping motion across the lips with the back of a hand.

“Marline?” The shopkeeper was incredulous. “What they teaching you in school that you can’t ask for the right thing? I thought you wanted string to fly kite!”

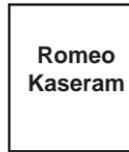
Armed with our precious marline, we ventured out into the world, our helpful friend trailing behind. Soon he was crafting tops for us lesser mortals. We had tried – using young coconuts that had fallen like dead birds out of a nest. Though triangular and awkward, we drove a long nail through them and made wobbly tops that spun in drunken circles.

But his tops – they were the best in the land. It was as if he knew the soul of the wood he was working with, and he soon settled on the guava tree as his material of choice.

With his penknife, and a sharpening stone at hand, he carved, shaved, scraped, and polished. The nail was driven in, the excess filed away on a stone, and the point sharpened.

We watched in awe as he wound the string around the top, waved us back, and released it with a flick of the wrist. The top flashed out like a striking snake, spinning with such precision that it appeared motionless. We held our breath until it lost momentum. It was beautiful – a union of art and motion.

Decades later and these memories still linger, bathed in the golden light of a setting summer. I still see us spinning his tops into the dust at our feet, its humming a comforting sound in a world that would soon grow louder with the cacophony of adulthood. Those were softer days, when life was simple, yet rich, each moment to be savoured like the juice of a freshly picked, purloined mango.



Romeo Kaseram

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Time to turn our thoughts on preserving Sir Shridath Ramphal's legacy

Dear Editor,

The Caribbean and Guyana lost one of its greatest persons with the death of Sir Shridath 'Sonny' Ramphal on August 30, just a few weeks shy of his 96th birthday.

I knew him for many years in several of his capacities for distinguished and effective leadership of the Caribbean, the developing countries of the world, world consciousness and action at the earliest times for environmental protection and conservation of the global environment for present and future generations.

I also knew him for his efforts for the end of apartheid in South Africa, negotiation of international treaties and agreements with Europe and the US, advancement of structural changes and development of the University of the West Indies, and Chairmanship of the Regional Eminent Persons Panel of the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Excellence Awards.

Sonny was remarkable for his inexhaustible energy, his inestimable knowledge and recall of critical facts, events and contexts, his mentorship and encouragement of younger professionals, and above all, his undiminished commitment to advancing the welfare of Guyana

and the Caribbean.

My wife and I last saw Sonny when we visited with him at his home in Barbados in July this year. He was enthusiastic about my appointment as

Guyana's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Brazil, generously provided sound advice and good wishes, and referred me to several important historical documents on the Guyana-Venezuela border matter before the International Court of Justice. He was full of energy and erudite as usual.

Now that he has gone, we, the beneficiaries of his intellectual, professional and personal legacy to the Caribbean and the wider world, should do no less than remain faithful to his vision and life's work for human betterment. May his soul rest in peace. We will miss you, Sonny.



Sir Shridath Ramphal

Compton Bourne, Guyana Ambassador to Brazil, and Professor Emeritus, UWI, via email.

...

Dear Editor,

I write to advocate for the preservation and promotion of Sir Shridath Ramphal's legacy, a distinguished Guyanese statesman and former Commonwealth Secretary-General. Like Nelson Mandela and Reverend Dr Martin Luther King Jr, Sir Shridath was a visionary leader who dedicated his life to the pursuit of justice, equality, and human rights.

As a prominent figure in international diplomacy, Sir Shridath's contributions to global peace and understanding were immeasurable. His work as Commonwealth Secretary-General, particularly in advocating for the rights of developing nations and promoting democratic values, echoes the principles championed by Mandela and King.

To ensure that Sir Shridath's legacy endures, I propose the following initiatives:

- **Educational Integration:** Incorporating his life and work into school curricula in Guyana and beyond to inspire future generations, and highlight his contributions to the nation and the world;
- **Public Commemoration:** Organising events, lectures, and exhibitions to celebrate his achievements and foster public awareness;
- **Digital Preservation:** Creating online resources and archives to make his writings and speeches accessible to a wider audience, emphasising his Guyanese

roots.

By honouring Ramphal's memory, we not only pay tribute to a remarkable individual, but also reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of justice, equality, and human rights that he, along with Mandela and King, so passionately upheld.

Keith Bernard, Guyana, via email.

...

Dear Editor,

The Caricom Secretariat is profoundly saddened at the passing of a stalwart of our Community, Sir Shridath 'Sonny' Ramphal, on 30 August, 2024.

In an illustrious career devoted to public service, Sir Shridath blazed a trail of excellence in diplomacy, law, academia and politics, earning respect and admiration in his homeland Guyana, elsewhere in the Caribbean Region, and across the Commonwealth of Nations.

He was a leading advocate of regionalism, and contributed practically to its advancement, notably in high-level service to the legal fraternity, institutions of higher learning, and as Chairman of the West Indian Commission which produced the 1992 seminal report, *Time for Action*. An astute negotiator, he was appointed by Heads of Government to lead the Caricom Regional Negotiating Machinery in negotiations in the external trade arena.

Included among his well-deserved accolades is the Region's highest honour, the Order of the Caribbean Community, which he received in 1992 in the first conferral of the award, for his sterling contributions to the Region.

The Secretary General and staff of the Caricom Secretariat join the Region and the international community in mourning his loss, and in lauding his life marked by committed service and excellence.

May his soul rest in peace.

Dr Carla Barnett, Secretary-General, Caribbean Community, via email.

New ideas needed to beat TT crime

Dear Editor,

I won't blame the US or Canada for crime in Trinidad and Tobago. It is the political leader and the government of Trinidad and Tobago that have the responsibility for national safety and security.

However, Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley passes the buck or the blame to others. He has continually absolved himself as the person responsible for tackling crime.

Rowley needs to look at how El Salvador did it. This Central American nation was enveloped in crime and gang warfare, but has now restored normalcy to the country. President Nayib Bukele took the criminals head on. He ruled by decree in order to save nationals, and set aside the constitution to tackle crimes.

It is said he behaved like a dictator, but he did what was absolutely necessary to save the lives of his people. The choice was either to stay calm and blame others, or do something.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the rhetoric emanating from the government is that it is not responsible for crime. Both Rowley and his

government's ministers appear to be spinning top in mud; no one has any new ideas to introduce.

Well, if no plan is available, and nothing seems to be working, why not dump the Privy Council and resuscitate the death penalty? The death penalty is still in the books, and it will send a message to Amnesty International to take a walk.

By the way, the US is a major manufacturer and supplier of guns, some for a nation's safety, and others for war. However, blaming the US for exporting guns is a cop-out. Why not close the ports, or put more emphasis on preventing illegal guns from entering Trinidad and Tobago, and stop blaming every Tom, Dick, and Harry?

I believe Rowley and his ministers are fed up with ubiquitous crime, but they have no sustainable solutions and new ideas, nor do they want to undertake a fearless approach. Instead, they absolve themselves from their responsibilities and keep blaming others.

Jay Rakhar, New York, via email.



Nayib Bukele

TT needs decisive leaders on crime

Dear Editor,

Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister, Dr Keith Rowley recently expressed frustration at being blamed for the rampant crime plaguing our nation. During a post-Cabinet media briefing last month, Rowley insisted that the responsibility for the nation's crime lies solely with the criminals, not the office holders.

While his comments might reflect his personal anguish, they also signal a troubling abdication of leadership.

Crime in Trinidad and Tobago has reached an alarming level, with innocent lives, including those of children, being lost. Rowley's admission that citizens are "on their own" in the fight against crime is not only disheartening, but also a stark reminder of the government's failure to ensure the safety and security of its people.

Leadership is about taking responsibility, especially in times of crisis. By distancing himself from the nation's most pressing issue, Rowley has effectively signaled that he

is unable, or unwilling, to provide the solutions and leadership that Trinidad and Tobago desperately needs.

This admission should not be taken lightly. When a leader openly declares that he cannot be blamed for the state of the nation, it raises a fundamental question: Who, then, is responsible?

It is time for Rowley to acknowledge that if he cannot lead the nation out of this crisis, he must step aside and allow someone else the opportunity to do so. Trinidad and Tobago nationals deserve a leader who is willing to take ownership of the challenges we face, not one who washes his hands of them.

For the sake of our nation's future, I urge Rowley to tender his resignation. It is only through decisive and responsible leadership that we can hope to address the scourge of crime and restore peace and security to our beloved country.

Allan Karim, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.



Keith Rowley



GUYANA PROPERTY MATTERS

Selling Property in Guyana

Guyanese property owners who are considering selling should be aware of the process and the costs that lie ahead. For the uninitiated, buying and selling a property in Guyana is not a simple process, and will involve lawyers, realtors, valuation consultants, and accountants and take nine to 12 weeks to complete. Some attempt to reduce potential costs and tax liabilities by managing the process themselves, which is often an exercise in frustration.

In cases where the property may have increased substantially in value, taxes are most likely due. Regardless of the payment arrangements the seller may make with the buyer, the Guyana Revenue Authority will assess the current value and levy taxes on the increase in value from 2011 to today. In some Georgetown neighbourhoods, this increase can be substantial.

Even in cases where the buyer is known, there is a significant process that will include managing the sales and conveyance process, which includes getting a valuation, an audit, filing the paperwork with the Guyana Revenue Authority, and obtaining the certificate to complete the sale. Without this, the GRA will not permit the transfer of the property to the buyer.

The best approach for sellers is to retain an experienced lawyer and realtor to manage the process on their behalf. The fees associated are typically deductible from the taxes levied, so professional help pays for itself.

In cases where the seller may be a group of persons, there is the additional requirement of settling the proceeds as per their respective shareholding. The payment and receipt of large amount of funds today requires the appropriate paperwork to comply with modern anti-money laundering requirements common now in every jurisdiction.

RE/Guyana's service is designed to simplify this process for overseas sellers where we integrate all realtor, legal, valuation and accounting services. We ensure our clients are able to obtain market value, and are able to successfully complete the transaction without having to make a single trip to Guyana. The globalised Guyanese nation can see a buyer who is located in Canada with a seller located in Europe.

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.](#)

Give careful thought, consideration to changes on TT's national emblem

Dear Editor,

Trinidad and Tobago's Coat of Arms is an official emblem, a mark of identification, and a symbol of the authority of the government of a nation or state.

In effect, it is really the seal of State of the government, and arguably the most important of the national emblems. And so, this seal is located at the top of all government documents.

Therefore, it is my view that a decision to alter the Coat of Arms should not have been made by the political directorate at its party convention, taking into account the implications for such a change, which is not the responsibility of any political party, but the responsibility of the State.

So, what is the history behind the design of Trinidad and Tobago's existing Coat of Arms?

It was designed by a committee formed in 1962 to select the symbols that would be representative of the people of Trinidad and Tobago. The committee included noted artist the late Carlisle Chang, and Carnival designer, the late George Bailey.

The Coat of Arms with the accompanying motifs that represent indigenous features of Trinidad and Tobago were selected and formally agreed to be used as the Coat of Arms in 1962, in a design approved by the College of Arms.

So, could one element or image be removed without altering the intent and meaning of the

original design, as was approved by the College of Arms?

If after 62 years politicians now see the need to effect a change to one element because of the negative historical connection, then maybe we have to consider if it is not time for us to review the contents of every element or image on the Coat of Arms, and then come up with a new design going forward.



For instance, most Tobagonians see the Cocrico as noisy pest. Additionally, what were the other images intended to reflect?

A change in the design of the coat of arms should not only be about attempting to erase part of our history as it relates to the role played by Columbus and the colonisers.

Instead, it should be about creating and designing a new Coat of Arms, which would reflect what we stand for as a cosmopolitan people.

I suggest the need for a committee, as was done in 1962, to be formed to select the appropriate symbols that would be a positive and progressive representation of the people of Trinidad and Tobago, while keeping our history as Trinidadians/Tobagonians intact, as well as reflecting our advances.

Nuff said! Let us begin a meaningful conversation on this development and other not-so-related issues.

Bryan St Louis, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.



Presentation of a Certificate of Appreciation to the Nandu family from close friends and members of the Bharat Sevashram Sangha Ashram, Toronto. The presentation took place recently at an event that honoured the iconic performer.

Scholarship honours legacy of musical icon

Dear Editor,

I would like to extend congratulations to the organisers of the Mohan Nandu Scholarship at the Saraswati Vidya Niketan Secondary School in Cornelia Ida, West Coast Demerara, Guyana.

This is a fitting tribute to the memory of the late singer, who was taken care of in his last days by the school in Guyana.

During a recent visit to the Bharat Sevashram Sangha in Toronto, Principal Swami Aksharananda was presented with a certificate of appreciation by the ashram that

posthumously recognised the cultural contributions of Nandu, and for approval for the establishment of the scholarship.

Nandu became a household name in the 1960s and 1970s as a versatile singer who won many singing competitions.

One of the Bollywood renditions that he will be most remembered for is the popular Manna Dey classical hit, *Laaga Chunri Mein Daag*. He also rendered songs by other notable singers, and earned the reputation as the local Mukesh.

Long live his memory.

Adit Kumar, Toronto, via email.

Mourning the loss of Sister Ameena Gafoor

Dear Editor,

I would like to express my deep sadness at the passing of a dear mentor – Sister Ameena Gafoor. Triumph Village and Guyana have lost a great daughter, an asset that is irreplaceable. Rabindranath Tagore's beautiful words expressed how she has influenced many a talent: "At the immortal touch of thy hands, my little heart loses its limit in joy and gives birth to utterance ineffable."

She will be missed by all whose lives she touched.

"Our self, as a form of God's joy, is deathless. For his joy is *amritham*, eternal bliss. We know that the life of a Soul, which is finite in its expression and infinite in its principle, must go through the portals of death in its journey to realise the infinite" — Rabindranath Tagore.

Sleep in peace Beautiful Soul.

Nanda Sahadeo, Guyana, via email.



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Guyana's growing economy continues to fire on all cylinders

Guyana's economy continues to fire on all cylinders. In the first half of 2024, the overall economy grew by an impressive 49.7 percent, according to a mid-year report issued by the Ministry of Finance. The non-oil economy grew by an estimated 12.6 percent, indicating that the country's diversification strategy is taking hold.

As expected, the oil sector was the best performer, followed by the construction sector. The non-oil sector remained strong on the back of improving confidence among private investors and continuing government support.

The consumer remained strong, evidenced by increased borrowing to finance durable goods and housing in particular. Business borrowing also increased appreciably.

At a macro-level, the current account recorded a surplus, while the capital account registered a deficit, leaving the balance of payments in a deficit at the end of the first half.

The report forecasted that the overall economy would grow by 42.3 percent in 2024, with non-oil GDP expanding by 11.8 percent for its fourth consecutive year of growth.

During the first half of 2024, food prices continued to be impacted by a combination of domestic and global factors. As a result, consumer prices rose by 1.6 percent at the end of June 2024 when compared with the end of 2023, reflecting higher food prices, specifically for fruits and fruit products, vegetables and vegetable products, and cereals and cereal products. The 12-month inflation rate stood at four percent at the end of June, and is now projected to be 3.2 percent for 2024.

According to Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service, Dr Ashni Singh, the

economy continues to grow even as it grapples with external challenges, including continued disruptions to production and supply chains, renewed escalation in freight costs, and interest rate uncertainty, given persistent global inflationary pressures.



Dwarka Lakhan

Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali noted that the growth in the non-oil sector, in particular, is not accidental, but is the result of well-implemented plans and programmes aimed at stimulating the private sector.

He attributed this to deliberate policy initiatives, strategic planning, and the confidence that the private sector has in the country's economic future.



Ashni Singh

Growth was led by the mining and quarrying sector, which is estimated to have grown by 64.3 percent in the first half of the year, driven mainly by oil sub-sector, which grew by 67.1 percent, with an output of 113.5 million barrels of oil in the first six months of this year. The oil industry is now projected to grow by 56.4 percent for the entire year.

The other mining and quarrying industry comprising sand, stone, diamonds, and manganese, is estimated to have grown by 45.5 percent in the first half, driven by greater activity in the construction sector. This industry is now projected to grow by 24.7 percent in 2024.

The construction sector grew by 43.7 percent on the back of government and private investment, supported by favourable policies such as the expansion of the housing drive, and the lowering of interest rates. The sector is now expected to grow by 27.2 percent in 2024. However, the sector continues to suffer from labour shortages.

The agriculture, forestry, and fisheries experienced mixed performance with rice growing

by 17.9 percent on the back of investments in drainage and irrigation, farm-to-market roads, and the expansion of cultivated land.

However, the sugar industry contracted by 60 percent in the first half of the year due to drought and the struggle to resuscitate the industry following the near abandonment of estates. However, the government still has high expectations for sugar.

The other crops subsector is estimated to have grown by 8.8 percent in the first half, with a growth projection of 12.7 percent for the entire year.

The forestry sub-sector grew by 13.2 percent, while the fishing industry expanded by 27.7 percent. It is anticipated that the fishing sector will benefit from further growth with the introduction of marine cage fishing and increased prawn production. It is expected to grow by 16.8 percent for the entire year.

The manufacturing sector is estimated to have grown by 27.5 percent in the first half, largely driven by increases in "other manufacturing" and rice manufacturing. The sector is now projected to grow by 14.5 percent this year.

The services sector is estimated to have expanded by 7.3 percent, driven largely by growth in financial and insurance activities and professional, scientific, and technical services. The overall 2024 growth rate for services is projected at 7.7 percent.

At a macro-level, the current account recorded a surplus of (US) \$3,199.9 million, while the capital account registered a deficit of (US) \$3,395.4 million. As a result, the overall balance of payments recorded a deficit of (US) \$184.6 million at the end of the first half of 2024.

Total export earnings grew by 68.7 percent to (US) \$10,221.9 million at the end of June 2024, largely on account of higher earnings from crude oil exports, which amounted to (US) \$9,401.6 million in the first half. Non-oil export

earnings increased by 23.4 percent in the first half of this year. Earnings from rice and gold expanded by (US) \$24.7 million, and (US) \$12.2 million, respectively, with the latter reflecting favourable price developments.

Total import payments declined over the first half to (US) \$3,245.1 million, largely attributed to the reduction in the importation of capital goods, as no new FPSO was imported.

At the end of the first half of 2024, net domestic credit stood at \$773.1 billion, 20.3 percent higher than the level at end of 2023. Total credit to the private sector grew by nine percent from \$376.1 billion at the end of December 2023, to \$410 billion at the end of June 2024.

Credit to households rose by 6.8 percent to \$41 billion, with notable growth of 11.6 percent observed in lending for motor cars.

In the area of credit to business enterprises, there was notable growth in lending for services, agriculture, and mining and quarrying, of 11.5 percent, 12.3 percent, and 29.3 percent to \$148.5 billion, \$24.6 billion, and \$6.9 billion, respectively.

Real estate mortgages expanded by nine percent to \$140.2 billion, driven by increases in mortgages granted for private dwellings and industrial and commercial properties.

Although Guyana's economy is surging ahead, a high level of discontent prevails among certain segments of the population, which expect more benefits to trickle down to them. That will remain a persistent problem.

...

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



FPSO vessel Prosperity

Guyana's oil production continues to surge

Georgetown – Guyana's oil industry is experiencing unprecedented growth, with the nation producing 113.5 million barrels of oil in the first half of 2024. According to the latest mid-year report from the Finance Ministry, production is on track to surpass 220 million barrels by year-end, fueled by increased output from the Prosperity floating, production, storage, and offloading (FPSO) vessel.

As reported by the Guyana media, in a recent address to the nation, President Dr Irfaan Ali highlighted the sector's remarkable expansion.

"The petroleum sector grew by 67.1 percent, with 113.5 million barrels of oil produced in the first six months of this year. The industry is now expected to grow by 56.4 percent for the entire year," Ali stated.

The report reveals that oil production averaged 624,000 barrels per day (bpd) in the first half of 2024, nearly double the rate from the same period in 2023, when 68.7 million barrels were produced. This surge is attributed to the start-up of the Prosperity FPSO in late 2023, which significantly boosted output in the Stabroek Block.

Export earnings from crude oil have also

soared, reaching (US) \$9.4 billion in the first half of the year – a (US) \$4 billion increase compared to the same period in 2023. This growth was driven by both increased production and favourable global oil prices, which averaged (US) \$84 per barrel.

ExxonMobil, through its subsidiary Esso Exploration Production Guyana Limited (EEPGL), leads operations in the Stabroek Block, holding a 45 percent interest. The Liza Phases One and Two and Payara projects, which together produce over 600,000 bpd, are supported by three FPSO vessels.

ExxonMobil is further expanding its operations with the Yellowtail project, expected to increase production to 810,000 bpd by the time it comes online. The company has also received approvals for the Uaru and Whiptail projects, which are projected to push Guyana's production to over 1.2 million bpd by 2027.

Looking ahead, ExxonMobil envisions having ten FPSOs operational in Guyana by 2030. The company's seventh development, the Hammerhead project, is anticipated to add between 120,000 and 180,000 bpd to the nation's production capacity when it begins in 2029.

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A section of adult volunteers with summer camp coordinator Madan Dheer, retired principal of Waterloo District School Board (second from left)



One of the summer camp youth attendees demonstrates her art and craft

RKMCC concludes vibrant youth summer camp

Cambridge – The Radha Krishna Mandir & Cultural Centre recently concluded its annual summer camp, a dynamic event that brought together youth from various cultural backgrounds.

Designed to foster community spirit and cultural understanding, the camp offered a variety of activities, including storytelling sessions, art and craft workshops, and daily lessons from Hindu scriptures, all aimed at demonstrating how these teachings apply to everyday life. This year's camp was led by Madan Dheer, a retired principal of the Waterloo Region School District Language School, along with a dedicated team of teachers, yoga instructors, and youth volunteers.

The program emphasised cultural education and the teachings of Hinduism, providing the camp's participants with a unique opportunity to explore the importance of *sanskars* (values) in a supportive environment. Through engaging activities and interactive sessions, participants deepened their appreciation for their cultural heritage, and embraced universal values such as compassion, respect, and unity.

One of the camp's highlights was its focus on yoga, with daily sessions introducing participants to various *asanas* (postures), *pranayama* (breathing exercises), and meditation techniques.

These sessions not only promoted physical well-being, but also instilled a sense of inner peace and mindfulness among the children.

The RKMCC expressed heartfelt gratitude to the volunteers, instructors, and participants who contributed to the camp's success. The positive feedback from parents and children underscored the event's impact in fostering a strong sense of community and cultural pride.

A notable feature of this year's camp was the participation of international youths from Conestoga College and the Waterloo Region School District Board. These young leaders conducted counselor sessions and shared their knowledge, enriching the nurturing experience for the younger participants.

Moving forward, the RKMCC is now looking forward to hosting future events that continue to foster togetherness, celebrate diversity, and promote holistic well-being.

The organisation also has plans to establish its new mandir and cultural centre, which is now being built. To this end, camp participants united in a fund-raising effort to support RKMCC's construction of its new mandir in Cambridge. [Click here to visit their donation platform on Canada Helps.](#)



Youth counsellors at the summer camp were in good hands during the event



A section of youthful campers during Week 1 with camp coordinator Madan Dheer (third row at right)

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Dr Lake Singh (left) presenting a Mohan Nandu certificate of appreciation to Principal of the Saraswati Vidya Niketan, Swami Aksharananda

Mohan Nandu Scholarship at Saraswati Vidya Niketan

Toronto – A scholarship was recently established at Saraswati Vidya Niketan, a private Hindu secondary school located in Cornelia Ida, West Coast Demerara in Guyana to honour the legacy of revered cultural icon, the late Mohan Nandu.

Named the Mohan Nandu Scholarship, it aims to keep the cultural and musical legend's memory alive while supporting the educational aspirations of deserving students. Nandu passed away in February this year.

The announcement of the scholarship was made following a recent visit by Swami Aksharananda, Principal of Saraswati Vidya Niketan, to the Bharat Sevashram Sangha in Toronto.

During his visit, Swami Aksharananda received a certificate of appreciation from the ashram that posthumously recognised Nandu's significant contributions to music and cultural life. The establishment of the scholarship was approved after discussions with Dr Lake Singh, the director of the ashram.

The scholarship was formally announced on June 2 during a tribute to the late Nandu, which was hosted by the Bharat Sevashram Sangha in Toronto. The event, organised by Ramnarine Sahadeo and supported by devotees of the ashram, along with Nandu's friends and family, celebrated the life and legacy of the Indo-Guyanese musical legend.



Mohan Nandu

Nandu will always be remembered for once sharing the stage in Guyana with the legendary Bollywood playback singer, the late Manna Dey, in a performance that further solidified his status as a proficient musician, and an enduring cultural icon.

At the tribute, several of Nandu's friends reminisced and shared anecdotes about their time with the legend, further highlighting his contributions to the musical and cultural landscape.

Sahadeo spearheaded the establishment of the scholarship as a vehicle to continue preservation of Nandu's legacy. This is not the first time Sahadeo has taken the lead in honouring cultural figures and preserving their legacies. He is remembered for previously contributing to the creation of the Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.

The Mohan Nandu Scholarship offers an opportunity for the community to contribute to the preservation of his legacy. Donations to the scholarship fund can be made through the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry. The account details are as follows: Saraswati Vidya Niketan Scholarship Fund, Account Number: 006459027034, Swift Code: GUTIGYGE.

Mailing and contact information are as follows: Block H, North Public Road, Cornelia Ida, West Coast Demerara (WCD), Guyana. Email: secretary@svn.edu.gy. Telephone: +592 276 0013/14. Sahadeo can be emailed at: ramjihindu@rogers.com.

Local 27 marks Labour Day at Toronto parade

Labour Day celebrations took place earlier this week in downtown Toronto. Among the participants at the parade were members of the Carpenters' Union Local 27, which was led by its President Chris Campbell.

In an *Instagram* post afterwards, Campbell noted that over the years the union's members and their families made tremendous sacrifices to ensure fair wages, safe working conditions, and the eight-hour workday.

"These efforts have led to some of the strongest collective agreements in the labour movement, providing a foundation upon which we continue to build," he stated.

At the same time, he expressed "deep gratitude for the commitment and legacy you've left behind," while further noting, "We are here because you fought for us."

Campbell also extended gratitude to Executive Secretary-Treasurer Jason Rowe, and the union's leadership team, its executive boards, and the committees.

"Your dedication to promoting growth, retention, mentorship, market share expansion, and diversity within our ranks is vital to our ongoing success," he declared.

He added, "Let's continue to honour the legacy of those who came before us, and work towards a fair and equitable future for all."

Campbell recently made history with his appointment as the first Black president in the union's 140-year history. Along with his latest elevation to the top leadership, he is also the lead player for Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at the Canadian Regional Council.

He is veteran of 35 years with the union, and also has a significant portfolio of corollary and related roles in the trades and beyond.



Chris Campbell (left to right) with Ontario Labour Minister MPP David Piccini and Whitby MPP Lorne Coe at the Toronto Labour Day parade



Campbell (second at left) with Local 27 members

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Everton Anderson, Executive Director, Jamaica's National Health Fund

Jamaica facing growing cancer crisis

Kingston – Jamaica is facing a growing cancer crisis, with alarming statistics revealing a sharp increase in new cases, the *Jamaica Gleaner* reported last week.

According to Everton Anderson, Executive Director of the National Health Fund, approximately 7,500 new cancer cases were reported in 2022 alone, including 1,327 cases of breast cancer.

Speaking at the launch of the Kiwanis Club of Providence Breast Cancer Run in Montego Bay, Anderson highlighted the concerning data from the Global Cancer Observatory. "These numbers underscore the urgent need for improved early detection and treatment," he stated.

The statistics paint a troubling picture: in 2020, 1,208 new breast cancer cases were diagnosed, up from 974 cases in 2018. The rising prevalence of the disease is a significant public health challenge, with serious implications for both individuals and the healthcare system.

"The burden of this disease is immense, not just in terms of human suffering, but also in the economic costs associated with treatment," Anderson noted.

He also revealed that treating a single cancer case can cost between [Jam] \$3 million and \$25 million, with some cases exceeding \$30 million.

The economic strain on the NHF is substantial, he declared.

"From a budget of \$10 billion, we are spending \$1.3 billion on cancer drugs alone. This illustrates the severe impact of cancer on our healthcare system," he stated.

The NHF card, introduced in 2003, has been a crucial tool in alleviating the financial burden of cancer care. Initially covering 13 conditions, the card now supports 22, including breast cancer.

"Breast cancer and prostate cancer have been on the card from day one, and the coverage for these conditions is about 70 percent of the cost," Anderson explained.

The card's reach is expanding, with 36,000 people enrolled for cancer-related conditions as of August 1, 2024. Of these, 32 percent are breast cancer patients.

"Each time a breast cancer patient swipes their NHF card at the pharmacy, we are spending an average of \$12,000. This reflects our commitment to supporting those battling this disease," Anderson added.

He also stressed the importance of early detection, citing a study that shows significantly higher costs for late-stage cancer patients.

At this time, the NHF is promoting early intervention through various programs, aiming to improve survival rates and reduce

healthcare costs.

"Early intervention not only saves lives, but also reduces the economic burden on the healthcare system," he affirmed.

Anderson also called for a national prioritisation of screening, suggesting that schools, businesses, and other organisations dedicate days specifically for health screenings.

"This would not only improve productivity, but also foster a culture of preventive care," he remarked.

Despite available resources, Anderson noted that fear and myths surrounding screening persist among Jamaicans.

"Many people avoid mammograms due to myths and fear, which delay diagnosis and worsen outcomes," he said.

This is particularly concerning given that only about 25 percent of Jamaicans have health insurance, making timely treatment even more critical.

He also called for a regional discussion on improving health insurance coverage across the Caribbean.

"We need to lift the conversation on how we are going to put in place greater mechanisms for health insurance, not just in Jamaica, but across the region," he urged.

The NHF has made significant strides in improving access to cancer treatment, partnering with organisations like CHASE to upgrade outdated equipment with new linear accelerators at major hospitals.

Anderson also emphasised the need for more partnerships, particularly in early childhood education, to instill the importance of health from a young age.

Now in its 15th year, the Kiwanis Club of Providence Montego Bay Breast Cancer Run is a key event in the fight against cancer. The run, usually staged in October, aims to raise \$15 million this year.

"The Kiwanis Club of Providence Montego Bay has consistently supported those affected by this devastating disease, with vital contributions from corporate Jamaica and local businesses," said committee chair Nadine Spence.

Over the years, the organisation has disbursed nearly \$6 million to the Jamaica Cancer Society and Cornwall Regional Hospital, assisting countless individuals.

Since 2023, over \$9 million has been raised, with more than 2,500 participants and donors collectively contributing nearly \$32 million to the cause.

"In our 15th year, we appeal for more sponsors to join us in this fight," Spence stated.

Additionally, "Every donation helps save lives, and as a registered charity affiliated with Kiwanis International, we are making a difference one community at a time."



Spence (left) with a cancer survivor



Ask Jay...

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PROOF OF DOWNPAYMENT CAN BE CHALLENGING WHEN BUYING A HOME

When purchasing a home, your lender will consider your gross employment income, credit report, current debt load, and downpayment amount. As a borrower, you must also provide the source of the downpayment to satisfy Canada's Anti-Money Laundering (AML) rules. This is a crucial step, ensuring that the funds used for the downpayment are from a legitimate source. Simply put, money laundering is washing dirty money. It is a method of concealing or hiding the source of the proceeds of crime so that it looks like it comes from an authentic source.

Money laundering helps local and international criminals to invest and grow their money, and use it for terrorism. The stringent AML requirements can extend the verification process and introduce unexpected challenges, even for buyers with strong financial backgrounds and excellent credit histories. These regulations reflect a broader trend where compliance requirements are intensifying, often leading to more comprehensive and sometimes invasive financial scrutiny.

The Financial Transaction and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) detects, prevents, and deters money laundering and financing of terrorist activities. Real estate investing is lucrative, so activities must be scrutinised. The onus is transferred to the lenders, mortgage brokers, and realtors. If they do not comply, they can face stiff fines.

In most cases, you must provide a 90-day history of all the funds for the downpayment and closing cost. Your lender will review your bank statement and need a detailed explanation of any deposits of \$2,000 and over. If the lender cannot trace the source, they can dig deeper by requesting a longer history timeline. Any deposits that do not come from an income source, such as family gifts or proceeds from the sale of an asset or transfer of funds from an overseas account, must be supported by proper documents.

Many people transfer money between accounts to reduce banking fees and increase interest. For example, a checking account may need a minimum balance to avoid paying fees, whereas a savings account or GIC can offer the highest interest rate. In many instances, the money is moved from one lender to another, making tracing and documenting transfers more challenging. A typical transaction involves two or more borrowers, and you can now appreciate the work to be done behind the scenes.

If you have investment accounts with many activities, tracing the movement of funds can become more cumbersome, and if the lender needs help tracing the funds, they can put your file on hold. This, in turn, can significantly delay your approval, underscoring the importance of preparing your downpayment in advance.

If you plan on buying a home soon, consolidate your downpayment from all sources about four months before making an offer. Sources such as GIC, RRSP, and so on, are trackable; you do not need to move them. If you are selling your current home and buying another with the proceeds from the sale of your current home, the source of funds is easy to trace.

If a relative gives money as a gift, ask them to provide you with a gift letter and proof of where the funds come from. E-transfers and wire transfers, especially from another country, can raise red flags, so it is best to prove that the money is legitimate.

Currently, cryptocurrency is not a popular choice as a source of downpayment, and it is advisable to consolidate these investments into a checking or savings account about four months before you decide to purchase.

In Canada, there is no limit on the amount of cash you can deposit. However, if you deposit \$10,000 or more within 24 hours, the banks must report it to FINTRAC, and if you choose to deposit it before closing, it could be challenging to show where the funds originate from. Make any cash deposits at least three months before buying a home. You must keep evidence of where the cash comes from.

If, on the closing date, your lender cannot trace the source of your downpayment, they will not release funds, regardless of your financial strength. If you do not have the funds to close, you will be in hot water because a string of other transactions might be affected, and you will have to carry the financial backlash.

If you plan to buy a home soon, start consolidating your accounts three to four months before. Keep the funds in a checking or savings account at the bank from which you will get the mortgage. This is an essential step towards a stress-free transaction.

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Celebrations last week of TT's 62nd Independence anniversary at the Consulate General in Toronto was led by Acting Consul General Tracey Ramsubagh-Mannette

Trinbago Festival returns to Nathan Phillips Square this weekend

Toronto – The vibrant energy of Trinidad and Tobago is set to take over Nathan Phillips Square this weekend as the highly anticipated Trinbago Festival returns, promising a bigger and better celebration.

After outgrowing its previous venue at Yonge-Dundas Square, the festival will now unfold at one of Toronto's most iconic locations, welcoming an expected 30,000 visitors to revel in the rich culture of the twin islands.

"We're thrilled to host this year's event at Nathan Phillips Square," said Pet Marchan, founder and organiser of the festival from Palo Seco Events Group.

Marchan added, "The growth of the festival is a testament to the incredible support from the Trinbagonian community and beyond. Toronto is the perfect city to celebrate diversity, and we're proud to share our culture with even more people this year."

This year's festival will be another scin-

tilating and sensory feast, featuring an expanded Carib Beer garden, over four dozen food and craft vendors serving up authentic Trinbagonian cuisine, and a lineup of electrifying performers.

Among the acts is Fire Eater Chris Precious, who thrilled the crowd last year with his daring and heated performance, and Dance Caribe, known for their infectious energy and stunning traditional costumes.

And in a surprise announcement made on August 31, which was Trinidad and Tobago's Independence Day celebrations in Toronto, organisers revealed that the 2024 headliner will be none other than Mical Teja, Trinidad and Tobago's reigning Road Monarch.

Teja's winning performance of *DNA* at Trinidad Carnival 2024 kept listeners dancing, and earned him the Road March crown, one of the festival's most eminent musical honours.

Last year's festival was graced with the pres-

ence of Toronto's Mayor Olivia Chow, who celebrated the city's diversity in a heartfelt speech.

Said Mayor Chow: "There is something about this city of ours – it doesn't matter where we are from; what colour our skin is; who we are; money or no money; it doesn't matter. We feel we belong here; this is our city; we can party together; we can share food, and share our love of our city together."

The Trinbago Festival, produced by Palo Seco Events Group and supported by the Consulate General of Trinidad and Tobago, is not just a celebration, but a community-driven event.

Proceeds from the festival will benefit the Caribbean Scholarship Foundation, providing opportunities in business, education, and the arts for youth in the Caribbean diaspora.

This year's event has received the support from numerous partners: the Tourism Trinidad Limited, Tobago Tourism Agency

Ltd, Caribbean Airlines, Carib Beer, TD Bank Group, Morgan Williams, Chubbys, Toronto Chow Fest, Grace Foods, National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Toronto Education Workers, Canadian Building Trades Union, Carpenters Local 27, United Local 46, LiUNA Local 183, and the United Trinbago West Indian Association.

Financial assistance has also been provided by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, highlighting the significance of the festival in Toronto's cultural landscape.

As the Trinbago Festival takes over Nathan Phillips Square, it promises to be an unforgettable weekend of music, food, and cultural pride, bringing together people from all walks of life to celebrate the beauty and heritage of Trinidad and Tobago.

[Click here for more information on the festival and upcoming events.](#)

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Festive Trininis light up McCandless Park

Coming hot on the heels of the Toronto Caribbean Carnival activities and World Steelpan Day held in Toronto last month, the Trinidad and Tobago diaspora, and honorary Trininis in our thriving community switched partying gears and turned up on August 24 with baggage, bundles, and bags of dhal puris at the McCandless Park in Brampton.

It was a celebration of Trinidad and Tobago's 62nd Anniversary of Independence that saw a festive cricket match in play when the Trinbago West team took on the Trinibago East team.

However, there were lots more taking place beyond the

boundary that day, in the eternal words of the Trinidad and Tobago intellectual and author, C.L.R. James.

On the sidelines were prizes and giveaways, and lots of cooking, with Trininis and honorary Trininis having a great "lime" – that eternal word used back in the homeland to describe an unending outing of rest, relaxation, and then more relaxation.

And oh yes, the game of cricket was played, which saw Trinbago West defeating Trinbago East by an exciting two wicket margin, with the partying afterwards putting an end to the global myth that never the twain shall meet.



Photos by Russell Lutchman



On oratory: Hold on to the facts and the words will follow

By Dhanpaul Narine

Politics is mostly oratory. “You campaign in poetry and you govern in prose” says Mario Cuomo. The most persuasive orator will win the 2024 presidential elections.

As it stands, Kamala Harris is connecting better. Her delivery and command of language is resonating with Americans, and with good speechwriters and coaching, she could hold the trump cards.

But one cannot ignore Donald Trump. Brash, irreverent, outrageous, off-script, and sometimes vague, he is not an orator in the classical sense. But he is effective in getting his message across, especially to his base.

What is oratory? It is the ability to inspire and persuade through the power of the spoken word. Who could forget the Shakespearian Mark Anthony turning hate into love for Caesar?

Anthony placed the word ‘mutiny’ on the lips of the mob and they ran away with it. Plato saw oratory as a philosophy that seeks the truth.

However, it was Aristotle who gave us the different types of oratory: pathos, logos, and ethos, or emotion, argument, and character. He defines rhetoric as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion”.

One of the most important orators is Demosthenes. He stood up to Philip, the King of Macedonia, arguing for a strengthening of the city state. In 342 BC, Demosthenes delivered what is considered to be his most powerful speech in which he called on Athenians to take arms against Phillip.

Pericles, another great orator, was called “the first citizen of Athens”. Then there was Hypatia, who was one of the most accomplished scholars of her time, and who in 360 AD gave orations on the ideas of Plato.

Political oratory was not only confined to the Greeks. The skill and mastery of the Romans had a lasting impact on Western civilisation.

Marcus Tullius Cicero was perhaps the greatest orator of all time. He adapted the oratorical traditions of Greece to that of Rome. His speeches were lucid, logical, and were able to

persuade the masses. He became Consul in 63 BC, holding one of the most prestigious political offices in Rome. Cicero’s speeches were so powerful that they became legal precedents.

The government in Rome was controlled by a highly-educated class that was conversant with the law. Cicero’s mark on the theory of oration was that a firm foundation in

the knowledge of all things was necessary.

As he put it, “It is not by muscle, speed, or physical dexterity that great things are achieved, but by reflection, force of character, and judgement.”

Oratory, then, was the “highest form of intellectual activity” that advanced the well-being of the State.

Another notable orator was Marcus Fabius Quintillanus, who was born in 35 AD. Like Cicero, he too adapted the Hellenic tradition to Rome. But the world had moved on and ornate delivery and embellishment had replaced lucidity, logic, and eloquence. The fall of the Roman Empire in 410 AD led to a low point in the development of rhetoric.

It is said that some of the greatest orators, after antiquity, dates from the 16th century onwards.

There was Oliver Cromwell, who used the military, and his speeches, to defy the English monarchy. He sacked the British Parliament in 1653, calling it “a pack of mercenary wretches”.

Patrick Henry in 1775 made a compelling case for independence from England during the Second Virginia Convention. Edmund Burke was known for his persuasive speeches in the English Parliament on the American and French Revolution.

Frederick Douglass was an eloquent speaker against slavery. Who can forget the brilliance of Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address? Sojourner Truth was a powerful voice against slavery and equal rights for women.

One of the most famous orators in the 20th century was Sir Winston Churchill. He understood the importance of the spoken word, and once wrote that “of all the talents bestowed on men, none is so precious as the gift of oratory”.

It was Sir Winston who inspired the British with his speeches during World War II, his most famous being, “We shall fight them on the beaches”.

But Sir Winston arguably met his oratorical match in Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, who both took India to Independence from the British.

Shashi Tharoor is rated highly as an exceptional speaker, as can be seen from his Oxford Union, and other speeches.

An orator who mesmerised his nation with lofty speeches was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan, while it was said that the Russian Leon Trotsky could get a crowd to listen to him in freezing temperatures.

The 20th century is noted for unforgettable orators. A number of them stood out in the 1960s. Fidel Castro could speak for hours. Martin Luther King asked us to be judged by the “content of character”.

John F. Kennedy wanted Americans to think what they could do for their country. Ronald Reagan was such an effective speaker that he was described as “the great communicator”, and many remember his speech in 1987, in Berlin, when he called on Mikhail Gorbachev to “tear down this wall”.

Nelson Mandela was the first democratically elected president of South Africa. His inaugural speech in 1994 is considered one of the landmarks in political oratory. He told the world that, “never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experi-

ence the oppression of one by another”.

The turn of the century gave us two extraordinary speakers, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama. They crafted speeches with wonderful language and compelling rhetoric. Who was better? There are those who argue that Clinton could connect better with an audience, a salesperson that lived next door, and knew the family.

But others say that Obama learned well from the Greeks and Romans. His speeches were an appeal to emotion and reason, using mostly Cicero as his guide. The intonations, pauses, the doric backdrops, the tri-fecta of using three running sentences to make his point, and then get the crowd to chant the ‘Yes we can’ line, could well be a eulogy in

ancient Greece.

Kamala Harris, a lawyer like Obama, and Cicero, may well be taking lessons to polish her oratorical skills. In this regard, Obama will be indispensable. Trump is more concerned with the size of the crowds than persuasive language. But what about the facts? You can sway a crowd with the felicity of language, persuasion, and an appeal to emotion, but these days words can be fact-checked.

John F. Kennedy came close to answering the question. He says that, “If more politicians knew poetry and more poets knew politics, the world would be a better place”.

However, it is ancient Rome that has the best answer. According to Cato, “If you hold on to the facts, the words will follow.”



Kamala Harris



Donald Trump

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Passing of a cultural luminary and beacon of philanthropy

Ameena Gafoor 1941-2024

The world lost a cultural luminary and a beacon of philanthropy with the passing of Ameena Gafoor on August 26. Her life, marked by an unwavering commitment to the arts, education, and the upliftment of her community, stands as a testament to the power of dedication and generosity. While mourning her loss, at the same time her incredible legacy was being celebrated as one that will continue to inspire generations to come.

Born in 1941, Ameena Gafoor rose from humble beginnings to become a respected educator, literary critic, and cultural advocate in Guyana. Her contributions to the arts were unparalleled, and her work touched countless lives, not only in Guyana, but also across the Caribbean and beyond in the diaspora.

As the founder and editor of *The Arts Journal*, she created a platform that highlighted the works of Caribbean artists and writers, ensuring that their voices were heard, and their talents recognised.

Her passion for the arts was evident in every aspect of her life. She was a key figure in the establishment of the Ameena Gafoor Institute for the Study of Indentureship and its Legacies at Cambridge University, the only such institute in Britain or Europe. This institute reflects her lifelong commitment to preserving and advancing the study of Caribbean history and culture, particularly the experiences of Indentured laborers and their descendants.

The University of Guyana recognised Gafoor's immense contributions to literature and culture by awarding her an Honorary Doctor of Letters in 2022. During the conferral ceremony, the university's official master orator, Al Creighton, described her as "a symbol of endurance and enlightenment; a flame providing light, steadfast and persevering, against the persistent force of a prevailing wind".

These words aptly capture the essence of Gafoor's life. It was

a life lived with purpose, resilience, and an unyielding commitment to making a difference.

In addition to her work in the arts, Gafoor was deeply involved in philanthropy. Alongside her husband, Sattaur Gafoor, she co-founded the Gafoor Foundation, which has funded numerous medical, educational, and sports projects. One of their most notable contributions is the Ameena Gafoor Medical and Dialysis Centre, established in November 2022, which provides affordable dialysis treatment to Guyanese in need. This centre stands as an eternal example of Gafoor's commitment to improving the lives of others, a commitment that defined her life and work.

In a heartfelt tribute, Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali recognised Gafoor as "a truly extraordinary woman whose contributions to our nation, and especially to the literary arts, were exceptional".

Ali also emphasised her kindness and generosity, noting that her efforts "nurtured and uplifted the talents of writers, poets, and artists across Guyana, making a lasting impact on our nation".

He also remembered her for her humility and warm spirit, qualities that endeared her to all who knew her.

Reflecting on her legacy, the University of Guyana expressed its deep appreciation for Gafoor's life and contributions.

In a statement, the university noted, "[She] was a mother, wife, literary critic, researcher, editor, anthologist, cultural activist, creative writer, philanthropist, and social worker. Her life, well-lived, provides a model of illumination and hopeful victory over darkness in times of adversity."

UG also extended its deepest condolences to her family, including her husband and children, and to all who mourn her passing.

Gafoor's influence extended beyond her work in literature and philanthropy. She was also a passionate advocate for education, having held teaching positions at Central High School and



Ameena Gafoor

Statement on the passing of Ameena Gafoor by Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali:

"I join all Guyana in mourning the passing of Mrs Ameena Gafoor, a truly extraordinary woman whose contributions were exceptional to our nation, and especially to the literary arts. "Ameena's kindness and generosity were unmatched, touching the lives of many through her consistent support for various philanthropic endeavours, particularly in the promotion of the literary arts. Her efforts nurtured and uplifted the talents of writers, poets, and artists across Guyana, making a lasting impact on our nation.

"Ameena will be remembered not only for her profound influence in the literary world but also for her humility and warm-spiritedness. "Her gracious nature and compassionate heart made her a beloved figure to all who knew her. In her passing, Guyana has lost a true literary luminary and one of its kindest souls. "On behalf of the government and people of Guyana, I extend our deepest condolences to her husband, family, and all who mourn her loss. May her example continue to inspire kindness, generosity, and a love for the arts in all of us. "May Allah's divine blessings and mercy be with her!"

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and philanthropy. She was also a passionate advocate for education, having held teaching positions at Central High School and

Understanding the nature of cultism and its dangerous leadership

Cultism is a social phenomenon springing from an organisational force in human affairs. A cult of personality uses techniques of mass media, propaganda, patriotism, organised rallies, image building, and a diet of lies and mass hysteria in many cases. Cultism exists in the culture of music, sports and games, religious beliefs, sects, politics, and the like.

Two American cult leaders come to mind from the not too distant past – Jim Jones and the massacre in the jungles of Guyana in Jonestown, and Charles Manson, a cult leader of "hippie types" in the US.

Nine hundred victims died in the Jonestown setting. They had followed their leader to a "Utopia" in the jungles of Guyana, but discovered otherwise.

Jones, a "Messiah" from the Peoples Temple in San Francisco, claimed among other things that he had psychic power – an ability to tell the future, which was really an ability to tell lies (does this sound familiar?), and a charisma of a "rock star". He even got to preach in one of the established churches in Georgetown, Guyana!

He manipulated his followers with threats of blackmail, beatings, and possible death. Violence or threats thereof were never far from reach. Does this sound familiar?

Then there was Charles Manson, a "hippie" type, looking for a heaven on earth. He converted his followers with force of personality with almost hypnotic effect!

He was arrested and convicted of first degree murder and conspiracy, along with three women followers, for the slaying of actor Sharon Tate, who was pregnant at the time.

Manson was diagnosed with severe character disorder, with mental disorders of paranoia, narcissistic features, and anti-social personality disorder.

He was diagnosed using scientific psychological personality tests while he was in prison. He was able to hypnotise his followers to commit murder.

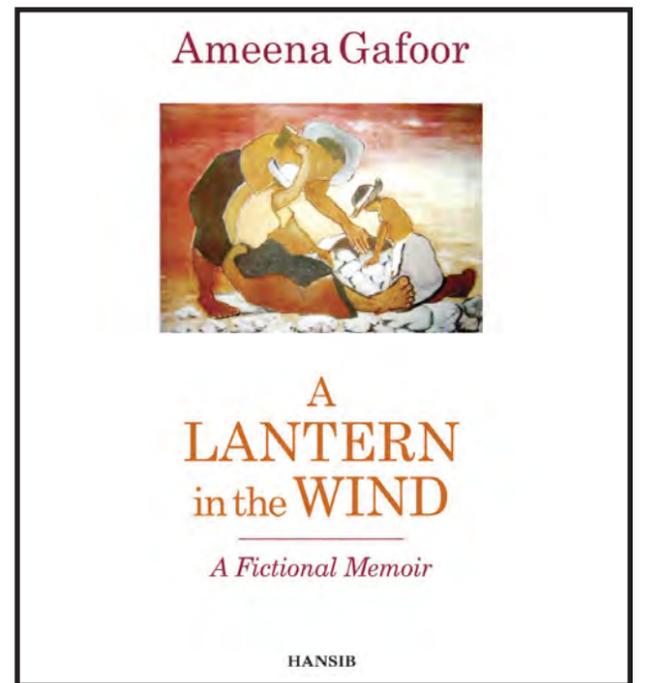
A number of political cult leaders have surfaced over the years. There were Adolf Hitler in Germany and Juan Perón in Argentina; there were also political cult leaders in Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Cuba, Egypt, Haiti, Iran, and the list goes on.

Fast forward to 2016 and we have Donald Trump in the US. Winning the presidential elections in 2016, in dubious circumstances including foreign "involvement", he then set the stage for what was to follow.

Not accepting the election results of 2020, he has turned the country "upside down".



Bernard Heydorn



Gafoor's well-regarded *A Lantern in the Wind*

Tutorial High School, where she inspired countless students in the subjects of literature, French, and Latin.

Her commitment to education was further evident in her work with various organisations, including ChildLink Guyana, an NGO dedicated to supporting abused and neglected adolescents, and the Doobay Medical Centre, a non-profit medical clinic offering life-saving treatments to those in need.

Through her work with *The Arts Journal*, Gafoor provided a platform for numerous Guyanese writers and scholars, including Michael Gilkes, Frank Birbalsingh, and Sister Mary Noel Menezes, among others. She also showcased the work of prominent artists like Philip Moore and Bernadette Persaud, ensuring that their contributions to Guyanese culture were celebrated and preserved.

Gafoor's literary achievements include the publication of several significant works, such as her study of Roy Heath's fiction, *Aftermath of Empire: The Novels of Roy A.K. Heath* (2017), and her fictional memoir, *Lantern in the Wind: A Fictional Memoir* (2020).

Lantern in the Wind provides a rare insight into Muslim life in Guyana. It was praised by renowned academic Dr David Dabydeen, who recognised it as a valuable addition to Caribbean literature.

Gafoor's enduring and varied legacy will be recalled in the years ahead in the words of Ali, who articulated the profound and collective grief being felt in Guyana with her loss.

"In her passing, Guyana has lost a true literary luminary and one of its kindest souls. On behalf of the government and people of Guyana, I extend our deepest condolences to her husband, family, and all who mourn her loss. May her example continue to inspire kindness, generosity, and a love for the arts in all of us. May Allah's divine blessings and mercy be with her."

Gafoor's life was one of service, not only to her family and friends, but to her community and Guyana, and beyond Guyana's shores into the diaspora. Her legacy of cultural enrichment, education, and philanthropy will continue to inspire and uplift the many who now follow in her pioneering footsteps.

Chaos has followed, and he faces a list of criminal charges for a variety of actions, including widespread lying and falsehoods leading up to the current 2024 elections.

Buoyed by a growing number of cult followers, the sky seems to be the limit, until recently with the Democrats putting forward a woman of colour to lead the country over the next four years.

The Republican Party in the US is hijacked by Trump and his cult followers. Then there are hangers-on, who are giving tacit support, waiting and watching to see which way the wind is blowing.

It would be helpful if Trump can be detained and given a battery of psychological tests as was done with Manson. The scientific results would be helpful.

Some of these personality tests have what is called a "lie factor". It can be very revealing. It would probably show what we already know. If it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, looks like a duck, then it must be a duck!

It is time for the American people and the world to know the entity called Donald Trump before it is too late. A lot is at stake in many places, including Canada, sleeping in the shadow of the giant called "the United States".

If the creeks don't rise and the sun still shines, I'll be talking to you.

Rowley expresses frustration over crime

Port-of-Spain – Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley last month voiced his growing frustration over the persistent crime wave in Trinidad and Tobago, stating that he is exhausted by the ongoing blame directed at him and his administration.

Speaking at a post-Cabinet media briefing in Port-of-Spain late last month, Rowley expressed his weariness with those who defend criminals, particularly those involved in the most heinous acts.

He did not mince words as he condemned those responsible for the escalating violence, especially following the murders of Enrico Guerra and his five-year-old daughter, Anika, who were brutally gunned down in Moruga last month.



Keith Rowley

Visibly moved by the tragedy, Rowley remarked, “For a fellow citizen to have seen a child in somebody’s hand, or in somebody’s presence, and deliberately discharge a firearm knowing that you’re going to kill that child, you are a different kind of devil. Unfortunately, we have those in this country.”

He emphasised that these crimes are not the result of who holds political office, but are driven by the benefits criminals seek.

“Don’t let anybody fool you, that crime is not being done based on who is in office. It’s done on the basis of whether there are benefits to be had by the perpetrators, and as fast as you stop or suppress one area, they surprise you with new ingenuity and heartlessness,” Rowley lamented.

He expressed his deep sadness and anger over the killings, particularly the murder of young Anika, which he described as an act only “a devil” could commit. And he acknowledged that these atrocities are not being carried out by foreigners, but by Trinidad and Tobago nationals.

“Not a Venezuelan or a Guyanese or a Ghanaian or a Russian. It is someone who we spawn here, who we fed here, who we gave opportunities here,” he stated, underscoring the homegrown nature of the problem.

Rowley was adamant that no leniency should be shown to those who contribute to the high crime rate, especially when innocent lives are taken.

“I have no excuse to make or any empathy to hold out for people like that because you are destroying our society,” he said.

He added that the responsibility of his administration is to ensure that law enforcement officials are diligently pursuing and

Recruit Venezuelans for police roles

Port-of-Spain – In the wake of the growing number of Venezuelan nationals currently residing in Trinidad and Tobago, a call was made last month for consideration to be given to utilise some of these law-abiding individuals in the Police Service to deal with the rising crime rate.

The suggestion was made by Fr Eric Thompson last month during an interfaith service held by the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service in Chaguana, central Trinidad.

The service marked the 69th anniversary of the Celebration of Women in the Police Service. Commissioner of Police Erla Christopher was among the team of officers present at the service.

In addressing the congregation, Thompson suggested the TTPS employ Venezuelan nationals, especially women, to help deal with rising crime.



Fr Eric Thompson

bringing these criminals to justice.

He also addressed the broader societal implications of crime, urging citizens to reflect on the loss of life and its impact on the community.

“There must be a limit to the lack of concern people have for their fellow men, as when people die, it is not one person, but a little piece of everyone that dies too,” he said.

Rowley dismissed poverty as a justification for violent crime, calling on young people to take advantage of government programs designed to provide opportunities for a better life.

“Some people believe they have a right to behave like that, and some people believe they have a reason to behave like that. Poverty! So, the way out of poverty is to choose that level of violent conduct that debases all of us?” he wondered.

Meanwhile, Rowley’s disavowal of blame for the spike in violent crime was rejected earlier this week by Saddam Hosein, MP for Barataria/San Juan, while he was speaking at a briefing at UNC headquarters in Chaguana.

Holding up a newspaper report on the kidnap and murder of Andrew Persadie, whose body was found in a Princes Town pond on August 31, Hosein lamented, “This is what we are ‘celebrating’ after 62 years of being an independent country under this regime.”

He said citizens were affected by crime, locked in their homes, including parents afraid to send their children back to school due to fear over the high levels of violence in schools.

“We are today met with, in 2024, a murder toll of over 416 of our citizens who have been killed,” Hosein stated.

He also lamented the rising number of home invasions.

“Then, it shocked the nation – the gruesome killing of five-year-old Anika Guerra. Her body was riddled with bullets,” Hosein said.

He added, “The only response that the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago could have for the nation is ‘Don’t blame me!’ Today I ask Dr Rowley, who then is responsible? The buck stops with you,” he stated.

He added, “Dr Rowley, you are abdicating your responsibility. Our citizens are fearful.”

Hosein criticised Rowley for distancing himself for blame over crime, while noting that in 2012 he had stated that a government unable to handle crime was part of the problem.

“Dr Rowley, every single part of Trinidad and Tobago is under siege by crime but you are doing absolutely nothing,” Hosein said.

“Striking a balance may mean the recruitment from Venezuela into the Police Service. Before we know it, we will have a migrant population from Venezuela that will be hard to infiltrate... Maybe it is time to review our laws, to review the Police Service Act to include in our recruiting strategies (Spanish-speaking women) to bridge the cultural gap and to give you a fighting chance in this dark world that will become darker in the years to come,” Thompson suggested.

He also called on nationals to work with the police, noting they do not have the manpower to police everyone on a one-to-one basis.

“Traditionally the police is blamed for everything that goes wrong in society, and you have graciously kept your silence because you are a disciplined group led by a godly Commissioner,” Thompson said.



Kazim Hosein (second from left) with Food Security and Food Prices Committee members (left to right) Nirmalla Debysingh, Nela Dwarika-Ali, and Nigel Grimes

TT’s fresh food imports should be lower

Port-of-Spain – Trinidad and Tobago should by now have reduced its importation of fresh produce through taking a wilful and cohesive approach to agriculture, allowing the population to eat healthier without breaking the bank.

This was the view of director at the Agricultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago Donny Rogers, who added that the country’s production rates and product range should have been much further ahead, allowing for “economies of scale” to be formed within the industry and help support sustainability in agriculture.

Rogers also expressed disappointment that the government-appointed Food Security and Food Prices Committee did not include a sitting member who came directly out of the farming community.

The Cabinet-appointed committee, chaired by chief executive officer of the National Agricultural Marketing and Development Corporation, Nirmalla Debysingh, has been

tasked with formulating “effective solutions to address this growing concern”, the Ministry of Agriculture stated late last month.

In presenting letters of appointment to the committee, Agriculture Minister Kazim Hosein stated this was a pivotal step in the government’s commitment to ensuring access to affordable and nutritious food for all.

Rogers noted the ASTT was based on an act of Parliament, and questioned how food security could be discussed without local farmers.

Food prices, both locally produced and imported, have been a topic of national conversation recently in Trinidad and Tobago.

Noting that while some fresh produce at the markets dipped from earlier this year, Rogers stated that prices were stabilising at increasingly higher rates, due to a variety of factors.

Overarching factors include decline of active farmers in the past five years, as people have left and are shunning the industry due to shrinking profits versus operational costs; as well as challenges with pests, and for water.

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Kangaloo raises a toast to the nation during Independence celebrations last week

Leaders praise TT for resilience, unity

Port-of-Spain – Trinidad and Tobago celebrated its 62nd Independence anniversary last week with its leaders delivering stirring messages of resilience, unity, and progress.

Both President Christine Kangaloo and Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley emphasised the country's ability to overcome challenges, and the importance of maintaining a collective spirit as the nation moves forward.

During her 'Toast to the Nation' at the National Academy for the Performing Arts, Kangaloo urged citizens never to doubt the country's ability to triumph in the face of adversity.

"Having challenges do not make us unique; what makes us unique is that we always find a way to overcome them. Just when self-doubt begins to threaten, just when apprehensiveness starts to cast its shadow, we ascend," she declared.

She highlighted the recent recognition of the steelpan as Trinidad and Tobago's national musical instrument by Parliament in July as a testament to the nation's perseverance. Kangaloo also referenced sprinter Jareem Richards, who despite missing out on a medal at the Paris Olympics, went on to win bronze at the Golden Gala Pietro Mennea Diamond League Meet in Rome.

"Just as the world started wondering how come our athletes were not among the medalists at the Paris Olympics, Jareem Richards silenced the critics by winning bronze in the 400 metres in Rome," she stated.

Kangaloo underscored that Trinidad and Tobago has repeatedly shown it can overcome obstacles and achieve significant milestones.

"We are a people and a country that cannot be kept down," she affirmed.

She added, "Like the flag we raised high in the forecourt of the Red House 62 years ago, we are a nation that always soars."

Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley, in his Independence Day message, echoed similar sentiments of resilience and unity. He noted

TT govt launches NCDs toll-free hotline

Port of Spain – In a move to combat the growing prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the Trinidad and Tobago's Ministry of Health has launched a toll-free hotline to provide medical advice and support to individuals living with these chronic conditions.

The hotline is available 24/7, and offers crucial assistance to those using home blood pressure or blood glucose monitors, addressing concerns about abnormal readings, and other NCD-related issues.

Staffed by trained nurses and doctors, the telemedicine call centre is designed to offer immediate medical guidance and linkage to care. This includes follow-up interventions such as referrals to local health centres, ambulance services, and emergency departments to ensure patients receive the appropriate care.

that nationals, regardless of their diverse origins, continue to demonstrate phenomenal harmony and respect for each other.

"As a people coming from many parts of the various continents, we continue to show a tolerance which must not be dismissed or understated," Rowley said.

He emphasised that this unique facet of Trinidad and Tobago has led some observers to describe the nation's inter-racial relationships as "uncommon".

Rowley also acknowledged the challenges facing Trinidad and Tobago, including rising levels of violent crime, family disputes, and gang culture among the youth.

Despite these issues, he praised the "Trinbagonian Spirit" – a collective attitude marked by creativity, optimism, discipline, and pride.

"Whatever our race or status, our unique, collective 'Trinbagonian Spirit' stands out, wherever, because we always expect to be enjoying and enhancing our daily lives," he said.

Highlighting the government's efforts to address these challenges, Rowley pointed to initiatives such as vocational and skills training, social services, and government subsidies for essential services.

He also noted the country's economic resilience, citing strong economic buffers, subsidising inflation, and signs of growth in the non-oil sector.

"Our Heritage and Stabilisation Fund and External Reserves are approaching (US) \$6 billion, giving us an eight-month import cover," Rowley stated, emphasising Trinidad and Tobago's economic strength despite global shocks and crises.

Rowley also called on citizens to continue seeing themselves as a resilient people, committed to developing the nation and navigating its challenges, in the words of Trinidad and Tobago's national anthem, with "boundless faith in our destiny".

This hotline is a key component of the Ministry's Hypertension and Diabetes Self-Management Initiative, which aims to tackle the increasing rates of chronic disease conditions in Trinidad and Tobago.

NCDs have long been a leading cause of death in the country, accounting for over 60 percent of all deaths since 2004, according to the Pan American Health Organisation.

A 2015 Hospital Utilisation Report highlighted that 25 percent of deaths were due to heart disease, 14 percent to diabetes, 13 percent to cancer, and ten percent to conditions affecting blood flow to the brain.

The situation remains dire, with the International Diabetes Foundation reporting a 14.8 percent prevalence of diabetes in adults in Trinidad and Tobago in 2021.

Debate begins over Columbus' statue

Port of Spain – The future of the Christopher Columbus statue in Port-of-Spain last week saw lively debate with nationals voicing opinions on the removal and relocation of historical monuments.

During the first public consultation hosted by the Cabinet-appointed committee tasked with reviewing the placement of statues, monuments, and signage across Trinidad and Tobago, many attendees called for the Columbus statue to be moved to a museum.

The consultation, held last week at the Government Campus Plaza, drew a sizable crowd eager to share their views on the issue.

Chaired by historian Dr Rita Pemberton, the committee also includes Dr Eastlyn McKenzie, Zaida Rajnauth, Lawrence Arjoon, Chief Ricardo Bharath-Hernandez, and Kobe Sandy.

Among those advocating for the statue's relocation was Roberta Bennett, a member of the Santa Rosa First Peoples community. Bennett supported removing the Columbus statue, but stressed that it should not be discarded.

"Whether Columbus was famous, reputable, or notorious, the sculpture is a work of art that must be preserved, and as such we are stating that it should be placed in a museum," she said.

Bennett also emphasised the importance of providing context: "There must be a description of who he was and the impact of his encounter on the New World, particularly what has happened here in Trinidad and Tobago."

Bennett raised questions about what would replace the statue, and the potential renaming of Columbus Square. She urged consideration of an Indigenous monument as a replacement while wondering, "How would the removal of the statue of Columbus improve the lives of the First Peoples?"

Shania James, another attendee, expressed strong opposition to the statue remaining in its current location, describing its presence as "disrespectful" to the descendants of those who



Columbus' statue in Port-of-Spain suffered under Columbus' actions.

"The First People suffered tremendously... by the persecution of Columbus and his subordinates in pursuit of greed and control. That is why having a statue that stands in his honour on our island is disgraceful, and blatantly disrespectful towards the First People," James stated.

She also agreed that while the statue should be removed from public view, it should be preserved in a museum as part of history.

The Cabinet-appointed committee will continue gathering public input before making recommendations.

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The Golden Years of Indian Cinema

Golden age nuggets in Durga Khote and Shobhana Samarth

By Vidur Dindayal

Two bright shining nuggets of Golden age movies Durga Khote and Shobana Samarth are the subject of this tribute. Durga Khote is a name I remember because of her unforgettable role as Kaikeyi in the epic movie about the *Ramayana*, *Bharat Milap* (1942). Playing Kaikeyi, she was at the centre of it all in the banishment of Rama to 14 years in the forest, just before he was to be crowned king of Ayodhya. In that unforgettable role, she managed it so that her son Bharat could become King.

Durga Khote starred in around 200 films. In 2000, *India Today* named her among '100 People Who Shaped India', noting: "Durga Khote marks the pioneering phase for women in Indian Cinema".

She was one of the first women from respectable families to enter the film industry. A postage stamp, bearing her face, was released by India Post to honour her on May 3, 2013.

Durga Khote was born as Vita Lad on January 14, 1905 to a Konkani Brahmin family from Goa. She spoke Konkani. Her father was Pandurang Shamrao Lad, and her mother Manjulabai.

As a young girl she grew up in a large Hindu joint family in Kandewadi. Educated at Cathedral High School and St Xavier's College where she studied for a BA, she was still a college-going teenager when she married Vishwanath Khote.

Vishwanath Khote died at a young age when Durga Khote was 26. Uncomfortable with financial dependence on family members, she sought work in film to support her children, which made her into a pioneer in the industry.

She came from a traditional family in a time when the film industry was looked down upon. Also, in that time most female characters were played by men. Her drive to act in films obviously met resistance, since then it was derided as a disreputable profession.

Durga Khote was active in films from 1931 to 1983. She starred in a minor role in a 1931 silent film *Farebi Jaal*, followed by *Maya Machindra* (1932).

Promoted to play the heroine Rani Taramati in the 1932 double version (Hindi and Marathi) *Ayodhyecha Raja*, the first ever Marathi talkie, she broke away from the "studio system" (which was an exclusive contract with a studio to work in its films on a monthly salary), and went on to become one of the first "freelance" artistes.

In 1936, she played Saudamini in *Amar Jyoti*. She played characters very much like her regal personality, and she commanded a screen presence even in front of legendary actors like Chandra Mohan, Sohrab Modi, and Prithviraj Kapoor.

In 1937, she produced and directed the film *Saathi*, an achievement that made her one of the first women to step into this role in Indian cinema.

In the 1940s she did award-winning performances in Aachary Atré's *Payachi Dasi* (Marathi), and *Charnon Ki Dasi* (Hindi) (1941), and Vijay Bhatt's classic *Bharat Milap* (1942).

In 1954, she played Lady Macbeth in V.V. Shirwadkar's Marathi adaptations of *Macbeth*. As Rajmukut, Durga Khote played a wide variety of roles over a long career.

She was the inspiration for several generations of Indian actresses, including veterans such as the late Shobhana Samarth, who frequently spoke of how she had been inspired by Durga Khote.

During her later years, she played several important character roles such as Jodhabai, the queen of Akbar torn between duty towards her husband and love towards her son in the highly acclaimed *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960). In 1963, she acted in Merchant Ivory's debut film *The Householder*.

She went on to play other character roles in later movies, such as the grandmother of the heroine in *Bobby* (1973); the hero's aunt in *Abhimaan* (1973); and the very memorable *Bidaai* (1974). Her final memorable role was in Subhash Ghai's *Karz* (1980).

By the 1980s she diversified into production of short films, ad films, and documentaries by setting up Fact Films, and later, Durga Khote Productions, which produced the Door Darshan TV series *Wagle Ki Duniya*.

Durga Khote's grandchildren were also involved in films – her grandson Ravi, a filmmaker; granddaughter Anjali Khote, an actress; and grandson Devan Khote, a producer. He is one of the co-founders of UTV, and produced films such as *Jodhaa Akbar* and *Life In A Metro*.

Durga Khote's brother-in-law Nandu Khote was a noted stage and silent movie actor. Two of Nandu's children also became actors: son Viju Khote (1941-2019) is best known for his role of Kalia in *Sholay* (1975).

Daughter, actress Shubha Khote, whose first film was *Seema* (1955), worked as a heroine in several films before moving to character roles. Still later, she moved to directing and producing Marathi films, and entered television in the 1990s.

Shubha's daughter, Bhavana Balsavar, is also an award-win-



Durga Khote



Shobhana Samarth

ning TV actress.

So it turned out that the acting profession, which was pioneered by Durga Khote, resonated into her family, and was also embraced by her late husband's family. Durga Khote died on September 22, 1991, aged 86 in Bombay.

She also had some distinguished relatives who had no connection to films. Her first cousin (her mother's sister's daughter) Sharda Mukherjee, wife of Subroto Mukherjee, was India's first Chief of the Air Staff, and served as governor of the States of Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.

Sharda's paternal uncle, Ranjit Sitaram Pandit, was the husband of Jawaharlal Nehru's sister Vijayalakshmi Pandit.

Durga Khote was recipient of many awards and honours. For the 1942 movie *Charnon Ki Dasi*, she won the Bengal Film Journalists' Association's Best Actress Award. The BFJA is the oldest association of film critics in India, founded in 1937 to serve the developing film journalism and film industry.

For her 1942 *Bharat Milap*, she won the BFJA Best Actress Award. In 1958, she was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. In 1968, she was awarded the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award by the government of India.

For the 1970 movie *Dhartichi Lekre*, she won the Maharashtra State Award. For the 1974 movie *Bidaai*, she won the Filmfare Award for Best Supporting Actress. In 1983, to cap it off, she was honoured with the most prestigious Indian Film Industry Award, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, which is the Lifetime recognition award for films from the government of India.

Shobhana Samarth was Sita in movie *Bharat Milap*. Until then we only had pictures of Rama and Sita. Those did not give details of how they would look in real life, but Shobana Samarth and Prem Adib did.

I am certain the makers of the *Bharat Milap* chose correctly, so when you saw Shobana Samarth and Prem Adib as Sita and Ram, it was almost believable that they were real life Sita and Ram. Shobana Samarth as Sita was, and will always be, the most divine, the most beautiful Sita for me, and I believe for most people who watched *Bharat Milap*.

After seeing *Bharat Milap*, British Guiana in the 1940s experienced a transformation in the way people saw Rama and Sita.

Enlargements of Ram and Sita were made and framed as photos from movie clips, and were sold everywhere. These were happily acquired as replacements of drawings/pictures of Rama and Sita, and were hung in living rooms or prayer rooms to bless the homes, or to be objects for prayer.

The photo of Shobana Samarth as Sita is indelibly engraved in my brain.

Shobana Samarth was an actress and film director/producer. She was born Sarojini Shilotri on November 17, 1916 in Bombay, which is present-day Mumbai, Maharashtra. She died on February 9, 2000 (aged 83), at Pune, Maharashtra.

An only child, her father Prabhakar Shilotri was a "pioneer banker", having started the Shilotri Bank in Bombay; her mother was Rattan Bai.

The Samarth family is of the Marathi Chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhu family. Their legacy in films began with Rattan Bai, who acted in a Marathi film. In 1936, she acted in the film *Frontiers of Freedom*, in Marathi *Swarajyachya Seemewar*.

Shobhana studied initially in Cathedral School, Bombay, for one year. In 1928, her father's business collapsed, and the family then shifted to Bangalore in 1931, where Shobhana attended Baldwin Girls High School, and then a convent school. To earn a living, her father taught students on a private basis, while her mother taught in a Marathi school. Later, Shobhana also taught privately to earn some money.

In December that year, her father died of a heart attack and mother Rattan Bai and 15-year-old Shobhana returned to Bombay to stay with the Jaywants. Actress Nalini Jaywant is Shobhana's cousin, Rattan Bai's sister's daughter. Nalini was only five then.

During this time, she met her future husband Kumarsen Samarth, who had just returned from Germany, and was keen on directing films.

Through him, Shobhana started work on her first film. Her uncle was opposed to her acting in films, and she and her mother moved out of his home. Nevertheless, his daughter Nalini Jaywant – Shobhana's cousin herself, became an actress.

Shobhana married Kumarsen Samarth, and together they had three daughters, Nutan, Tanuja, and Chatura, and a son, Jaideep. Chatura is an artist, and Jaideep is an advertising film producer. Chatura and Jaideep never acted in films. Eventually, the couple parted amicably. Shobhana became linked to actor Motilal.

Shobhana acted in around 30 films, and as a director for three films, her first was *Orphans of Society* (1935), also called *Nigah Nafarat*, or *Vilasi Ishwar*. The film was not a success, but Shobhana was critically acclaimed for her role.

Her next film was *Kokila* (1937) starring Motilal, Sabita Devi, and Sitara Devi. Her other film was *Do Diwane* (1936), co-starring Motilal, Yakub, and Aruna Devi.

By the end of 1937, Shobhana was acting in *Industrial India* (*Nirala Hindustan*), with Prem Adib and Wasti, then *Pati Patni* (1939), with co-stars Yakub, Sitara Devi and Wasti.

By 1939, she had made four films: *Kaun Kisi Ka* (1939); *Saubhagya* (1940); and *Apni Nagariya* (1940); then a film called *Ghar Javai* (1941).

The year 1942 saw her career-defining film *Bharat Milap*, directed by Vijay Bhatt and starring Durga Khote as Kaikeyi, Shobhana as Sita, and Prem Adib as Ram. Following this was *Ram Rajya* in 1943. She is best remembered for her portrayal of Sita. In 1997, she was honoured with the Filmfare Special Award for her contribution to the arts.

Shobhana became identified as Sita, leading to several other films. Shobhana as Sita and Prem Adib as Rama became extremely popular, and were accepted by the audiences and had them featuring as Rama and Sita on calendars. She was frequently cast as the leading lady with the top heroes like Ashok Kumar, Prithviraj Kapoor, Prem Adib, Shahu Modak, Trilok Kapoor, Mahipal, Jairaj, and others. Shobhana later produced and directed a pair of movies that launched the careers, as actresses, of her daughters, Nutan and Tanuja.

The Mukherjee-Samarth family is a Hindu Bengali-Marathi family that has been involved in the Hindi film industry since the 1930s. The family was connected to the Samarth family by Tanuja's marriage to Shomu Mukherjee in 1973. He is the son of Sashadhar Mukherjee.

Sashadhar was married to Ashok Kumar's sister Satirani Ganguly. Actor Joy Mukherjee is Shomu's brother. Rani Mukherjee is his cousin. Actress Kajol, Tanuja's daughter, is married to Actor Ajay Devgan. Nutan's son Mohnish Bahl is also an actor.

At her death, Shobhana had seven granddaughters, one grandson, three great-grand-daughters, and two great-grandsons.

Chakraborty moving on from horror of jail

Actor-model Rhea Chakraborty has shared her harrowing experience of spending time in jail, revealing the emotional toll it took on her and the life-altering lessons she learned. Speaking candidly on Karishma Mehta's podcast, Chakraborty described her time behind bars as a period marked by "deep depression and darkness".

However, she also declared it was one that taught her the raw realities of survival in a harsh and unforgiving environment.

Chakraborty was arrested in September 2020 by India's Narcotics Control Bureau in a drug-related case that surfaced during the investigation into the death of her late boyfriend, actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

Reflecting on her incarceration, she recalled how each day felt interminable, stretching into what seemed like an endless loop of time.

"Jail is actually a very different world because there's no society in jail. There is a weird sense of equality. Everyone is a UT number; they are not a person. You are a number when you are in undertrial prison," she said.

Chakraborty was pointing to, and emphasising, the dehumanising experience of being reduced to a number. That she had fallen to become a faceless inmate came in the wake of an ascending career where she debuted in 2012 in the Telugu film *Tuneega Tuneega*.

Then in 2013, she debuted in Bollywood with *Mere Dad Ki Maruti*, and in 2014 she appeared in *Sonali Cable*.

She appeared in YRF's *Bank Chor* in 2017, and made cameo appearances in *Half Girlfriend* and *Dobaara: See Your Evil*. In 2018 she appeared in *Jalebi*, and topped the list of *The Times of India's* 'Most Desirable Women' in 2020.

Then came Byculla jail, where her initial weeks of incarceration were particularly challenging as she grappled with the draconian reality of her changed situation, she revealed.

"My time in there was really difficult in the first two weeks to kind of adjust to this situation, because no one ever believes that they are going to jail. Once you are in there, it takes a long time to understand that this has happened," she shared.

Chakraborty also noted that an overwhelming sense of despair led her into a deep depression, which was a stark and notable contrast to her usually optimistic and positive outlook on life.

"I've always been a very bubbly, positive person, like delusionally optimistic," Chakraborty recalled.

However, it was in this bleak environment that she found a way to cope with her mental anguish. Chakraborty decided to channel her energy into helping other inmates, many of whom had lost hope in their lives.

As she stated, she began teaching inmates yoga, leading

dance classes, and even recited poems to children in the jail.

"I thought of giving them 'a bit of me', because some of them had no hope in their lives and had given up," she said, highlighting how these small acts of kindness helped her reclaim a sense of purpose and light amidst the darkness that had now enveloped her life.

Chakraborty's time in jail came at a particularly tumultuous period in her life following the death of Sushant Singh Rajput in June, 2020.

Rajput was found dead in his Bandra apartment, and soon after, Chakraborty was thrust into the centre of a media storm. Accusations of abetment to suicide and drug-related charges were leveled against her, and all of India looked on as her life unravelled.

"I definitely could never imagine that the whole country could have any opinion on me - forget good or bad - any at all!"

Chakraborty was recalling being stunned at the intense national scrutiny she faced during those challenging times that had suddenly impacted her life.

In the podcast, Chakraborty also spoke about the relentless trolling and vilification she endured following Rajput's death.

"They called me names like *chudail*, *kaala jaadu karne waali*, *naagin*, etc., but I really don't care. It used to upset me earlier," she confessed.

The negative attention and the relentless accusations took a toll on her mental health, leading her to embark on a "path of forgiveness" to heal from the anger and bitterness that had been deployed against her, and which she revealed had started to consume her.

"While I was angry for the longest time, I eventually decided to let go because fury had taken a toll on my health," she said.

The controversy surrounding Rajput's death led to multiple investigations by various agencies. Both Chakraborty and her brother Showik were questioned by the Enforcement Directorate on allegations of money laundering.

Then the Central Bureau of Investigation got involved, and the NCB arrested both siblings on charges of supplying marijuana to Rajput.

However, the Bombay High Court later dismissed the NCB's claims that Chakraborty had funded and supported Rajput's alleged drug habit.

Through it all, Chakraborty noted she has now emerged with a renewed perspective on life and survival. As she declared, her time in jail, though fraught with challenges, shaped her understanding of human resilience, and the importance of hope, even in the darkest of times.

"You have to survive each day, and each day feels like a year," she concluded, revealing her growing awareness and ongoing distillation of the profound impact the ordeal had on her acting career, and as she now rebuilds the pieces of her impacted life.



Rhea Chakraborty



Rhea with Sushant Singh Rajput

Navya Naveli Nanda makes the grade for MBA pursuit

Navya Naveli Nanda revealed last week that she is now enrolled in an MBA programme at the prestigious Indian Institute of Management-Ahmedabad. The daughter of Shweta Bachchan Nanda and industrialist Nikhil Nanda, she is also the granddaughter of Amitabh and Jaya Bachchan.

Sharing the news on her social media pages, Navya wrote, "Dreams do come true. The next 2 years... with the best people & faculty! Blended Post Graduate Programme (BPGP) Class of 2026."

In her *Instagram* post, she thanked her teacher for coaching her for the entrance exams. Sharing a photo of her cutting the celebratory cake at the coaching institute, Navya wrote, "Thank you to IMS MBA Preparation for coaching me for the entrance exams. This is Prasad sir, who played the biggest hand in coaching and preparing me to crack the CAT/ICT entrance exams. One of the best teachers I have ever had the honour of learning from."

Navya's MBA course was launched earlier this year as a blended programme that combines on-campus, in-person sessions and live interactive online sessions. The programme is meant for a seasoned cohort of participants with a minimum experience of three years. It is designed to allow students who



Navya Naveli Nanda

are also working professionals and entrepreneurs to balance their work life and educational pursuits.

Family and friends of Navya were effusive following the *Instagram* post, and shared best wishes on her new endeavour.

Mom Shweta wrote, "You make me so proud baby..." while Suhana Khan, Ananya Panday, and Shanaya Kapoor responded via a display of supportive emojis. Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar, actors Karishma Kapoor, and Sonali Bendre also extended congratulatory responses.

Meanwhile, Navya's admission to the IIM also raised social media's curiosity about her grades. Admission to IIM typically requires a range between 99-100 percentile.

One X user tagged an associate professor at IIM wondering, "Prof Promila Agarwal, Navya making to IIMA news on SM is going big. Did she really get those crazy 99.99 percentile?"

In response, the professor stated, "She got a solid CV. Btw, you don't necessarily need CAT. Irrespective, hats off to everyone for being courageous enough to sign up for rigorous program."

Agarwal then added, "PS: Just like other students, looking forward to her posts cribbing about hard life at IIMA." The response was accompanied with a laughing emoji.



Zeenat Aman

Aman speaks to relationships

Bollywood icon Zeenat Aman recently opened up about the difficulties she has faced in forming meaningful relationships throughout her life, attributing much of her struggle to the overwhelming impact of her public persona.

In yet another candid reflection shared on her *Instagram* account last week, the 72-year-old actress delved into the complexities of maintaining personal connections while living under the constant scrutiny of the public eye.

Aman, who is often celebrated as Hindi cinema's "original glam diva", has long been a subject of fascination for both fans and industry insiders. Her personal life, marked by high-profile relationships and a tumultuous marriage, has been as much in the spotlight as her professional achievements. However, in her recent introspection, Aman reveals the toll this relentless attention has taken on her ability to forge deep, meaningful bonds.

Reflecting on her experiences, Aman began by acknowledging the scarcity of such relationships in her life.

"I have not had too many. I didn't dwell on it when I was younger, but now I have been giving it some thought. There is a saying - it's lonely at the top. Well, it's lonely at the bottom too. I have experienced both," she wrote, highlighting the isolating nature of her journey.

The actress went on to discuss how her public image often overshadowed her true self, creating barriers to forming genuine connections.

"In my own private examination of my life, I have realised a crude truth. Meaningful relationships have been difficult to come by because my public persona has always overshadowed my true self. The idea that people have of me has been something of a prison, even while it has been a privilege," she explained.

This dichotomy of privilege and imprisonment underlines the complexity of her situation - while her fame brought admiration, it also led to superficial interactions and unfulfilled connections.

Aman candidly described the challenges she faced with both men and women, noting that societal expectations often tainted her relationships.

"With men, their intent was almost always obvious, which was flattering but ultimately shallow. And with women, the nature of society, especially back in those days, forced comparisons that led to envy in one too many cases," she observed.

It was a poignant interplay of the gender dynamics that further complicated her quest for meaningful relationships, she further affirmed.

For Aman, the essence of a meaningful relationship lies in reciprocity - a mutual exchange of support, honesty, and vulnerability.

"What is the measure of a meaningful relationship then? For me it is when there is reciprocity - in celebrating each other's successes, enduring the bad times together, being able to speak and receive home truths, and above all, reaching a point where your outward masks (and don't we all have them?) can be removed," she stated, emphasising the importance of authenticity and mutual respect.

Despite her challenges, Aman concluded on a note of gratitude for the meaningful relationships she has managed to cultivate, even if they are few in number.

"Sadly, I have had limited success in this arena. The silver lining is that it has made me cherish those meaningful relationships I do have all the more," she wrote.

At the same time, she expressed a heartfelt wish for her followers: "Perhaps I have bored you with this pontification, but it is followed by this one earnest wish - that each of you finds meaningful relationships, romantic or otherwise, to add brilliance to your lives."

Beyond her reflective posts, Aman continues to make her mark in the entertainment industry. She is set to appear in the upcoming *Netflix* web series *The Royals*, and will also feature in director Faraz Arif Ansari's film *Bun Tikki*, where she will share the screen with Shabana Azmi. The two legends last worked together in the 1982 film *Ashanti*. Abhay Deol also plays a significant role in the project, adding to the anticipation surrounding this reunion of veteran talent.

Simmons tells prolific Pooran to go after CPL run record

Trinbago Knight Riders head coach Phil Simmons last week threw down the gauntlet to star batsman Nicholas Pooran, urging him to break the record for the most runs in a single Caribbean Premier League season during the 2024 edition.

As the Caribbean media and online cricket websites reported, Simmons' challenge came on the heels of Pooran's scintillating performance in TKR's opening match, where he smashed 97 runs off just 43 balls, propelling his team to a dominant 44-run victory over St Kitts and Nevis Patriots at Warner Park on August 31.

Pooran's explosive innings was the centrepiece of TKR's imposing total of 250 for 4, the third-highest score in CPL history. The left-hander unleashed a barrage of boundaries, including nine sixes and seven fours, bringing up his half-century in a mere 21 balls with a towering six off South African spinner Tabraiz Shamsi.

This rapid-fire 50 was Pooran's fastest in the CPL, and pushed him past the 2,000-run milestone in the tournament.

TKR captain Kieron Pollard lauded Pooran's knock as "fantastic", praising his precision and power at the crease. Even opposing captain Andre Fletcher acknowledged that Pooran's innings was the game-changer, admitting, "He actually took the game away from us."

Though Pooran seemed destined to notch his third CPL century, his aggressive approach was halted by South African pacer



Nicholas Pooran

Anrich Nortje, who dismissed him in the 18th over, leaving him just three runs short of the milestone.

However, despite his falling short of the century, Pooran's

innings has already set the tone for what could be a record-breaking season.

Inspired by Pooran's early form, Simmons challenged the 28-year-old to surpass the CPL's single-season run record of 567, set by New Zealand's Colin Munro for TKR in 2018.

Pooran's best CPL season to date saw him amass 291 runs in 2023, but his recent form suggests he is well-positioned to eclipse Munro's record.

During a post-match team meeting, Simmons expressed confidence in Pooran's ability to achieve this feat.

"First, I think you've shown the level you're on right now, and my challenge to you is how far you can put this CPL run record for a season. The kind of form you're in, you shouldn't have any problem passing it, but it's how far you can take it," Simmons stated.

Pooran's sensational start to the season also saw him make history by becoming the batter with the most T20 sixes in a calendar year, surpassing Chris Gayle's record of 135 sixes. Pooran now leads the global standings with 139 T20 sixes, and with the CPL only just underway, his record-breaking spree could be far from over.

In addition to his individual brilliance, Pooran forged a crucial 122-run partnership with Keacy Carty, who remained unbeaten on 73. Carty, now in his second season with TKR, played a pivotal role in setting up the massive total, showcasing the depth and versatility of TKR's batting lineup.



Bhanuka Rajapaksa's unbeaten 68 was the cornerstone of a remarkable turnaround for the St Lucia Kings that took them to a thrilling victory over the St Kitts and Nevis Patriots after a disastrous CPL start. Partnering with Tim Seifert, Rajapaksa's innings included a 103-run stand that dismantled the Patriots' bowling attack to seal the win with 16 balls to spare, kicking off the Kings' CPL campaign on a high note.

Shanto hopes historic Pakistan sweep brings joy to impacted Bangladesh

Bangladesh skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto has said he hopes the historic clean sweep of Pakistan would help soothe the anguish being felt back home as the nation recovers from its recent environmental turmoil and political instability.

When the Najmul-led Test team flew to Pakistan for the two-Test series, Bangladesh was undergoing political uncertainty, along with extreme weather that saw the nation impacted by historical floods.

"I think this win will bring joy to the people of the country because, in past few days... say flood or the protest, people have gone through many difficulties," Najmul said following the six-wicket win in the second Test earlier this week.

"But the way we played the match, I think this will bring a bit of laughter on the people's faces. And all of us know that to what extent the general people of our country are crazy about cricket. Everyone supports us even if we lose matches. So we tried that how we can give something to the people of our country."

The series was only Bangladesh's third away from home,

following wins in West Indies in 2009, and Zimbabwe in 2021.

Najmul even went as far as describing the victory as "one of the best moments" for cricket in Bangladesh.



Najmul Hossain Shanto

"Very important [the series win]," he said. I think everyone struggled a lot in the last one and a half months. But we all know that cricket is a very emotional thing in our country. So, I hope they will somewhat smile, because we won the series, and won the matches. And we are very happy that our crowd has got some happiness in their faces," he said.

He added, "The emotion I felt [after clinching the series] is hard to put in words. Because this achievement, I personally feel, is one of the best moments for Bangladesh cricket. And when [Mushfiqur Rahman]... and Shakib [Al Hasan]... were batting, all of us from the dressing room were wanting that these two should finish the match. They have been playing for Bangladesh for so long, they have won many matches for us. But it's special to win a match like this, and all of us were wanting that, and Alhamdulillah everyone is really happy," he said.

Darren Bravo announces CPL retirement

Port-of-Spain – Celebrated Trinidadian cricketer and a cornerstone of Caribbean Premier League (CPL) cricket Darren Bravo has officially announced that the 2024 CPL season will be his final campaign.

The news, shared on social media just before Trinbago Knight Riders (TKR) kicked off their season, marks the end of an era for one of the CPL's most influential figures. News of his retirement was also covered by the sports media in the Caribbean and across the globe.

Bravo, known for his graceful left-handed batting and steely resolve, has spent the majority of his CPL career with TKR, where he became a fan favourite.

In an *Instagram* post, the 35-year-old Bravo expressed his gratitude and excitement for his final season, saying, "It's been a great journey. This season will be my last one, and I'm looking forward to playing my final professional tournament in front of my Caribbean people! TKR is the place where everything started for me, and it will end with my team."

Bravo's CPL career has been nothing short of illustrious. With 128 wickets in 103 matches, he is the league's all-time leading wicket-taker, a record that will stand as a testament to his skill and longevity in the game.

Beyond his prowess with the ball, Bravo has also contributed significantly with the bat, amassing 1,155 runs at an average of 21, with a strike rate of 129.62.

Bravo's impact on the CPL extends far beyond the numbers. His leadership was instrumental in TKR's success, leading the team to four championships, including back-to-back titles in 2017 and 2018.

His ability to rise to the occasion was perhaps best exemplified during the 2015 tournament, where he not only captained TKR to victory, but also earned the Player of the Tournament award, thanks to his extraordinary 28-wicket haul.



Darren Bravo

As Bravo prepares to take his final bow, TKR and the entire CPL community are gearing up for an emotional farewell, with TKR's statement on reflecting the admiration and respect he has garnered over the years.

As TKR declared, "The Sir Champion will be riding off into the sunset on the back of being the highest wicket-taker in the CPL ever, winning three (four) championships as a skipper, and five in total. After what has been an incredible career, Bravo will be having the last dance this season, and will be eyeing to deliver match-winning performances to take his side to their fifth CPL trophy."

Bravo's influence has also been felt off the field, where he has nurtured young talent, and served as a mentor to the next generation of cricketers.

His leadership style, characterised by a blend of experience and tactical acumen, has earned him accolades from coaches and players alike.

Simon Helmot, a former coach of TKR, once praised Bravo's growth as a leader.

"He wasn't just the captain, he was the ultimate leader. He's invested in our staff and players, in our ownership and the entire organisation. His game intelligence and ability to problem-solve in T20 cricket are second to none," Helmot said.

CPL CEO Pete Russell also paid tribute to Bravo's contributions, highlighting his role in making the tournament a global spectacle.

"We are so grateful that Darren has been a part of our tournament since its inception in 2013. His contribution to making the league what it is today is immeasurable. The CPL has become known around the world as the Biggest Party in Sport, and Darren's enthusiasm and amazing personality have done as much as anyone to bring that to life."

However, with Bravo's CPL career drawing to a close, his presence in the world of T20 cricket will continue, as he remains a highly sought-after player in various franchise leagues around the globe, including the upcoming ILT20 in the UAE, where he will reunite with fellow West Indies stars Kieron Pollard and Nicholas Pooran.



Deandra Dottin

Dottin picked for West Indies squad

Deandra Dottin, the dynamic Barbados all-rounder and captain of the Trinidad Knight Riders women's team, is set to make a powerful comeback to international cricket. She has been named in the 15-woman West Indies squad for the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled to take place from October 3 to October 20 in the United Arab Emirates.

The 33-year-old, who holds the record for the fastest century in women's T20 internationals, announced her return to the West Indies setup on July 27 after stepping away from the team in 2022 due to concerns about team culture and environment.

Her decision to return was driven by a deep-seated love for the game and a burning ambition to help the West Indies reclaim their former glory, she told the Caribbean media last month.

"Cricket is something I love, enjoy, and play with strong passion and determination," Dottin declared.

She added, "There's a World Cup coming up around the corner, and I think I can be a big asset back on the team. I can help the West Indies reach far into the World Cup, and hopefully win it as well."

The West Indies squad, announced during a Cricket West Indies press conference in Antigua on August 29, will be captained by the world's leading women's T20 all-rounder, Hayley Matthews.

The 26-year-old Barbadian, who was named ICC's T20 Women's Player of the Year for 2023, will lead a team that blends experience with exciting young talent.

Joining Matthews in the leadership ranks is experienced wicketkeeper/batter Shemaine Campbelle, who will serve as vice-captain, while former skipper Stafanie Taylor also makes her return to the squad. The team boasts a mix

WCPL a vital stepping stone: Matthews

Fresh off leading the Barbados Royals to their second consecutive Masy Women's Caribbean Premier League (WCPL) title, captain Hayley Matthews has said the tournament is a vital stepping stone in narrowing the gap between the West Indies and the world's best cricket teams.

Matthews, who also captains the West Indies women's team, showcased her exceptional talent throughout the WCPL, earning MVP honors after finishing as the tournament's top wicket-taker and second-highest run-scorer.

Her all-round brilliance, which included 11 wickets and 147 runs, was instrumental in the Royals' four-wicket victory over Trinidad Knight Riders (TKR) in the final at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Trinidad on August 29.

Reflecting on the success of the WCPL, Matthews emphasised its significance in preparing regional players for the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, scheduled for October in the United Arab Emirates.

"The WCPL is fantastic prep for us, especial-

of seasoned players, including seamers Aaliyah Alleyne and Shamilia Connell, as well as spinners Afy Fletcher and Karishma Ramharack.

The squad also features promising young talents like 19-year-old left-arm spinner Zaida James and 20-year-old off-spinner Ashmini Munisar. St Lucia's Nerissa Crafton, 26, is the sole uncapped player in the squad.

Head coach Shane Deitz expressed confidence in Crafton's abilities, and welcomed Dottin's return as a significant boost to the team's prospects.

"West Indies cricket will be happy to have Deandra back. Her record speaks for itself, and she brings a wealth of experience and versatility to the team," Deitz said.

He added, "She's an unbelievable fielder, a powerhouse hitter, and her presence on the field will be invaluable, especially for our younger players as we aim to compete at the highest level."

Deitz emphasised the importance of building an attacking brand of cricket, aiming to position the West Indies among the top teams in the women's game alongside the other cricket powerhouses.

"The key thing in the selection of our team is the variations and flexibility. The top three teams in women's cricket are Australia, England, and India, and they have been dominating international cricket for a while. It's a big challenge to try and compete with them," he said.

He added, "We want to work on what our strengths are, and those strengths are the all-round status of the players."

The West Indies won the T20 World Cup in 2016. The team is placed in Group B alongside Bangladesh, England, Scotland, and South Africa. They will kick off their campaign against South Africa on October 4 in Dubai, followed by matches against Scotland, Bangladesh, and England.

ly right before the World Cup," Matthews said.

She added, "It gives everyone a chance to get valuable match practice and experience playing under pressure, which is essential as we head into the global tournament."

The 2024 edition of the WCPL featured three teams – Barbados Royals, TKR, and Guyana Amazon Warriors – and Matthews believes that the competition played a crucial role in developing the women's game in the Caribbean.

She explained: "This tournament is really good for us in the Caribbean. It helps bridge the gap between our regional level and international cricket. Having this level of competition right before the World Cup is just what we need to be at our best on the global stage."

As the leader of the West Indies squad for the T20 World Cup, Matthews is keen on applying the lessons she learned from her WCPL experience to the international arena.

Her leadership skills have grown significantly, thanks in part to the challenges and triumphs she faced while captaining both the Royals and the West Indies.

Cricket Schedule

(Matches ALL TIMES LOCAL)

<p>Wednesday September 4, 2024 Australia tour of Scotland, 2024 Scot. vs Australia, 1st T20I, Grange Cricket Club, Edinburgh, 2:30 PM</p> <p>Friday September 6, 2024 Sri Lanka tour of England, 2024 England vs SL, 3rd Test, Day 1, Kennington Oval, London, 11:00 AM Australia tour of Scotland, 2024 Scot. vs Australia, 2nd T20I, Grange Cricket Club, Edinburgh, 2:30 PM</p> <p>Saturday September 7, 2024 Sri Lanka tour of England, 2024 England vs SL, 3rd Test, Day 2, Kennington Oval, London, 11:00 AM Australia tour of Scotland, 2024 Scot. vs Australia, 3rd T20I, Grange Cricket Club, Edinburgh, 2:30 PM</p> <p>Sunday September 8, 2024 Sri Lanka tour of England, 2024 England vs SL, 3rd Test, Day 3, Kennington Oval, London, 11:00 AM</p> <p>Monday September 9, 2024 Sri Lanka tour of England, 2024 England vs SL, 3rd Test, Day 4, Kennington Oval, London, 11:00 AM Afghanistan vs NZ in India, 2024 Afghanistan vs NZ, Only Test, Day 1 Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground, Greater Noida, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Tuesday September 10, 2024 Sri Lanka tour of England, 2024 England vs SL, 3rd Test, Day 5, Kennington Oval, London, 11:00 AM Afghanistan vs NZ in India, 2024 Afghanistan vs NZ, Only Test, Day 2, Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground, Greater Noida, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Wednesday September 11, 2024 Australia tour of England, 2024 England vs Australia, 1st T20I, The</p>	<p>Rose Bowl, Southampton, 6:30 PM Afghanistan vs NZ in India, 2024 Afghanistan vs NZ, Only Test, Day 3, Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground, Greater Noida, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Thursday September 12, 2024 Afghanistan vs NZ in India, 2024 Afghanistan vs NZ, Only Test, Day 4, Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground, Greater Noida, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Friday September 13, 2024 Australia tour of England, 2024 England vs Australia, 2nd T20I, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, 11:30 AM Afghanistan vs NZ in India, 2024 Afghanistan vs NZ, Only Test, Day 5, Greater Noida Sports Complex Ground, Greater Noida, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Sunday September 15, 2024 Australia tour of England, 2024 England vs Aus., 3rd T20I, Emirates Old Trafford, Manchester, 6:30 PM</p> <p>Wednesday September 18, 2024 Afghanistan v SA in UAE, 2024 Afghanistan vs SA, 1st ODI, Sharjah Cricket Stadium, Sharjah, 10:00 AM NZ tour of Sri Lanka, 2024 Sri Lanka vs NZ, 1st Test, Day 1, Galle Int. Stadium, Galle, 10:00 AM</p> <p>Thursday September 19, 2024 Bangladesh tour of India, 2024 India vs Bangladesh, 1st Test, Day 1, MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai, 9:30 AM</p> <p>Australia tour of England, 2024 England vs Australia, 1st ODI, Trent Bridge, Nottingham, 11:00 AM NZ tour of Sri Lanka, 2024 Sri Lanka vs NZ, 1st Test, Day 2, Galle International Stadium, Galle, 10:00 AM.</p>
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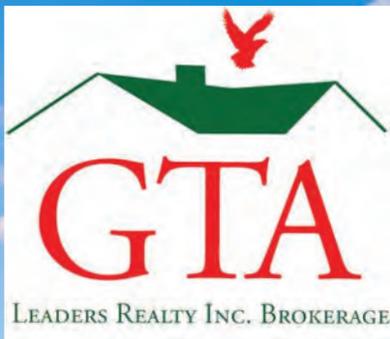
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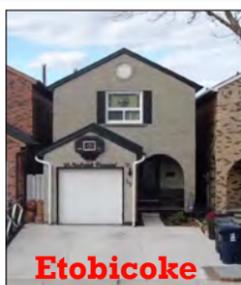
Richmond & Jarvis Downtown Toronto Condo For Sale \$598,990

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