VILLAGE VOICE
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'Top cop bowing to political pressure'

PG 06

…was ordered to recognise "illegitimate" election, Conway says

From homeless boy to tech genius

PG 30

- Carl Handy tells how he overcame poverty to now own a tech company

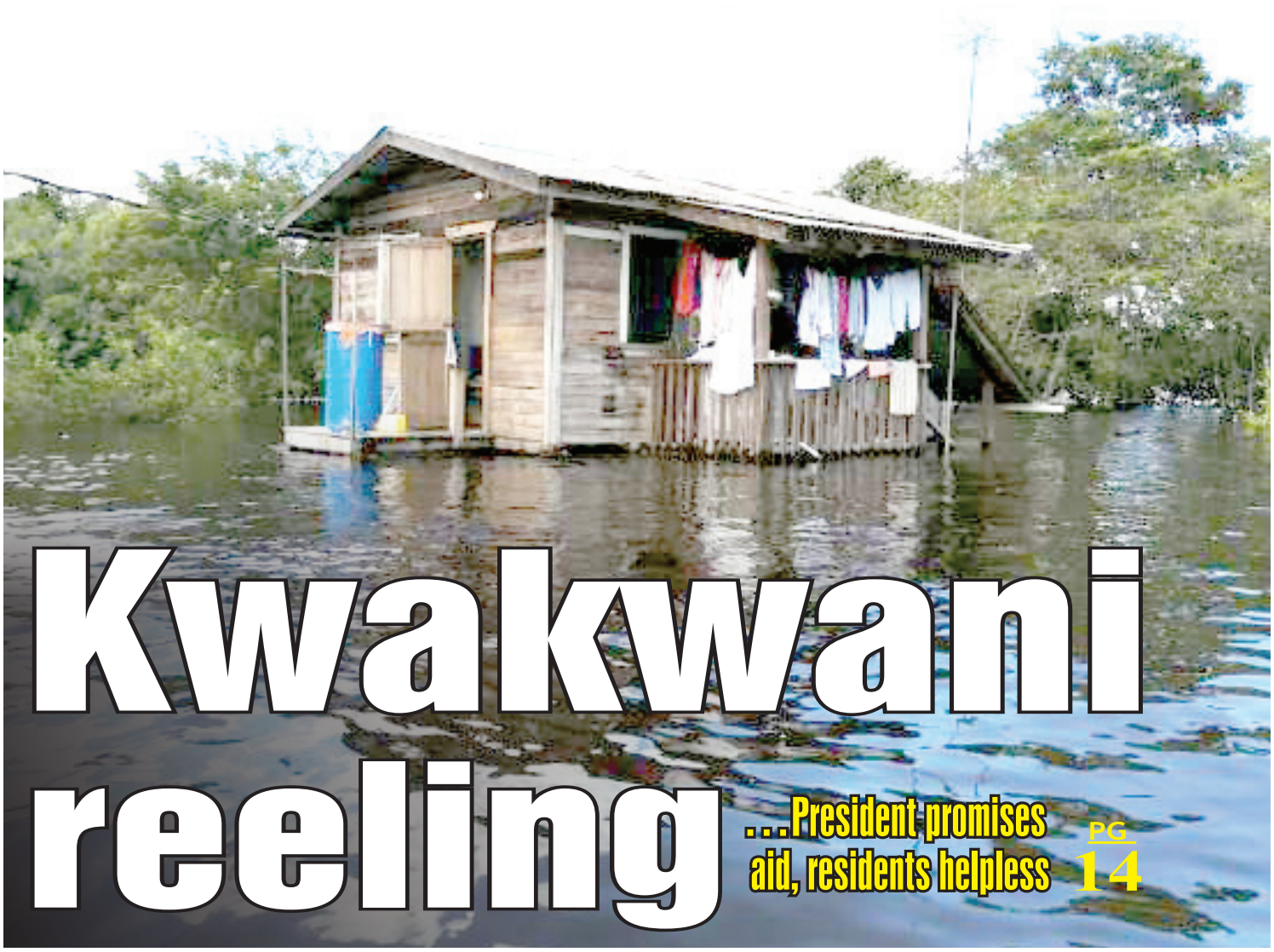


Covid killed 21 last week

* as May now holds year's highest death toll

PG 03

* 22 persons in ICU; deaths in 2021 32.9% higher than 2020



Kwakwani reeling

…President promises aid, residents helpless

PG 14

Residents of Kwakwani for days have been battling severe flooding due to heavy rainfall across Guyana

Double murder at Coomacka

Two men were killed at Three Friends Mines Coomacka in the Upper Demerara, Berbice Region early Saturday morning.

Dead are: Leonard Reec unemployed and Ronald aged 36 years of the same area.

Enquiries disclosed that during the month of April 2021 Ronald Wong was released from prison after he was convicted for attempted murder.

However, after being released he went to live with his uncle Leonard Reece who would usually cook for him on a daily basis.

SEE STORY ON PAGE 25

You cannot re-impose tax on soap during a viral pandemic

— Harmon

Opposition Leader, Joseph Harmon has deemed "rash" and confusing the announcement of the re-imposition of 40 percent tax on soap by the Guyana Revenue Authority (GRA) during a period when hand washing is necessary to protect against the coronavirus.

In a notice on May 25, 2021, the GRA announced that it would reinstate the Common External Tariff (CET) on various soaps including medicated soap; other soaps in the form of bars, cakes, moulded pieces or shapes; soaps for toilet use including medicated products; hand soap and other soaps as deemed necessary. "Soap imported under the above tariff headings will pay the CET rate of 40 percent with effect from June 1, 2021," the GRA announced. It was noted that the move is in keeping with its obligations under the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas and a decision of the 49th Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED).

The rates are applicable to imports from third countries into the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) as well as to goods traded among the Member States of the CARICOM which do not qualify for Community treatment.

In a subsequent statement, Harmon highlighted that it was the APNU+AFC Coalition that removed the CET on soaps after the pandemic hit last year. He said this was intended to increase the availability of soaps and reduce the prices to make them more affordable to ordinary people. However, with the re-imposition of 40 percent tax on soap, Harmon said that the health of Guyanese is now in a worse position. "We remain in the throes of a global pandemic and a central feature of the measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is for persons to regularly and thoroughly wash their hands with soap. The citizenry is more dependent on soap now than ever before...this re-imposition of 40 percent tax on soap by the installed PPP regime is unconscionable and will imperil the health of our people as many people will now not be able to afford to buy soap and others will have to economize and use soap less given the inevitable astronomical price increases which will follow," he said.



Opposition Leader, Joseph Harmon

Furthermore, the opposition Leader pointed out that with this increase, Guyanese also have to grapple with "skyrocketing" price increases for basic food items such as rice, sugar, flour, oil, milk, meats and vegetables. "This PPP does not care about the health and safety of Guyanese nor do they care about taking every action to help curb the spread of COVID-19. In fact, their actions and policies are helping to spread COVID which is already out of control," he added.

The Opposition Leader, on behalf of his political party, has therefore called for an explanation for the decision and for the immediate suspension of the 40 percent tax which it deemed unnecessary and inhumane at such a time.





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Our writers



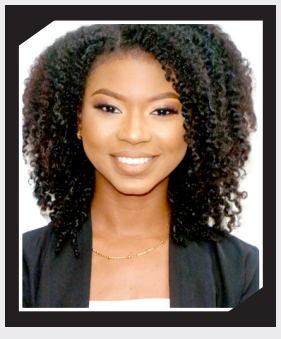
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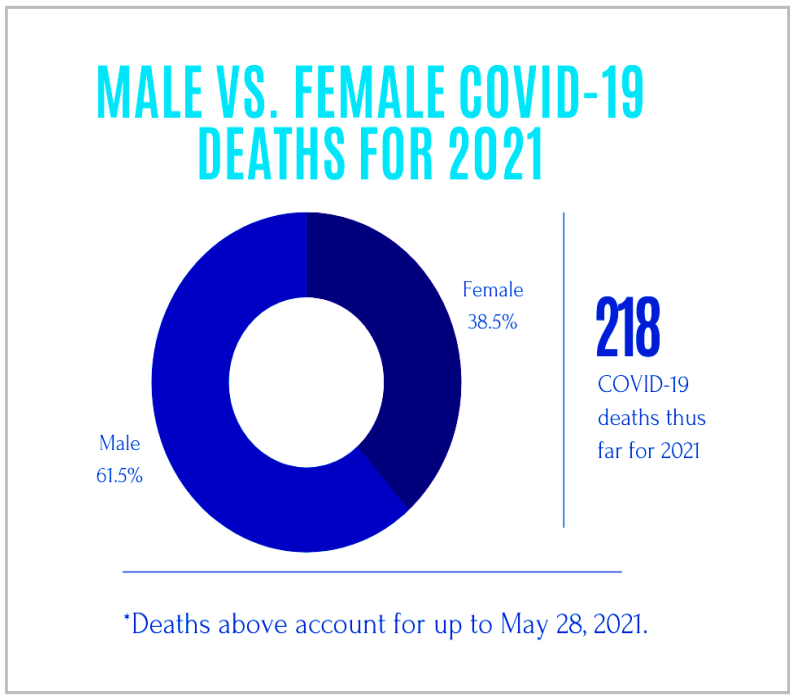


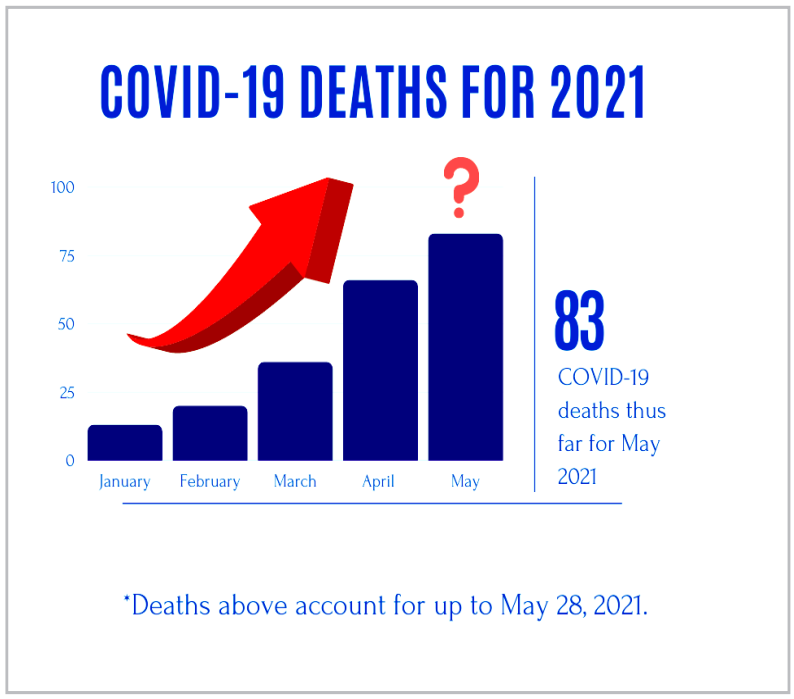
Farah Bates
Berbice Correspondent

Covid killed 21 last week

…as May now holds year's highest death toll

...22 persons in ICU; deaths in 2021 32.9% higher than 2020





By Lisa Hamilton

Guyana recorded 21 COVID-19 deaths between Sunday, May 23 and Friday, May 28, pushing the total number of deaths for the month thus far to a whopping 83 -- the highest number of deaths experienced in one month for the country.

Based on information provided by the Ministry of Health, the highest number of deaths within the month took place on May 24, which recorded 8 deaths. Dates with the second-highest number of deaths within the month are May 2 and 6 with five deaths each.

Despite Guyana's robust vaccination campaign, COVID-19 deaths have been sharply increasing each month since the start of the year. For the year thus far, the figures are as follows: January - 13; February - 20; March - 36; April - 66; and May - 83. From January to February, there was a 53.9 percent increase in deaths; from February to March there was an 80 percent increase in deaths; from March to April there was an 83.3 percent increase in deaths, and from April to May there was a 25.8 percent increase in deaths.

"COVID-19 is real and it has touched us in a really devastating way," Head of Medical Services and Cardiology at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC), Dr. Mahendra Carpen said in his recent update to the public. "This is frightening, this is devastating and we continue to have large numbers of persons testing positive. This is something that concerns us all, this is something that is all of our business. We have to continue to take measures and put systems in place so that we minimise exposure."

Overall, comparing 2020, which recorded 164 deaths, to 2021, which has recorded 218 deaths thus far, there has been an increase in deaths by 32.9 percent. This is even as there were 98 new cases last reported with 22 persons in the COVID-19 ICU. As of May 28, a total of 49 males died from the virus while 34 females died. The youngest person to die for the month was 17 years old while the oldest to die thus far was 87 years old.

Region Four saw the highest number of deaths at 37. This is followed by 13 deaths in Region Three; 10 deaths in Region Six; 6 deaths in Regions Five and Ten; 5 deaths in Regions Seven; 4 deaths in Region Nine; and two deaths in Region One. There were no deaths recorded thus far for the month in Regions Two and Eight.

As of May 27, 2021, Minister of Health, Dr. Frank Anthony reported that 191,151 people have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine which represents some 39.3 percent of the adult population. Meanwhile, 12.9 percent or 62,610 of the population have received the second dose. He urged more Guyanese to get vaccinated to improve their chances against the virus should they become infected. "Vaccination prevents deaths. Vaccination is a way of reducing the burden of disease and also preventing deaths...the more people that get vaccinated then the faster we can prevent the deaths that are currently occurring," Dr. Anthony said.

COVID-19 KILLING MORE MALES THAN FEMALES

Meanwhile, males in Guyana continue to record a higher number of deaths to COVID-19 than females. Based on information provided by the Ministry of Health on all COVID-19 deaths for 2021, 84 females have died while 134 males died. This represents a percentage of 38.5 females to 61.5 males, a pattern that has continued similar to figures in 2020.

In January, while two females died, 11 males died. In February, while four females died, 16 males died. The same continued for March with 17 female deaths and 19 male deaths; and April with 27 female deaths and 39 male deaths. For the month of May, while 34 females died as a result of the virus, 49 males died.

According to research conducted by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in the United States, male COVID-19 patients are more likely to be hospitalized and have higher all-cause mortality than female counterparts. Males also recorded a higher prevalence of diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart disease, obstructive pulmonary disease, nicotine dependence, and heart failure.

Added to this, the study showed that, compared with women, men tend to engage in more high-risk behaviours that generate the potential for contracting COVID-19. However, the sex gap in COVID-19 associated mortality is not easily explained by any single biological or social factor.

"In summary, a range of biological, psychological, and behavioural factors can explain why men have higher rates of COVID-19–associated morbidity and mortality than women. Although it is critical to identify the factors associated with increased risk for men of COVID-19 mortality, it is equally important to determine how to reduce the risk of men dying of COVID-19. The factors that exacerbate men's risk also are intertwined with race, ethnicity, geography, and other proxies," the research concluded.

Head of Medical Services and Cardiology at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC), Dr. Mahendra Carpen has stated that, for Guyana, it is important that as many persons as possible are vaccinated as it is the best chance at a return to some form of normalcy. Of the two ways to develop immunity -- to get the disease and recover or to get vaccinated -- he said that vaccination is the safer option.

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Editorial

The Unemployment Crisis

The recent release of unemployment data, based on the Guyana Labour Force Survey (GLFS), is both stark and troubling. Even though there exists doubt about the credibility of the statistics there is no sugar coating that the situation is grim. According to the Report, 15.6 percent of the population is unemployed, which represented an increase of three percent when compared to last year.

The truth of the matter is, even though the GLFS accounted for its data by saying, "Unemployed persons are not currently employed, but are available to work within a short time span, and are actively looking for work" the situation is likely worse. With only 51 percent of the unemployed participating in the survey had more participated the numbers would have been grimer. Some Guyanese have fallen out of the unemployed category not because they are not interested in work but because they feel the system has been stacked against them. The ordinary man in the street could attest to that.

There are pockets of people at the road corners and elsewhere either in a state of hopelessness or looking to 'catch their hands' for the day. Citizens need not be fooled. These persons are all illiterate or without work experience, certification, skills, and talent and many have applied for work consistent with their knowledge and competencies but have been turned down. In response to the paucity of employment opportunities some have created their own form of subsistence living, are relying on remittances, or have migrated and this include those with tertiary education. Every year Guyana produces thousands of graduates from the University of Guyana, but according to the World Bank, Guyana has the highest rate of tertiary-educated nationals leaving.

The breakdown in the Survey shows, as per demographics, how stark are the details. 51.3 percent of men are unemployed and 48.7 percent of women. This means that men are unable to provide for the family and women, particularly in the instance of female-headed households, are finding it hard to put meals on the tables for their children much less maintaining a roof over their heads, paying utility bills and transportation to get from one point to another. This is a situation of poverty that will lead to hopelessness, including mental challenges and adverse impact on health and longevity.

The youth unemployment rate, according to the GLFS, is recorded as 30.2 percent. When the young make up a significant percent in society this is a state of hopelessness. Society is quick to castigate the young if they are perceived to be engaging in non-productive activities. This statistic alone raises the question whether 'idle' activities are the result of this phenomenon. A third of young people do not have a job. Many of them would have graduated from at least high schools. It is not to Guyana's advantage to create any situation where the young feel that even after graduating from high school, university, college, trade school, etc., that there is no place for them in the workforce. This is dis-incentivizing the importance of an education and the rewards that should follow hard work and sacrifices.

The unemployment statistics is also a situation that would allow for anti-social behaviours such as crimes, family/neighbourhood conflicts, etc. Business will also suffer. If people are not earning, they cannot spend, and if businesses cannot sell, they cannot exist or some will seek to exist by not paying their taxes, which is a legal offence, and engaging in other unlawful activities. Guyana is in a no-win zone as per the statistics released by the GLFS, even at its most conservative. There is an unemployment crisis and government intervention is needed to pull Guyana out of this abyss.

Letters

The President should get down to working for the good of Guyana

Dear Editor,

I earned the displeasure of many of my colleagues and friends when after Irfaan Ali was sworn in as President and delivered his initial address with all the ingredients of nationalism, I said let us support him and give him an opportunity to make true his words.

Later President Ali spoke of One Guyana.

The inference being one of working together in the interest of Guyana with unity being the main instrument. Unity and the truth being cardinal.

As such, it was sad to read this latest assault dated May 25, 2021 titled "Central Government remains committed to improving conditions in Georgetown."

After reading this, I observed as follows – first, the old adage that half-truth is dangerous came to mind and second, that there must be something that is beyond my understanding that the Head of State and not his Minister of Local Government should find the time to deal with what is essentially a local government matter.

In his Statement, he refers to the years 2004, in the last audited financial statement, a disclaimer of opinion was issued by the Auditor General – a disclaimer is where the information submitted cannot stand up to scrutiny; in 2005, again a disclaimer opinion was issued; 2006 to 2011, no financial statements were submitted; 2012 to 2015 financial statement not have allowed auditors to express an opinion.

I was Mayor at that time and the tone of the letter in a sense impugn my character and competence. Violations referred to in the President's statement, are serious matters of public concern. However, as presently constituted, the persona of the Mayor and Councillors could only deal with matters of policy

It is the Town Clerk and the senior officers who must act.

In all of these matters and others, the Mayor and Council request, from time to time that the Town Clerk as Head of the Administration ensures that the many things referred to in the President's Statement are complied with.

In every organization, the Head, if he or she is to be held responsible, must have the right to hire and fire.

Here lies the truth about City Hall and the dilemma faced for more than two decades.

After Local Government Elections were held in 1994, in Georgetown the GGG prevailed. Since then for several years, there was no functioning Local Government Commission and what we therefore witnessed was that the PPP Minister of Local Government carried out those functions and in fact, exercised direct control of the senior officers.

As Mayor, on several occasions I complained to all the Ministers of Local Government, Harripersaud Nokta, Clinton Collymore and Norman Whittaker.

Our pleadings fell on deaf ears.

The worst was of the case before 2015, where the Minister ignored the recommendations of the Mayor and Council's nominee to be Town Clerk.

Instead, they appointed a lady with no administrative experience, did not have the qualifications.

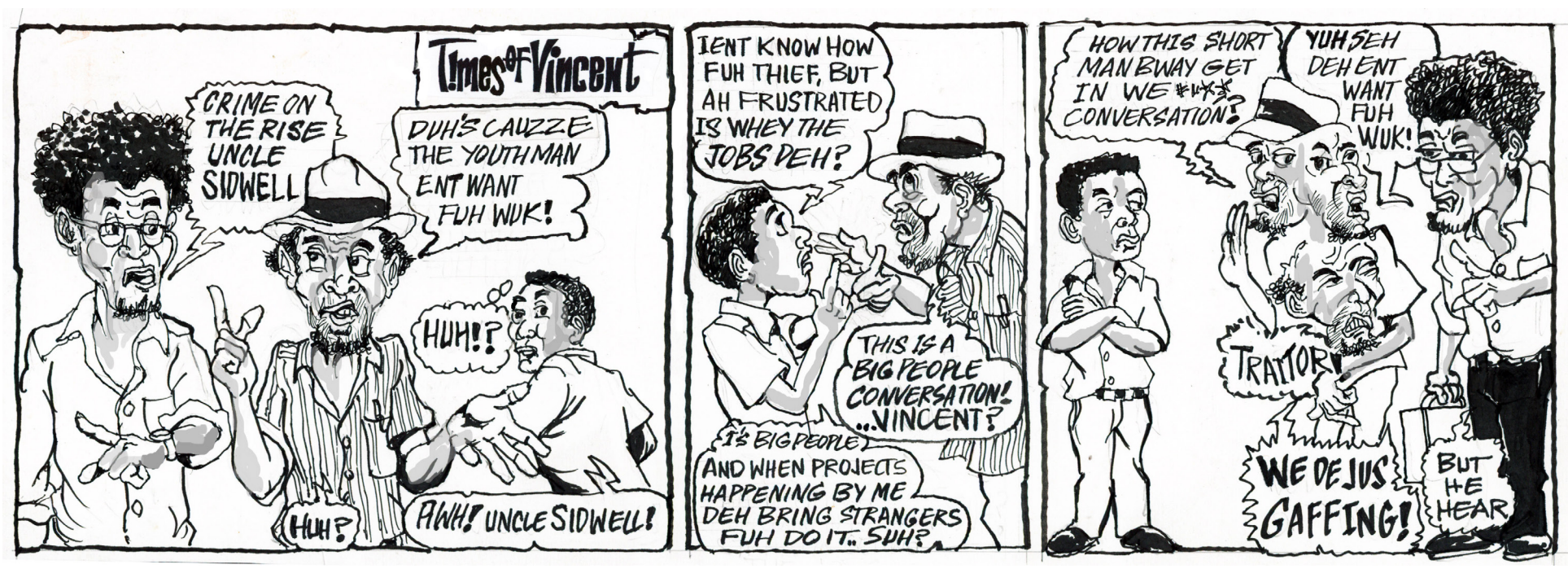
Once in place she defied the decisions and wishes of the Mayor and Council.

The Council drew the Town Clerk's attention to the many deficiencies in her administration.

Such administrative matters as referred to in the President's statement are the responsibility of the Town Clerk who is the Chief Executive Officer

After listening to the rumbustious reply and disdain shown for the duly elected Mayor and Councillors, a Motion of 'No Confidence' in her was passed.

TURN TO PAGE 5





Cometh the hour, cometh the man'

Mr. Aubrey Norton would have us believe that in this hour he is the man the PNC and Guyana need, and in an exclusive interview with this paper last week he gave some of his reasons for believing so and his plans for the future. It would have been helpful if he had even briefly outlined a vision of his parties place in the future management of Guyana to prevent a surfeit of second guessing.

This would become particularly important for by way of education and leadership guidance Mr. Norton hopes to develop self-motivated cadres of activists with the capacity to act independently. He will find this extremely difficult to achieve without at some point providing a holistic vision.

This type of error is not unusual. Recently, the government announced that it will draft elections laws and circulate them for comment before taking them to parliament. I suspect that in this process one will be left to use one's interpretation of what the government is attempting to achieve; is it worth supporting, are there better ways of achieving the same goals, etc.

In an important matter such as electoral reform, a more sensible way forward would have been to provide some discussion paper, white or preferably green, outlining the government's policy on the matter, before any drafting was done. In passing, the government approach also suggests that it may perceive its being in a position to proceed with legislation without consensus!

That said, the PNC has never won a free and fair elections in Guyana alone and my first assumption is that Mr. Norton knows and accepts this and believes that in collaboration with others his party could be the driving force in wining free and transparent elections. He did say that he intends to work to strengthen and broaden the partnership between the coalition parties by putting in place proper mechanisms for consultation, discussion, decision making and implementation. Here again, a vision would have helped for there are numerous difficulties, not least being the question of the possible nature of political participation in the present national context and how he envisages the problem of cooperation today. How does he view the existing constituencies and how are they likely to respond electorally? Without this it is purely speculative to assess the possible success of his scheme as he visualizes it. All one can possibly say with a reasonable degree of certainty is that strengthening, broadening and consulting are worthwhile ends in the present era and context.

There can be no doubt that Norton has the institutional and academic knowledge, political experience, skills, party association and reach, and that these make him an exceptional candidate for the leadership of the PNC. That he understands some of the burning issues within his party is demonstrated by his making a specific point of reaching out to the popular Region 10 duo of Vanessa Kissoon and Sharma Solomon. Further, at least in one important dimension, he has fathomed the mindsets of the party leadership that historically has called upon him when mass interventions are necessary and the vast majority of the PNC core constituency with the statement, 'When you are dealing with the People's Progressive Party, it can't be a church affair; you will have to protest because they understand nothing else outside of protest. While you have to do your parliamentary work, you have to also be able to stand up to the excesses of the People's Progressive Party. I have had a good track record standing up to them, and people know I would have stood up to them.' If the government's view of electoral reform is as I suspect, Norton and his party might have to respond sooner than he thinks!

I am not convinced that the behaviour of the PNC when it took office in 2015 – making dubious charges over PPP/C's land deals, shackling former ministers, wasting resources over some old law books, dismissing 7,000 sugar workers at Christmas time, etc – were less excessive than what is taking place today but in Guyana political allegiances are largely built upon negative political perceptions. In last week's Village Voice, the Guyana Human Rights Association asked, 'When will we start doing politics in Guyana?' My answer is: when we are able to contain such perceptions and create a substantial political context.

If the PNC's conduct from about 1997 produced Bharrat Jagdeo, the Norton leadership challenge is being bolstered by the post 2020 PPP's behaviour. Cometh the hour, cometh the man!

The President should get down to working for the ...

FROM PAGE 4

I can fill volumes to show that, at least from 1994, it was the Minister of Local Government who pulled the strings and therefore I argue that successive Ministers of Local Government never allowed the Mayor and Council to exercise authority and really supervise the Town Clerk and Senior Officers who ought to carry out their administrative tasks in a professional manner.

At one time, President Bharat Jagdeo, visited City Hall and spoke with Councillors at a Meeting I arranged.

He assured us of the Government's co-operation to improve conditions of the City.

We were joyful and hopeful, but it appeared that his then Minister, mistook co-operation to mean confrontation and control.

If Government is serious about the concept of Local Government, as enshrined in our Constitution, they would take the knee off the neck of the Mayor and Councillors of Georgetown and instead of this latest propaganda blitz, sit down and work with the Mayor and Councillors for the betterment of the City, which is crying out for help.

It will be otiose for me to chronicle the many efforts and initiatives, which were frustrated by the powers that be.

The Lottery is history, two, the establishment of a Warden Corp, where persons were identified in each of the wards of Georgetown, were trained and were expected to be the link between the citizens and those Municipal Officers tasked to do their work.

This initiative was frustrated.

Three, we pleaded for a Municipal Court and next, an opportunity to interview and determine who should be appointed to the senior and sensitive positions in the Municipality.

When I came to the Council, I was popularly called 'Action Green.' The rest is no secret.

The President said in his Statement "that we want a partnership for the development of the city, but we cannot allow the City Council to continue to blatantly disregard what is out there in terms of its responsibility and in terms of its fiduciary responsibility. And we will not allow the Central Government to be used as a political football. Notwithstanding all of this, we are moving forward with a plan and programme to improve the welfare, well-being, living conditions, and standard of the people of the city and those who use the city and we are sparing no resources in achieving this."

Fine words, the old people say " wha mouth nah load."

The perception from his present Statement is not concern for "Partnership," but a Path of "Paternalism."

My advice is that the President should avoid this assault on the Mayor and Councillors and get together with the Opposition, Civil Society, the Religious Community and work towards developing a sense of nationalism and patriotism, where we all will learn to serve Guyana and vindicate the sufferings of our noble ancestors.

Regards
Hamilton Green



'Top cop bowing to political pressure'

…was ordered to recognise "illegitimate" election, ConwayConway says

By Svetlana Marshall

Police Service Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ret'd), Clinton Conway said continued political interference in the Guyana Police Force would only result in its destruction.

In an interview with Village Voice Newspaper, Conway, who served the Guyana Police Force with distinction for 39 years, said while the Government, through the Home Affairs Ministry, is responsible for development of policies, it is the Commissioner of Police, who is responsible for operations.

"The Government or the Ministry of Home Affairs is responsible for policies; the Commissioner is [responsible for] operations, it is written in Law. [But] now you find policies overriding operations; politicians getting involved in terms of the operations of the police but it shouldn't be so," the Police Service Commissioner said.

He said while the Guyana Police Force is performing "relatively well," the involvement of politics in its operation is of major concern.

"There are people who are working against [Nigel] Hoppie – the Commissioner of Police (ag) – and when they want certain things done and Hoppie says no, they run to the politicians, and the politicians would direct Hoppie to do the biddings for those people," the

retired Assistant Police Commissioner explained.

He opined that because Hoppie wants to be confirmed as the Commissioner of Police he would "not rock the boat."

According to Conway, it was political interference that led the Commission of Police (ag) to backpedal on his initial position, and recognize an "illegitimate" election of the Guyana Police Association.

On May 11, 2021, two separate elections were held for key offices within Guyana Police Association resulting in both Inspector Prim Narine and Inspector Rosanne Forde, being elected chairman.

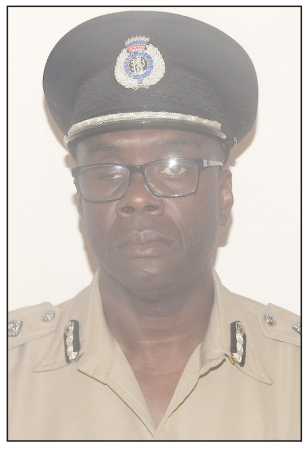
The Commissioner of Police (ag) had nullified both



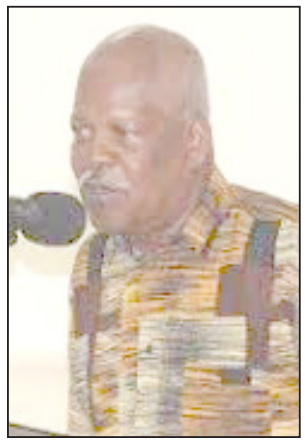
Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police Calvin Brutus



Head of the Special Organized Crime Unit (SOCU) Fazil Karimbaksh



Commissioner of Police (ag), Nigel Hoppie



Police Service Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ret'd), Clinton Conway

elections, however, in a letter dated May 12, 2021 addressed to Forde, the current chairman, he said based on a review of the Police Act, Standing Orders, and legal advised received, the first election is now deemed valid.

"In my capacity as Commissioner of Police, I am now directing that the first elections held at 10:00h on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 be recognized as the valid and binding elections of office bearers to the Guyana Police Association and that the persons duly elected at those elections be recognized as the official holders of the offices to which they have been elected," Commissioner Hoppie said in the letter.

Commissioner Hoppie's decision has now resulted in Inspector Narine being identified as chairman-elect of the Police Association. However, Conway said the decision taken by the acting Police Commissioner was not based on his own volition.

"After he vitiated both elections, he was called to two government ministries, and pulled over the coals, and then he issued a statement and said the first one is legal and the other one is illegal. He went to Home Affairs, and he had to go to Legal Affairs," the Police Service Commissioner told this publication.

The decision to recognize Inspector Narine as the Chairman-elect has resulted in major objection and condemnation from the Caribbean Federation of Police Welfare Associations (CFPWA). CFPWA has accused the Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police, Senior Superintendent Calvin Brutus of usurping the responsibility of the legitimate Chairman when he called an election without the knowledge of the sitting Chairman Inspector Forde.

"We are also concerned that the Acting Commissioner of Police Nigel Hoppie DSM on May 11th,2021 declared both elections null and void then back paddled and accepted the results of an illegitimate election. The Federation is seriously concerned that a Commissioner of Police who must have some appreciation for the rule of law would acquiesce at a retrenchment of a legitimately elected body mandated to serve its three-year tenure. This is not our finest hour as long as this miscarriage of justice is accepted," the Caribbean Police Federation had said in a statement.

He said the recognition of "the illegitimate" Guyana Police Association election is part of a scheme to dismantle the current Police Service Commission, and replace it with a Commission would heed to the political wishes of a selective few.

Earlier this month, Conway along with the current Chairman of the Police Service Commission, Assistant Commissioner of Police (Ret'd) Paul Slowe along with seven others were charged with conspiracy to defraud the Guyana Police Force of approximately $10M.

It is alleged that the two retired Assistant Police Commissioners along with Claude Whittaker; former Senior Superintendent George Fraser and former Senior Superintendent, Mark Gilbert were paid $10M to facilitate a review of the Guyana Police Force's Standing Orders, though the Orders were reviewed by the Strategic Planning Unit of the Guyana Police Force between July 2018 and March 2019.

On May 19, 2021, Prime Minister Mark Phillips, in a letter, gave Conway and Slowe up until May 31, 2021 to show cause why they should not be removed from the Police Service Commissioner.

But Conway told Village Voice News that the charge is not only trumped up but is intended to remove he and Slowe from the Police Service Commission.

"We didn't engage in any agreement, the [then] Commissioner decided that the Force will pay us a stipend but not $10M," Conway said while he refuted the allegation. For the record, he said none of the members of the five-member team received $1M or more.

He is convinced that the sole intention of the charge is to discredit them so as to facilitate him and Slowe's removal from the Police Service Commission.

Explaining the nexus between the Police Service Commission and the Guyana Police Association, Conway pointed out that the police association is among organisations that identifies nominees to sit on the Police Service Commission.

Conway said at the opportune time, he will take legal actions against the State and the Guyana Police Force for defaming his character. "Even if I have to go to the CCJ, I will," he told this newspaper.

In a separate interview with Travis Chase, a journalist attached to on HGP Nightly News, Conway pointed out too that the charge was instituted by the Special Organized Crime Unit (SOCU) – an organization which is headed by Fazil Karimbaksh, who was sanctioned by the Police Service Commission for sexual misconduct within the Force.

"We were investigating an allegation against him, where three female police recruits alleged sexual harassment," Conway disclosed. He noted that Assistant Commissioner Simon McBean, based on an investigation conducted, recommended charges be laid against Karimbaksh under the Police Discipline Act.

Conway said the Police Service Commission concurred, however, Karimbaksh challenged the case in court but lost. As such, the Commission is proceeding with the charge against Karimbaksh.

He said there were other allegations of sexual harassment made against the SOCU Head.

"There was an investigation conducted by a Deputy Commissioner against Karimbaksh, where 11 female trainees made allegations of sexual harassment against Karimbaksh. I saw the files, I read the files, the investigation was damning but apparently that was swept under the carpet," Conway contended.

He noted that the Police Service Commission also took disciplinary action against Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police Calvin Brutus, however, he too, took the Commission to Court and the decision is pending.

"The position is put trumped up charges against me and Paul Slowe and when you put trumped up charges against me and Paul Slowe, they will fight to remove us from the Police Service Commission. So there will be no Service Commission and as a result, we can't do anything; our term finishes in August, and then they will form a new Service Commission, which will be supportive of them, and they promote, who they want to promote...a lot of incompetence," he posited.

However, he made it clear that once the Commission wins the case, in which Brutus brought, it will take disciplinary actions against him, Karimbaksh and all others would have acted contrary to the Force's Standing Orders. Further, he told Village Voice Newspaper, that any officer, who is under investigation or is being disciplined, will not be recommended for promotion.

Conway iterated that continued political interference in the Guyana Police Force would only erode the public's conference in the Guyana Police Force. For emphasis, he said there should be no political interference or influence in the operations of the Force. Such, he warned will only destroy the Guyana Police Force.

"I feel that politicians should stick to the policies, and let the police do the operational work," he emphasized.

He said there are good men and women in the force, but their work is being affected by the politics. "There are a lot of disgruntled police officers but they are afraid to speak out of the fear of being victimized; they have some good police, some excellent police, some god fearing police, but they are afraid," Conway said.



Tribalism is like a rising tide: It only recoils to come back with greater force

Why the two major parties are never dead and will always remain permanent forces

Above, I have paraphrased Alexis de Tocqueville's views on democracy. It was necessary to capture the essence of what I wish to discuss. Tribalism, as you would have observed. In the best sense of the word, it is that dogged and fatalistic commitment to one's ethnic allegiances. It is that inclination that is never up for negotiation. It is the crystalized commitment. Above all, it is our perennial problem. But today, here and now, we are not going to have another usual discussion on our intractable ethnic problem. We are not going to do the good old ad nauseam crying to the desert. We are not going to chase the seawall wind and belabor what is well known. This column will not play the broken record yet again.

Instead, I am writing to show you that despite times of serious internal turmoil or disaffection among their bases, the two major parties remain as strong as ever. Reason being, tribalism ebbs and flows. It might take an ephemeral national mood swing and proceed on facts and logic but invariably it will recoil and come back with a stronger force. As a consequence, as long as the two major parties are conduits for tribal inclinations, you can never count them out.

THE 1992 PNC RIFT

The year was 1994. The place was old Georgetown. The specific location was Robb Street. Outside the PPP headquarters, a few members of the Central Executive Committee gathered for their customary informal intellectual gaff. They were beaming. Wry smiles and glee decorated their relaxed faces and a sense of general happiness permeated the conspiratorial air. In reference to the imminent 1994 local government elections, one member of the group remarked: 'this is it, we got them, they are divided and dead'. Further, he made the bold assertion that this will be the first time in the nation's history, the People's Progressive Party will control of the Georgetown Mayor and City Council after these municipal elections. His merry naivety was influenced by the dire state of affairs over at Congress Place. It was two years after the 1992 elections. The PNC's base was demoralized and some vowed never to support the party again because Desmond Hoyte was a 'sellout'. There was a big split in the party between Desmond Hoyte and Hamilton Green over how the 1992 elections were handled. Green was expelled from the party. In 1994, he formed the Forum for Democracy which eventually morphed into Good Green Guyana (GGG). This internecine battle gave the PPP officials supreme confidence that the municipality was there for the taking. The political calculus was: Green will split the votes, there will be a low turnout, general apathy and the PPP will emerge with the largest block of votes.

Once, the political bells began to ring and the dog whistles went out, the based showed up en masse and gave Green the largest block of votes. Added to this, 5 years after vowing to never support the part again, about 30 000 people filled the streets of Georgetown for protests which coupled with a successful election petition, fell the government of the day. It was the biggest display of the strength and power of the PNC. Tribalism recoiled.

THE ALI CANDIDACY

Against the backdrop of losing the 2015 election and endless rumors about massive divisions in the party, the PPP central exec met to consider its next presidential candidate. If the reports are to be believed, it was arguably the most divisive of times. Unrelenting Presidential ambitions were everywhere. Internal party balkanization had seemingly reached its zenith. There was even an unverified report which suggested there was a scuffle between the General Secretary and a former President. Thus, it was easy to conclude that this party may be in a disarray and politically weak. However, if you have any appreciation for the religious zeal rooted in tribalism that comes with support for the two major, you would not proceed from such erroneous assumptions.

Ali emerged. He had a thick and well-established resume and experience. But those who were waiting in the leadership wings for years, said 'no way'. They argued: he is not at his reputational best at the moment and can't win national elections. The rancor reached its apogee. Someone behind the heavily fortified walls of Freedom House leaked damning information on his qualifications in an attempt to bury the candidacy. It was a big fight.

Despite all the noise, Mohammed Irfaan Ali emerged victoriously. The reactions on social media from some sections were lukewarm. Some within the PPP orbit expressed disgust and vowed not to support the party again. These reactions created a false sense of complacency and led some in the coalition orbit to opine: 'they are dead, no way they are winning the next elections.' They dared to question the omnipotence of tribalism. Added to this, the coalition government was embarking on unprecedented development in the areas connected to the party's bases. Leguan got asphalt roads for the first time. The coalition orbit was confident that they could break the back of tribalism and render the PPP weak in their strongholds.

There was the usual erroneous assumption that development and good governance could trump ethnological inclinations. We have seen this movie before, it is called 'Desmond Hoyte: the hero who almost saved Guyana'.

On September 27, 2019, President Granger announced the date for the 2020 elections. Despite seemingly still earth shattered from the successful passage of the no-confidence motion, the party apparatchiks in coalition circles were bullish on their chances at the polls. The purported internecine battles in the PPP were their reference points for political optimism.

As you know, the polls were held. Controversy erupted. As expected, the base aligned themselves immediately. In a strategic display of its political prowess, the PPP organized a nationwide struggle to stop the dubious results. They were successful. They formed the government. Tribalism recoiled.

THE PRESENT POST-2020 ELECTIONS PERIOD

Insofar as PNC politics is concerned, it is déjà vu all over again. It is Hoyte 2.0. Here we are yet again. The base is upset over how things were handled in the aftermath of the elections. Apathy has raised its head again. There are the usual cries: 'I done with them', 'me aint voting again'. Arrows are being thrown in the leader's direction. Challenges are everywhere. The PPP-led government is executing a plan to win hearts and souls in the urban strongholds. There is talk of serious internal battles. Due to all of this, there is now the false conclusion from opposing camps that the party is powerless. It behooves those who understand the political sociology of this country to pen words of caution, nay, refutation of this wild loose assertion. Never question the tribal Colossus which bestrides these 214, 000 square kilometers.

When the time comes and 'Let the blow blow blow' bellows again from the speaker atop the party bus and green and yellow t-shirts are made available, the supporters will align en masse. Tribalism will recoil. Ethnic allegiances cannot be washed away with lofty speeches. It has no regard for reason and logic. It could care less about the plans and proposals that can help or develop its communities. It is not interested in Obama-esque or Churchillian leadership with a face that is different from its tribe. You cannot woo it with development. Every time you think it is gone or ebbed, it will come back with a greater force. Those primal instincts can only be controlled and quelled by constitutional arrangements.





Nobody could preserve our rights and freedoms but us

When people speak about the wrongs in society and discriminatory treatment meted out to some there is an attempt to shut us down, deny or trivialise the seriousness of the claims. This could only be for one reason, i.e., the misplaced notion that we are not all equal and deserving to be treated with respect and dignity and guarantee exact protection under the law. We who have stood up against the wrongdoings of those we voted for or may look like us, cannot, as Guyana enters its 55th year as an independent nation become tired, grow weary or still our voices.

The attacks and denial may grow louder from those who reside in 'ivory towers,' are beneficiaries of an unequal society and have more access to public media and other resources. We need not forget that as in the days of yore where these were not hindrance to the fights for justice, they must not be hindrance now. Nobody has a right or privilege to treat any son and daughter of Guyana as though they do not belong, as though they are aliens in this nation their forebears fought to create and laid the foundation for. Nobody.

And if we accept that each is entitled -yes, entitled -to participate in and reap of this nation's bounties as prescribed under the law, no man, woman or child must tell us otherwise. We are not a people that have accepted marginalisation, discrimination silently or with a whimper. It is not within mankind's DNA. We must not accept being treated like dogs and even dogs are protected from mistreatment.

As we look around the world no society gets better, or a people guaranteed equal rights and justice sitting silently. Improvements are fought for through actions on the street, in the legislature, judicature and boardrooms. The Executive, by law and function, is administrator of the day-to-day business of the state. And where the Executive, particularly this one we have, is administering the business of the state in an exclusionary not inclusionary manner, those affected by this action must raise hell. No society can function properly when any part is excluded, violated, and mistreated. It is like a car- for it to function properly all the mechanical and electrical parts must be working effectively.

My ancestors were brought here against their will. They toiled for centuries on this land and helped lay the foundation for modern Guyana. Whips rained down on their backs as they resisted the inhumane conditions under which they were forced to labour and live but they succeeded in the fight to be treated as human beings with inalienable rights and freedoms. I will be damned, after what they went through, to accept today any resemblance of mistreatment that would erode their gains.

This land belongs to all who came. We who own this land called Guyana must refuse to let anybody or government tell us we are not deserving of the protection and participation that come from being Guyanese, inheritors of this land. It is not for the Irfaan Ali regime or any government, group or individual to determine whether we should participate. They do not have the right nor power to do so unless we surrender that to them.

They cannot determine for us what is good for us and what we must have unless we cede the constitutional protection of involvement in the management and decision -making processes of the state on issues that affect our wellbeing (Article 13). And should we cede this to those we have not entrusted the responsibility we invoke the wrath of our ancestors. They did not die for us not to live; they did not stand up and fight against oppression for us to live on our knees.

We are not a people who settle for being talked down to, deprived and accepting the occasional truck load pulling up with supplies, someone lording over us, insulting and instructing us how to behave. That image in Ruimveldt hurts. We are a people capable of self-reliance and fighting for self-determination. At times situations may be hard but we must never settle to have to depend on others to do for us what we can and must do for ourselves.

We must find within that strength to stand up and fight, to refuse to accept that after more than half-century as an independent people we are content accepting handouts, and think the only way we could survive is being insulted, demeaned, dehumanised and accepting the crumbs from 'massa table.' This must not be the thinking of the descendants of braves who fought chattel slavery and colonialism.

Guyana belongs to all of us. No person-brown, black, white or red; straight hair, curly or no hair; fat or slim; tall or short- must treat us as though we do not equally belong. No government-whether Indian, African or whoever led must treat one race as superior to the other. No man, woman or child must make us grovel for what is rightly ours, what our ancestors have fought for and bequeathed to us. No person must make us feel or accept we are lesser than when we settled that matter long ago. We must stand up and fight to preserve our rights and freedoms. Nobody could do this but us.







Young Lindener quits teaching to start up booming Yoghurt business

By Naomi Marshall

Desserts are known to make life more enjoyable, boosting the moods of persons who often indulge in the sweet or savory treat guiltily.

However, the sense of guilt is not necessary if the dessert is low in refined carbs, trans-fats and added sugars. One such treat is frozen yoghurt, and in Linden Guyana, Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights has been producing delicious frozen yoghurts for over two years.

Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights offers eight different flavours of enjoyable frozen yoghurt of which four consist of chunks of various fresh fruits, while the remaining four include chunks of sweet snacks.

Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights come in a 5.5-once-container and in the flavours Chocolate, Pina Colada, Strawberry-Banana, Mixed Fruit, Rum Raisin, Apple-Cinnamon, Peanut Butter, and Micky Marsh.

Behind the brand, Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights is Regina London, an ex-nursery school teacher from the United States of America who resigned from her job to live in Guyana with her parents and subsequently became a successful entrepreneur.

Prior to migrating to Guyana in October 2019, London would visit her family in the summer and her favourite thing to do was getting creative in the kitchen, trying out new recipes.

While playing around in the kitchen three years ago, London made her first frozen yoghurt from scratch, combining ingredients that she thought would give the treat she was making, the taste and texture she had in mind.



Owner of Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights, Regina London



Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights' 'Mixed fruit' frozen yoghurt



Frozen yoghurt in the flavour Strawberry-banana

Frozen yoghurt in the flavour 'Chocolate'

"The first time was about three years ago and honestly it was by trial and error. I just kept mixing things together to get the flavours I would like. I did not follow any recipe, I just like to cook and be creative in the kitchen so I figured certain ingredients would taste good together and I just started mixing and hoping for the best," the 28-year-old recalled.

In sharing the dessert with her family, London got great reviews and would eventually go on to sharing her creation with the nation through her business, Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights.

"I resigned from my job as a nursery school teacher to be here in Guyana so I needed a way to start providing for myself and this frozen yoghurt is something that I used to make when I am in Guyana so I decided to invest in it because my family liked it so I figured other people would like it too," the young woman stated.

London launched her business, Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights, at Linden's Business Expo held in December, 2019 where she sold out, selling over 100 cups of her frozen yoghurt in one day.

London noted that she was surprised at the support she got on the first day of selling her frozen dessert because the product was new to the market and not much persons were aware of what frozen yoghurt was.

The ex-teacher told Village Voice News that her business has grown tremendously over the years, with her market expanding from Linden to places like Berbice and Georgetown.

Like all entrepreneurs, London has faced challenges with her business, and hers was having ingredients she would use to make her frozen desserts readily available.

"Because I try to make my yoghurt taste different from other brands some of my products that I use is hard to find in Guyana so that is one of the challenges that I face.



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In The Village

'We are more than a silk cotton tree'

…Perseverance residents said poor water quality, constant blackout major concerns

By Svetlana Marshall

Nestled between Belmont and Bushy Park in the community of Mahaicony, the Village of Perseverance is known for the famous silk cotton tree, located in the middle of the public road, but residents said there is more to the village than the myths surrounding the tree.

With a population of less than 200 persons, most of the residents of Perseverance engage in small scale farming while others work in the public sector, though in the past many of the male residents were pork-knockers, in addition to being farmers.

Sixty-nine-year-old Claude Scotland, who has been operating a shop alongside the main public road for the past 21 years, has lived in Perseverance all his life.

In an interview with Village Voice Newspaper, Scotland said Perseverance is not the vibrant village it once was. He said the village was big on sports, and produced a Test Match Cricketer along with other national players.

"Clive Butts is from here, Leonard McRae is from here, Calvin Burnett they are all people who played cricket for Guyana and they are one and two others. Things have changed over the years, and technology has taken over and people don't really play cricket anymore. Sports has taken a back seat," Scotland told this newspaper.

According to Scotland, Perseverance produced talented players, however, over the years, many of the residents migrated and those who have remained have sadly traded their bats and balls for

technology. "Oh yes, we had a wonderful team, we beat all of the teams from Georgetown to Rosignol. We had the best cricket team, the best domino team, we had the best rounders team in those days but now a lot of people have migrated, that's the first thing, then there is technology, people don't play like they used to," Scotland told this newspaper.

Sixty-three-year-old Joseph Simpson is among those national cricketers. Originally from Harmony Hall, Mahaicony, Simpson, who is also a former police officer, had moved to Perseverance with his wife before migrating to the United States of America some 33 years ago.

THE MYTHS

Scotland, however, admitted that the village is also famous for the Coomacka or Silk Cotton Tree. He said among the myths is that the tree cannot be cut. "I remember when they were building the road, that was in the 60s, they brought a big bulldozer to bulldoze the tree but when they went to bulldoze the tree, the operator became unconscious, when he catch back himself, he said he is not going. They brought another one, the same thing happened. And that's how the tree left in the middle of the road because they couldn't get it down," Scotland relayed.



On Independence Day, these gentlemen engaged in a game of domino in the village of Perseverance



Ninety-four-year-old Alice Solomon



Former national cricketer, Joseph Simpson



Hilton Solomon

However, he said what many people don't know is that the original tree felt in 1983, and was replanted by Gavin D'Aguiar in 1986.

Scotland said some persons in the country are of the opinion that the tree has claimed many lives by causing accidents. "People say the tree ah cause the accidents but that's absolute stupidity. A car passed here the other day, I can't tell you the colour because it drove pass so fast, I couldn't tell you the colour," he said.

The elderly man said on a daily basis, drivers could be seen racing on the main public road. He posited that the accidents are not caused as a result of the tree but because of reckless driving.

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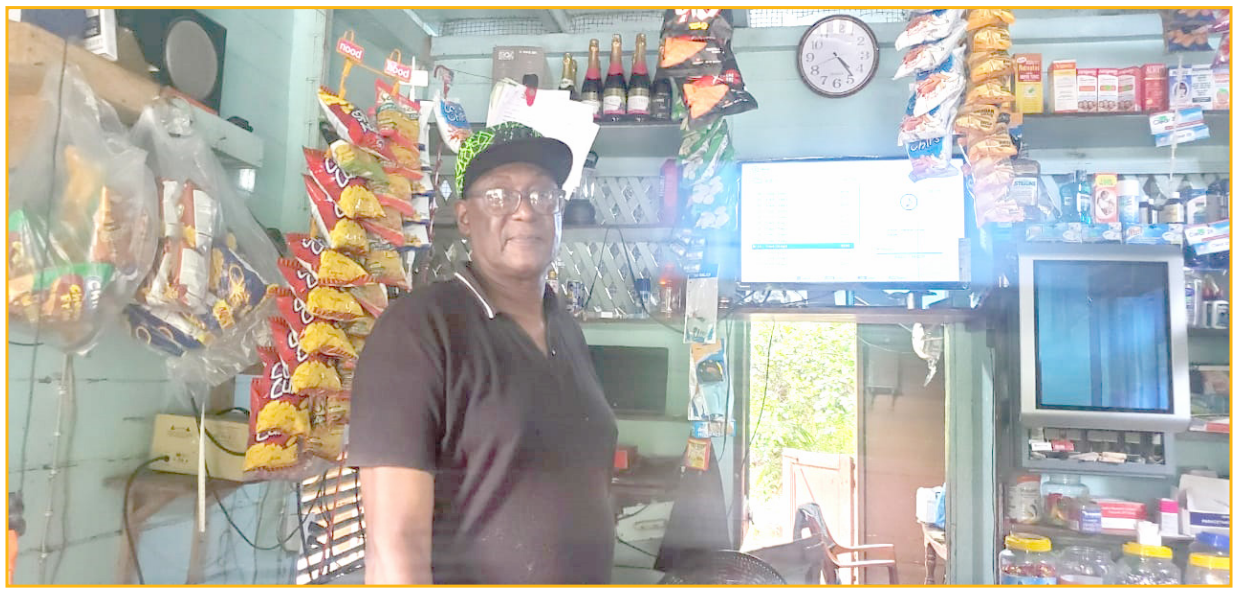
In The Village

'We are more than a silk...

FROM PAGE 10 ▶



The famous silk cotton tree



Claude Scotland



A section of Perseverance



A day in the village of Perseverance, located in the community of Mahaicony in the Mahaica-Berbice District

NEGLECTED

Another resident, 70-year-old Hilton Solomon said it would appear that Perseverance is one of the forgotten villages. "There is absolute neglect," Solomon told Village Voice Newspaper, adding that the only time residents interface with the national leaders is during the lead up to an election.

"All of the governments, every one of them, during the elections, you see everybody from the president right down but after then you don't see them back," he posited.

He said that the village, which engages in farming, lacks a proper drainage and irrigation system.

"The water system is deplorable. Water running red, you can't drink that. They say Guyana is the land of many waters but all the water we buying now, you can't even bathe with this water," Solomon added as he pointed to other issues affecting villagers.

Solomon said too that the unreliable supply of electricity to the residents of the village is of major concern. "Electricity, terrible! Phone, terrible! No good reception," he lamented.

Weighing in on the issue of poor power supply, Scotland said when the A Partnership for National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU+AFC) took office in 2015, the number of power outage had reduced significantly, however, since the return of the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) Administration, the situation has deteriorated.

"Before APNU, I had a set of lamps in this shop, battery lamps, solar lights all sort of things because of the blackouts, and when APNU took over, we had no need for that, but now PPP back in power, I have to buy fresh ones because we already have more blackouts now, than all the years of APNU," he contended.

According to him, between December, 2020 and May, 2021, the number of power outages have doubled. Scotland said one of his freezers and a number of smaller appliances have damaged as a result of the power outages. "We had 19 blackouts one day. That sound like something normal? Another day, we had 13 blackouts, I had a radio, that I use to catch Gordon Mosely on, that done," he said.

Scotland also complained about the rapid increase in food items. He said in recent months, business has been on the decline, even as the price for essential items have skyrocketed.

"They use to but right now no body ain't buying nothing, I wonder what they are eating because business is on the decline, people not getting money, and all of the prices gone up," Scotland said.

Meanwhile, 94-year-old Alice Solomon, a resident who lives on the border of Perseverance and Belmont, said Perseverance said there is need for more infrastructure development in the village, as well as activities to target young people, to renew their interest in agriculture.

In The Village

Ithaca Co-op Society on a mission to revive village economy

…launches Market Day

By Svetlana Marshall

On a mission to revive the village economy, the Ithaca Agriculture Land Development Co-op Society (IALDCS) on Independence Day successfully launched a Market Day.

The Market Day, which drew Guyanese from all parts of Guyana including representatives from the Government and Opposition, saw more than 24 vendors, the majority being farmers, offering fruits, vegetables, ground provision, poultry and dairy products at reasonable prices.

Sixty-one-year-old Claudette Johnson, who has been farming since her early years as a teenager, said the Market Day was a resounding success. Johnson, who is the treasurer of the Ithaca Agriculture Land Development Co-op Society, told Village Voice Newspaper that by 8 o'clock on Wednesday all of her ground provision, greens and citrus fruits were sold out.

"It was great because I tap in a lot, I tap in a lot," she said while noting that it provided residents of Ithaca the opportunity to shop at home instead of having to travel to Rosignol, West Bank Berbice.

Meshella Benjamin, who has been a member of the Co-op since its establishment in 2018, said the Market Day was definitely a one stop shop, and residents were more than happy to cash in on the reasonable prices.

"It was nice. We came out as early as 5 o'clock, and by 8 o'clock we were almost sold out. A lot of people came out despite the weather," Benjamin said.

She added: "We had greens, we had fruits, plantain, chicken, beef, fish, pork, we even had lemon grass, dry coconut, plantain chip, chicken foot, eddo leave, we had a whole lot of stuff."

Benjamin said she is optimistic that in the future, the Market Day will expand much to the benefits of both residents and farmers.

"We are going to achieve so much as long as we come together," she posited.

Thirty-four-year-old Zoisa Gilgeous, a food vendor for approximately nine years, said she was more than happy to introduce residents to her pork souse while offering grilled fish, beef broth and other Guyanese delicacies.



Zoisa Gilgeous serving one of her many customers beef broth







Scenes from Ithaca Market Day

Chairman of the Ithaca Agriculture Land Development Co-op Society, Desmond Weekes said the Market Day was birthed out of the need to provide greater market access to farmers.

"This day was birthed two meetings ago; members believe that we are in production phase now, and we should at least get a market, whereby as a village we can actually hold a market, sell our produce and improve the village economy," Weekes told this newspaper.

He said although the village is made up largely of farmers, other residents were travelling to Rosignol, a neighbouring community, to purchase their greens, vegetables and meat.

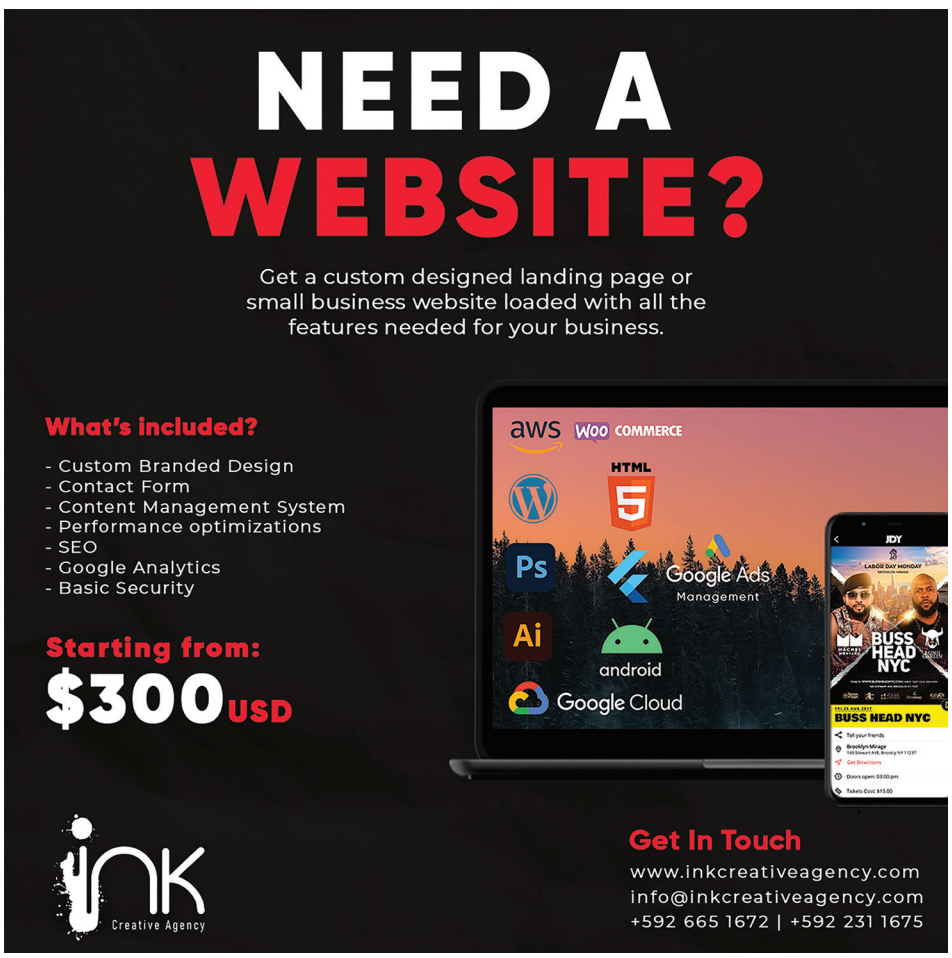
"What we find happening, we have public servants who go to the market at Rosignol, so you are actually shedding wealth to Rosignol other than the wealth remaining in the village," Weekes explained.

He said that the lack of market was resulting in many farmers losing thousands of dollars in crops. "Farmers had crops but couldn't get it sell, and if they were to sell it outside of the village, it would

have been a low price, so we thought that if we can get a market here, farmers would get more value for their labour. So that is why we went into this direction," Weekes further explained.

The co-op society, intends to make the Market Day a weekly event in the Village of Ithaca and will soon meet to finalize whether it will be held every Friday or Sunday.

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In The Village

Rebuilding Morawhanna

-Young leader foresees a bright future for famous community

By Alva Solomon

For years , residents of Morawhanna in the Mabaruma sub-region believed they were left in the cold by the authorities but a young resident has taken up the mantle to rebuild the famous port-of-entry community to the status it once held.

"I was born and raised here at Morawhanna and I plan to ensure that this community develop and be the number one community in the region," said 20-year-old Timaul Rufino. In April this year, the young man came into the spotlight in Region One when the community of some 80 to 90 residents elected him to the post of chair of the Community Development Council (CDC).

At first he was hesitant about the position since he was unsure about how the community would react to him being their leader. But several days before Nomination Day in April this year for the community elections, Timaul was walking down the narrow road at Morawhanna when he met and elder. The elder suggested he be the new CDC chair and Timaul said he was surprised by the man's suggestion.

He said several days later he met another elderly resident who also encouraged him to be the community's leader. "He said I should think about it because they needed someone young and who is disciplined and educated ," the young leader noted.



Residents of Morawhanna engaged in the clearing of land where the community's first ever playfield will be built.



Morawhanna residents being assisted by GDF Coastguard ranks and the police in a clean-up exercise recently.

CDC ELECTIONS

Timaul then encountered more villagers and when Nomination Day arrived, he was still hesitant about taking part in the elections. "It had another candidate and he was campaigning so I didn't think I would have a chance," the young man noted. Nevertheless, he accepted the nomination and on elections day, his nerves were out of control since he didn't see himself being the winner. But he was sure that the elders in the village were backing him and as such he awaited the results with some degree of hope.

Finally, that afternoon when the results were announced, he was adjudged the winner by 6 votes and from that day, he started working on his plans for transforming Morawhanna.

He said he met with the 8 other members of the council and he suggested a clean-up campaign was badly needed since the lone road at the waterfront community was overrun by bushes over the years. He said the other councillors supported the move and days later he approached the Guyana Defence Force Coastguard base as well as the police at Morawhanna for help.

"The coastguard head look at me and said you is the CDC chair, you look so small," the young man chuckled. Timaul said he was positive about his plans and as such he informed the officer about the clean-up exercise. The Coastguard official immediately agreed to providing assistance through the ranks station there. The police also agreed to help and that Sunday morning, the team along with residents started working on the rebuilding process. "We clean up the area and try to make it look good," he said.

Next, he said as a young man growing in the community, he observed the lack of social activities and this he noted impacted the youths of the area.

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Young Lindener quits ...

FROM PAGE 09 ▶

I am hoping to one day, be able to import my ingredients so I do not have to struggle driving from this store to that store," she related.

Nevertheless, London has not allowed her challenges to limit her and is advising budding entrepreneurs to believe in themselves and their products and services.

"My advice would be to believe in yourself, believe in your products and do not let anyone detour you from that because many people would complain about your prices but my thing is that if you believe in yourself you are going to make it. Trust that you are making something that is worth it and do not sway from that," London said.

Currently Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights are sold at Foodmaxx in Giftland, Caliente Spot in Berbice and at London's Fair's Rust home in Linden.

Persons interested in purchasing Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights can call London on (592)6761440, message her on Facebook or Instagram at Nina-Shi's Creamy Delights.

"People should choose my frozen yoghurt because firstly, it is homemade so it does not have all the preservatives inside; you would not feel as guilty eating it because there will be chucks of fruits inside which are healthy, and it tastes great," she said while reminding persons why her product is the right choice.

In the future, the young woman, who apart from cooking, enjoys singing, doing voice overs and spending time with family, wants to sell her products internationally, especially in places like the Caribbean islands and the USA.

She is also working towards having her products available in Linden super markets in the near future.



Kwakwani swamped

…President promises aid, residents helpless


President Irfaan Ali engages residents of the Kwakwani community


Officials assessing the damage in the community of Kwakwani

For the third consecutive night, Kwakwani residents on Saturday went to bed with their houses in several inches of water and despite promises of material aid, their main concern is for the floodwaters to recede, which has not been happening.

President Irfaan Ali on Saturday visited the community as part of his on-the-ground flood assessment of the countrywide flooding situation. In a press release, the Office of the President said the Head of State assessed the situation at Lamp Island, Kwakwani— one of the severely affected communities in the country, Bamboo Landing, Hururu Mission and Ladern's Ville.

President Ali listened to the concerns of scores of residents whose homes and farmlands are inundated due to persistent rainfall over the last week, a release from the Office of the President said. "The President reassured the residents that his Government, working with all stakeholders, including the Civil Defence Commission (CDC), will ensure that food, water and health supplies are provided. He explained that shelters would be set up at various government buildings to ensure that flood-affected residents have places to stay safe and secure until the floodwaters recede," the OP release added.

President Ali was accompanied by Minister of Public Works, Juan Edghill; Minister of Public Service, Sonia Parag; Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Force (GDF), Brigadier Godfrey Bess; CDC Head, Lieutenant Kester Craig and other officials.

On Friday the President had visited communities in Mahaicony Creek to assess the flooding there. A team of Government officials, including Prime Minister, Brigadier, (Ret'd) Mark Phillips, and Minister of Amerindian Affairs, the Honourable Pauline Sukhai also visited Region 10 today to distribute food hampers and to access the flood-related damages in various communities. Minister Edghill was a part of that team Saturday morning. A number of communities in Guyana, especially those in low-lying and riverain areas, are currently flooded, due to heavy rainfall.

Meanwhile, in an interview with Village Voice News, Vice Chairman of Region 10, Douglas Gittens stated that the flood is a result of heavy rain fall over the past weeks which caused a rise in the water level of the Upper Berbice River situated nearby.

According to Douglas, the communities have been experiencing floodwater at low levels since April of this year. However, certain areas are now flooded over eight feet high.

During a telephone interview, resident of Kwakwani, Loreen Austin related that the flood is affecting her gravely since more than half of her two-story house is covered in water. Austin, a resident of the community for 43 years said, "it affecting me a whole lot because normally I do cooking as business and my whole downstairs in water which is where the kitchen is and I do not know if my freezers will last because I see the two freezers floating".

Austin noted that the water began to rise rapidly on Thursday morning and has not lowered since then.

"From yesterday (Thursday) the water started to raise rapidly because when I wake up yesterday morning like after 1:00am I see how the water keep raising and by time 5:30am when I get up back I decided to go downstairs to check on the freezers. When I go is just to see the freezers floating and that is how quick the water raised and we did not have time to put up much things," she recalled.

Austin noted that in the 43 years of being in the community she has never seen the floodwater high as it is presently.

Additionally, Austin noted that the residents were offered lands away from the river in the past by the government but persons were reluctant to relocate because they had already built houses and a life at the waterfront.

However, it seems as though the residents have had enough and is ready to relocate.

"On behalf of the residents of Kwakwani waterfront, I know in the past they have given out house lots but maybe persons did not take it so serious then. But I was talking to some other residents and we were saying that we would be glad if the government can come and open a new scheme or give out land where we can go away from the water," Austin said.

Resident of Kwakwani, Tonesha Rogers and her family of seven was forced to evacuate their one-story house that has been covered by the floodwater. In seeing that the water was raising rapidly, the family attempted to remove some of the appliances and furniture from the house.

However, upon returning to the house for the remaining items, the Rogers family realised that their house was almost covered in water which prevented them from getting everything out of the house.

Rogers also called on the government to give more attention and assistance to the residents of the Kwakwani community. "I would like the government to pay more attention to us because people are experiencing a lot of losses and we need their assistance. We are waiting on the water to go down but that would not be anytime soon because it is getting higher," Rogers said.

Meanwhile, the Regional Vice Chairman told this publication that the poor condition of the Linden to Kwakwani road, the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) has been unable to go into the Kwakwani community.

Gittens noted that work was being done on the road, but due to the severe rainfall over the past weeks, the road has not been able to cure and is messy at the moment, resulting in cars and trucks being stuck on the road.

Despite the challenges, Gittens noted that the RDC have persons in Kwakwani assessing the situation and keeping the council informed.

On Thursday, the RDC organised for some of the residents to be evacuated and moved into the Kwakwani Primary School for safety and until the water recedes.

Additionally, Gittens said that there is a need for collaborative efforts between the RDC and the Government of Guyana in addressing the situation and giving assistance to the residents of Kwakwani.

"It is a natural disaster and there is a need for collaborative effort on the part of the RDC and Government of Guyana because almost everyone in the area needs help for a flood of that nature. They need food stuff, clothes and cleaning material," he said.

The Vice Chairman went on to say that the RDC will continue put measures in place to ensure the comfort of the people of Kwakwani during this time Other communities affected by flooding in Region 10 are Silvertown and Speightland, among others.



'Time to lockdown shut the country'

— MP also calls for tripling of vaccination efforts

Failure to shut down the country could deepen the COVID-19 crisis here in Guyana, A Partnership for National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU+AFC) Region Six Member of Parliament, Dineshwar Jaipersaud is warning.

"We will self-destruct, if we don't lock down this country; and strictly enforce the COVID-19 measures," MP Jaipersaud said during an interview with Village Voice Newspaper.

His warning comes at a time when there is a rapid increase in COVID-19 related deaths and confirmed cases of the virus here in Guyana. As of Friday, May 28, 2021, Guyana had recorded 380 COVID-19 related deaths while 24 persons were battling for their lives in the COVID-19

Intensive Care Unit (ICU). According to the Ministry of Health's statistics, 103 persons were in institutional isolation while 1,841 were in home isolation, and nine (9) in institutional quarantine. At the time, Guyana had recorded 16,724 confirmed cases of

the virus.

MP Jaipersaud said while Region Six (East Berbice-Corentyne) is among the geographical districts with the lowest number of confirmed cases of the virus, he is concerned that should it be business as usual, the number of COVID-19 cases will not only increase in Region 6

but all other regions, in particular Region Four (Demerara-Mahaica), which has recorded the largest number of confirmed cases of the virus – 8,004 as of May 28.

Despite the sharp increase in COVID-19 cases over the past nine months, the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) Administration has refused to shut down the country in its attempt to revive the non-oil economy.

But MP Jaipersaud said it is time to choose life over money. "We must have a lockdown; if we cannot have a lockdown, let us go back to 6pm-6am curfew; let us minimize the amount of people engaging in leisure activities," the APNU+AFC MP urged.



APNU+AFC MP Dineshwar Jaipersaud

He said the current curfew, which spans from 10:30pm to 6am, is lending to the spread of the disease since it gives persons ample time to socialize and engage in physical contact, notwithstanding the 6-feet social distance requirement.

"Since this government came to being, they have relaxed the COVID-19 emergency measures, moving the curfew to 10:30pm, but this gives people ample time to socialize, get drunk, get merry, and go home and even take the virus home," he posited.

The APNU+AFC MP said while the Coalition is pro-business, the lock-down is necessary to flatten the curve. "To the businessmen, it is okay to make money, we have nothing against that, but you have people working there who have to go back home, who are exposing themselves

to COVID, taking it back home, and they have families, and elders," he reasoned.

Earlier this month, Trinidad and Tobago Guardian reported that massive jumps in both COVID-19 numbers and deaths had triggered calls by the Twin Island's business chambers for tighter restrictions, the implementation of a curfew and an extension of the lockdown. To

date, Trinidad and Tobago has recorded approximately 22,620 confirmed cases of the virus and 458 related deaths.

But Vice President, Bharrat Jagdeo, during a press conference held earlier this month, said there is no evidence to suggest that a lockdown would reduce the spread of the virus.

"We have demonstrated that there is no imperial evidence to say shifting curfew hours you will get less rates of infection," Jagdeo said while noting that though other countries have engaged in a total lockdown, the virus continues to spread.

"Take for example Trinidad, which has been in a perpetual state of lockdown for the last year, and it did not help really," Jagdeo pointed out.

But MP MP Jaipersaud is adamant that a lockdown and stricter enforcement of the COVID1-9 Emergency Measures are needed.

COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME

The APNU+AFC Region Six MP said in addition to the lockdown, the Government should heighten its COVID-19 vaccination programme to achieve herd immunity.

"If we lock down this country for two weeks, we can vaccinate the entire country; two weeks of lockdown, and in every region you have 10 vehicles, two nurses…we can go street to street," MP Jaipersaud posited, while noting that there is also a need for increased

public awareness on the benefits of the vaccine.

According to Reuters COVID-19 Tracker, Guyana has administered at least 245,616 doses of COVID vaccines thus far. "Assuming every person needs 2 doses, that's enough to have vaccinated about 15.7% of the country's population," Reuters said.

It added: "During the last week reported, Guyana averaged about 4,848 doses administered each day. At that rate, it will take a further 33 days to administer enough doses for another 10% of the population."

However, the country finds itself in a conundrum. Just days ago, the Ministry of Health confirmed a shortage of the vaccines here.

It said while both first and second dose of the COVID-19 vaccines are being administered across the country, the second dose of the Sputnik V vaccine is currently unavailable.

"Currently, all sites have in stock, the Sputnik V first dose available for vaccination. Sputnik V second dose can be administered between 4 to 12 weeks. However, we currently have a delay in our supplies," it explained.

The Health Ministry noted, however, that a further shipment of Sputnik V first dose and second dose vaccines will arrive in Guyana soon.

"The Guyana Government is awaiting shipment information, and we will advise the public as soon as the MOH receive shipment details," the Health Ministry said.

Additionally, AstraZeneca and SinoPharm are no longer available for the first dose, the Health Ministry disclosed but noted that the second dose is available.

"But everyone who has received their first dose will get their second dose. These doses are currently available," it stated. The Government and Opposition have been urging persons living in Guyana to get vaccinated to flatten the curve.



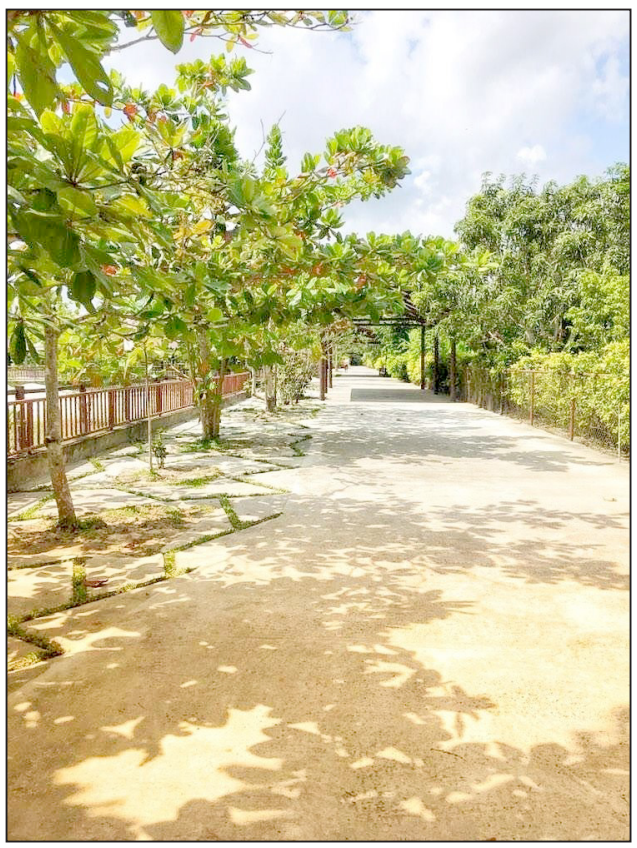
Construction of Hyde Park Zoo Sanctuary stalled

...EPA grants approval for continuation of first phase

Construction of the Hyde Park Zoo Sanctuary and Tropical Gardens at Land of Canaan on the East Bank of Demerara (EBD) has been delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the project has received a renewal of Environmental Authorisation by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue its first phase.

The proposed project will facilitate a variety of animals both native to Guyana and other countries around the world. The proposed facility is set to be the first of its kind in Guyana and will promote conservation, employment, recreation for families, and education for children in a safe, healthy, and serene environment.

It was projected in March 2021, that the facility would be completed by the end of the year. However, according to the EPA, project implementation is still at 85 percent of the first phase, with two more phases to go. This first phase includes the construction of key infrastructure, the establishment of the zoo sanctuary, and the introduction of wildlife from Guyana.







The site for the construction of the Hyde Park Zoo Sanctuary and Tropical Gardens at Land of Canaan on the East Bank of Demerara (EBD)

Phase Two will entail the importation of exotic animals through exchange programmes with other zoos around the world and Phase Three will involve the construction of luxury infrastructures such as a 20-room hotel with a bird-watching facility, a mini-golf course, a recreational park, and a landing strip and helicopter pad for the purpose of emergencies, depositing rescued animals or flying in dignitaries.

The proposed development is being established at areas PML1 and VML2 of Tract "H" all being portions of Lots C and D comprising the South Half of North Plantation and North Half of Lots 10, 11, and 12 of Land of Canaan on the East Bank of Demerara. The total land area of the overall size is 186 acres, of which 36 acres will be taken up by the proposed facility.

It should be noted that the Environmental Authorisation permitted for the project is only for the first phase. According to the EPA: "The construction and implementation of Hyde Park Zoo Sanctuary and Tropical Gardens have been stalled given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. However, the project met the minimum criteria during the environmental audit and was renewed by the Agency."

The construction or operation of facilities such as zoological parks and other green spaces come under the purview of the Infrastructure and Project Management Department of the EPA.

Ithaca Co-op Society on a mission to revive ...

FROM PAGE 12

He said notwithstanding some challenges, the co-op has been growing in membership and production.

"We have arrived at a place where we had zero production to a place where we have more than surplus to sell to other villages. A lot of people are now engaged in the backdam, particularly the youths. When we started this project initially, people were probably hesitant to go because they were talking about distance and so on, but as it is now, we are finding it hard to find a piece of land to give it to anybody. Most of the youths are now involved, they are eager to go even when it rains, so that is a big plus," Weekes explained.

He said, however, the weather poses a problem. He explained that during the rainy season, the road becomes difficult to traverse, and as such, there is need for an all-weather road to allow for easier access to the farm.

"Right now as we speak, farmers have a lot of produce in the backdam but they are finding it difficult to bring them out. So I think the biggest challenge we have is the road, we need an all-weather road," Weekes said.

He said too that the co-op society was earmarked to receive a boat and engine from the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) loan acquired under the A Partnership for National Unity + Alliance For Change (APNU+AFC) Government, however, it was never delivered. Weekes posited that the provision of the boat and engine would serve the farmers well, and provide them with an alternative mode of transportation to transport their crops.



Treasurer of the Ithaca Agriculture Land Development Co-op Society (IALDCS), Claudette Johnson



Meshella Benjamin displaying her pepper sauce during Ithaca Market Day on Independence Day



IN THE KITCHEN

Recipe

Pan seared Tilapia (or fish of choice)

INGREDIENTS



1 pound tilapia fillets
4 fillets
½ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon paprika
½ teaspoon dried basil
2 tablespoons olive oil



INSTRUCTIONS

Place fillets on a large plate then rub the salt, pepper, garlic powder, paprika, dried basil and olive oil all over them.

In a skillet (preferably cast iron) heat 1 tablespoon of oil on high heat for about 3 minutes. Turn down the heat to medium then add two fillets to the pan. Let them cook on one side for about 4 minutes then flip to the other side and let them cook for another 3-4 minutes.

Repeat the process with the remaining fillets and oil.

Serve warm with some lime wedges on the side for squeezing over the fish as needed. I love to serve this fish with my Mango Avocado Salsa on the side! You could also break it up and use in tacos or serve with any side dish you like. Enjoy, friends!

Recipe Notes

Use completely defrosted fillets for this recipe. I defrosted my fish in the fridge for 24 hours but you can all place the fish fillets in a Ziploc bag then place in a bowl of water to quickly defrost. Defrosting the fish completely ensures that the fillets cook evenly.

Source- precioustcore.com







Big, Bad & Bold



By Debra & Minette

Covering issues of interest to women, that means all issues from the womb to the tomb

We are unlimited in our abilities and interests

Viewpoint

Reflecting on Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham

Last Wednesday, May 26, Guyana marked another Independence Anniversary. Independence was achieved under the leadership of Premier Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham who remains one of the most misunderstood leaders of our time. From his policies, deportment, competitiveness, intellect, philosophy, patriotism to his charisma, detractors have found ways to downplay and demonise attributes that normally would be sources for discourse to arrive at an objective understanding of the man.

For keeping his eyes on the prize to achieve independence and having successfully influenced the coloniser and its ally (Britain and USA), in the Cold War Era, to accept his embrace of socialism as unthreatening and posing no opportunity for USSR/communist expansion in the Caribbean/South America, rather than acknowledge his shrewdness he is accused of being power hungry. That he subsequently fought for Republican status, finally breaking the yoke of domination and a compromise date struck for February 23, he is accused of fixing this date to celebrate his birthday. February 23 marks the enslaved first (1763) major blow for freedom in the New World, and this final attainment (1970) is a fitting homage to those who began the struggle centuries before.

He is accused of restricting or banning food items to punish one race. Ignored is the fact that the restriction of these items impacted all races. The allegation ignores flour was/is used to make bakes, bread, cakes and roti which are staples of all. The accusation ignores split peas was/is used in soup, cook-up and dhall and used by all. Irish potato was/is a staple of all. More importantly,the allegation ignores the circumstances under which Guyana was unable to continue the importation of these items. Disregard is the function of the government to make choices or tough decisions spending scarce foreign exchange on expenditures and debt repayment.

The oil crisis of the early 1970s that sent economies reeling and non-producing, oil-dependent countries like Guyana into a tailspin was blamed as a fault of Mr. Burnham. That Guyana, unlike countries like the USA and Trinidad and Tobago had no social safety net to cushion the effects made matters worse. Efforts by his administration to encourage citizens to conserve and be self-reliant were labeled as a return to dark times. Where developed societies are driven by the ingenuity and entrepreneurship of its people, at home forces influenced the masses to think self-empowerment equals deprivation and anti-development.



Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham (http://www.caribbeanelections.com Photo)

Alongside the oil crisis, were political strikes and economic sabotages costing the Treasury millions of foreign exchanges. An insight of this could be gleaned from Dr. Tyrone Ferguson's book "To survive sensibly or court heroic death…." Mr. Burnham stands accused of being anti-Indian, racist, even though he zealously pursued the aspiration of "One People, One Nation, One Destiny." His remains an unsurpassed record to bring racial healing and forge positive race relations.

The record includes the designation of major religious and racial observances as national holidays, legitimising Hindu and Muslim weddings, allowing pandit and imam to become marriage officers, the repeal of the Obeah Ordinance, the legitimising of children born out of wedlock which also impacted Indians who did not conform to the western marriage, the policies of mandatory early education and free education from nursery to university which opened the doors to learning for all.

Mr. Burnham's additional achievements are the national symbols, including naming of awards, the Coat of Arms, the reconfiguration of local government boundaries which allow for diverse groups to work together in common pursuit, honouring the 1948 struggles of sugar workers, the building of all-weather roads in Canal No. 1 & 2 that allowed farmers improved road access to bring their produce from the backdam to the main road, the Demerara Harbour Bridge which improved trading, the construction of silos that allowed for improvement in rice storage, Hinterland Scholarship, Mashramani events which showcase cultural diversity in celebration after hard work, etc.

As Head of Government, Mr. Burnham used his power to remove 'Jim Crow' laws and topple the class, colour and race barriers in sugar and bauxite. This policy had a domino effect in Guyana Stores, Fogarty's etc. No longer if you were non-white, dark and from poor families you had to stay back. He established financial institutions such as GAIBANK, GNCB, GNCB Trust Co-operation and Mortgage Finance, making it possible for the ordinary man to own his home and engage in business.

Amidst accusations that Mr. Burnham wanted to steal workers' money and calls to boycott by his political rival, he forged ahead with the National Insurance Scheme (1969), which remains the nation's major social safety net in times of sickness, maternity, injury, death, invalidity, disablement and old age. The single largest bloc of beneficiaries to the Industrial Branch benefit remains sugar workers.

Dr. Cheddie (Joey) Jagan Jr in a letter, published in Stabroek News (Feb 8, 2010) said this about Mr. Burnham: "As a teenager I remember during the dark period of the early 1960s, when the PNC and PPP were engaged in spreading violence, my godfather, Forbes Burnham, and my father, Cheddi Jagan met on several occasions secretly (they even went to the seawalls some evenings), I am sure to contain the violence…."

Mr. Burnham's contributions to Guyana's development begs for truthful and contextual examination. It requires giving him his due credit and where mistakes were made, learning from them. To do otherwise would be allowing others to wipe his contributions from history and Guyana's development.





Guyanese Women In The Diaspora

A vision for STEM and belief in Guyana's children

- Karen Abrams continues to prove herself

She packed her bags, travelled back and forth from the United States of America (USA) to Guyana, on the conviction that the children of Guyana should not be left behind in a rapidly developing technological world. She is determined to give Guyana's children the type of educational exposure her children have benefitted from in the USA.

HERSTORY

Undoubtedly, Karen Abrams has a vision for Guyana's children and is determined to work with them, in their communities, with their parents and the government to realise it. She travelled to Guyana around 2016 with a dream, and the support of former first lady Sandra Granger, confident in her ability to help shape a brighter future. She led the introduction of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) as an integrated discipline to Guyanese children.

The subjects in STEM could be intimidating for adults much less children. Thus, when Karen burst onto the scene seeking to create national appreciation for the disciplines through robotics learning, whilst some embraced her desire with open arms, others were wary. In short time she proved herself and supporters right and forced the wary to recognise her ability. Her passion- a most fitting description- was released in the project (STEMGuyana) she launched with the support of her family and well-wishers.

Karen has brought to STEMGuyana her all. Her can-do and go-getter attitudes rally support for the project. Her children have been involved, including travelling to Guyana to provide necessary technical support and encouragement critical to success. She has kept society informed and involved utilising social media (Facebook) as a platform. Persons have been kept abreast of the children's progress, rallied around them, and have shared feedback reminiscence of the African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child."

Hers has been the ever-inspiring presence about the possibilities and enthusiasm of the children she has taken under her proverbial wings. Not once has she demonstrated she would quit or has given up on her ward, in spite of challenges, financial or otherwise. For her learning, education and opportunities are not confined to class, location, race, creed and all the other diversionary 'elements' use to deprive.

She has taken under her wings' children from the poorest to the richest neighbourhoods. No village or ward has been beneath her interest nor the children residing within are considered unworthy.

ROBOTICS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

These are Guyana's children Karen has been moulding and exposing to compete with themselves and against students of more developed societies and with superior education infrastructures. In 2017 she collaborated with the Ministry of Education to launch a Maths App for the National Grade Six Assessment.

In 2018 Karen took the Robotics Team to the international arena. Rather than be intimidated the children were injected with confidence that they are as good as anyone, could compete and win. Participating in the Global Robotics Competition held in Washington DC, Guyana placed 10th.



Karen Abrams

In 2019 Guyana participated in the much sought-after International STEM Competition, coming in 39th out of the 190 participating countries and walked away with the Albert Einstein Gold Medal of Excellence.

Karen has produced a STEM Television talk show "Robin The Robot" to ensure continuity of education in the pandemic. She helped produce the podcast "Learning Pods" which is screened in nine of the country's ten administrative regions. She has trained two hundred plus STEM Club leaders across Guyana.

Karen has also provided curriculum and material support for 70 plus local STEM clubs, and prepared youth robotics national teams for participation in local and international competitions. Not settling for children alone learning the importance of Robotics, Karen has piloted a role for the parents. According to Stabroek Business (April 4, 2021) she has launched a 'Parent Academy' in order that parents, who have children (Grade 1 to 10), are empowered to learn about the programme and be able to supervise and teach their children.

NATIONAL AWARD AND USA RECOGNITION

The outstanding work Karen has done moulding the minds of Guyana's children, preparing them to compete, through STEM, at home and in a global economy has been second to none. Both Guyana and the USA have acknowledged her efforts and achievements.

In 2018, she was awarded Guyana's fourth-highest National Award, the Golden Arrow of Achievement. This Order is said to be conferred on any citizen of Guyana who has performed an outstanding and specific act of service or achievement of an exceptional nature or is given for long and dedicated service of a consistently high standard in responsible offices, local government services, social and voluntary services, industry or trade unions, or in any other area of public service.

Last month she was amongst "50 Women Over the age of 50" who were recognised by the prominent USA Forbes Magazine for exemplifying, "the full range of career and passion project paths including entrepreneurship, business ownership, non-profit and philanthropic pursuits, inspirational leadership, public service, policy conceptualisation and implementation and social advocacy."

Source- internet



WFCAP taking its operations to the next level



WFCAP officials Vice President Elvina Emmanuel (left) and Committee Member Vanessa Simon with some of their produce at a recent food fair and exhibition

Women for Change Agro Processors (WFCAP) of Bel Air West Coast Berbice are taking their operations to the next level by acquiring labels for their products which include nutritional value as well as the bar codes used in retail stores as part of the purchase process.

The resultant upgrade will help the group to increase its production and to acquire additional markets and greater competitiveness within the agro-processing subsector, President Ms. S McAlmont told Village Voice News recently.

Ms. McAlmont said that the Group is pursuing certification from the Food and Drugs Department with direct assistance from the New Guyana Marketing Corporation (NGMC).

She said: "A representative from (WFCAP) met with the Marketing Manager of the NGMC last week. He listened to us and he agreed to assist and we are now working with his Department to get required documentation for the products, hopefully within a month to six weeks."

WFCAP is based at Fort Wellington West Coast Berbice and most of its members are from the Bel Air St John and #22 villages and their environs. The group was formed in 2012 with the aim of empowering women in these villages, including women who are heads of single parent families, with the means of improving the quality of their lives and the lives of their families.

WFCAP, McAlmont said, received substantial help from Food for the Poor (FFP) after formation.

FFP assisted with a cash donation on $3M and then other equipment such the Fridge the blenders and so on.

Since then, members have been producing condiments such as hot peppers and green seasoning, achar, jams and fruit wines.

McAlmont disclosed: "At first we bought the raw materials we used to make the hot peppers and green seasoning but we have since established our own cultivation plots and are now self-sufficient in raw materials."

The group has been selling its products mainly to business places in Hopetown and its environs. The women were restricted from selling to supermarkets and bigger stores further afield because of the lack of labels including nutritional value of contents and bar codes.

Production has in recent months been negatively affected by the current COVID 19 pandemic. Leadership of the WFCAP includes Elvina Emmanuel Vice President; Colleen Fraser Secretary, Patricia Bowman Treasurer and Vida Cadogan Assistant Secretary Treasurer

McAlmont told Village Voice News: "Despite the setbacks, COVID 19 included, we are still active. We want to expand production to a wider range of condiments; to get access to new and bigger markets and to take our operations on behalf of the wellbeing of our members, to the next level."

In Loving Memory of
Eunice Patricia Primus

21st June, 1934 - 4th May, 2021



He will call; The dead will answer.
They will live at his command; For he will have a longing for the work of his own hand.
So have faith, and do not wonder; for our God can make us stand.
And we will live forever, as the work of his own hand.

Eunice Patricia Primus was born in Georgetown, Guyana. She was the youngest child of Randolph Smith and Elfreda Patterson-Smith. Her siblings were her deceased brothers Eddy, Winston, Redver and Roy; and her sister Gwen who resides in London. Eunice followed her elder sister Gwen to the UK in 1957. In 1958 she married Neville Smartt with whom she shared two children – Bridget and Ulwin. She later married Cecil Primus in 1968 and bore him two other children – Paulette and Neil. Eunice worked at every hospital in the London area over a period of Forty Years, with her last place of work being a nursing home in Wandsworth. She started her nursing career in Peterborough andlater in London where she continued until her retirement. Nursing wasn't just a career for Eunice, it was a real vocation and a passion. Eunice started studying with Jehovah's Witnesses in the late 1960s and was baptized in 1974 at a convention at Twickenham, Southwest London. She enjoyed several decades of faithfulness as a devoted Witness. During her regular visits to Guyana –her last was during the first half of 2020- she worshipped at the Kingdom Hall in Norton Street, Lodge, Georgetown.

May Her Soul Rest in Peace!

House of Israel International
The Black Prophecy

By: Rabbi Edward Washington

Black history month has come and gone. let's take a real look at real Black History. Let's look at the seed of Abraham, which is true Israel the Black people of North, South and Central America. Let us read the Holy Bible Genesis:15:13-14: And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years;

And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

Now, this Prophecy is not talking about the Jews that were slaves in Egypt. This Black Prophecy is talking about the Black Hebrews in captivity in North, South and Central America. there are no other people on earth that have served Four hundred Years in captivity.

Now many churches are teaching that Genesis:15:13-14 is talking about the Jews in Egypt. But it is not true. Let us go to our Bible and read what it says. Exodus:12:40-41: Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.

And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

Please read again. Not four hundred years but four hundred and thirty years. Now it is plain to see that the Prophecy in Genesis:15:13-14 cannot be the same slavery as in Exodus:12:40-41, that is plain, very plain to see. You only need to look at it. One is four hundred years, the other is four hundred and thirty years. The Genesis Prophecy can only speak of the Black Jews in the United States, South and Central America. They are the Tribes of Judah, Dan, Simeon, Benjamin and some of the tribe of Levi is among us. Also some in Mexico and India. True Israel have been scattered all over the earth. Jerimiah:31:10, 1 Kings:22:17, Psalms:44:14 - Thou makest us a byword among the Heathen a shaken of the head among the people. This scripture only speaks of the Black Jews in the United States of America talking to the slave master. Psalms:137:1-3: By the rivers of Babylon, there



we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. Yes, they wasted us Deuteronomy:28:43-44 vs 64 The Black wife will hate her husband.

Deuteronomy:28:54-55 NOW THESE BLACK JEWS WERE CARRIED INTO SLAVERY Psalms:137:1-3: Carried us away captive, did you read it? The Jews that was in Egypt 430 years, did not go into Egypt as slaves.

Genesis: 47:17-20: And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan;

And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come.

Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

They went into Egypt by a Royal invitation, not as slaves and our mode of transportation was by Wagons. Now let me give you some more Black Prophecy. The Bible was written by Black people, for Black People. Romans:3:1-4: I am the Lord your God, and none else. Joel:2:27 - Psalms:147:19-20: We were carried away captive in Ships into Egypt. TRUE ISRAEL WERE CARRIED INTO EGYPT IN SHIPS. Deuteronomy:28:68: You need to read it again, now you see that there is more in your Bible than St John:3:16: No other people ever went into slavery in ships, with a Bible Prophecy to server 400 years, but the Black man and Woman of North, South and Central America. We were robbed and spoiled. Please read Isaiah:42:22: Daniel:1:4-8 You can see, the slaves were not all dumb and ignorant as the slave masters forced us to believe. The Bible says Children in whom was no blemish, but well favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science. After they give us a Gentile name, they must make you worship their gods. Please read Deuteronomy:4:27-28, Deuteronomy:28:64vs36 - 2 Kings:17:35. They must destroy your religion. Open your Bible to Psalms:83:3-6. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.

They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee:

The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes;

St Matthew:10:5-6, St Matthew: 15:24 and Jerimiah:50:4-9.

Contacts: houseofisraelinternational@gmail.com, Facebook: House of Israel International, 592-625-0498, +1(678) 301-9709, 592-628-9579, 592-627-3580.



Have we done enough to translate our independence into a deliberate quest for freedom?

This past week Guyana observed fifty-five years of independence or political freedom from colonial rule. As is the case with most recent post-colonial societies, the debate over whether we are truly independent is as fresh as it was five decades ago. It is an inevitable debate, given the fact that independence ended almost four centuries of institutionalized bondage by the other—the colonizer who reduced his subjects to mere chattel. That is a fact that should never be lost in our debate over the condition of our independence. You do not undo four centuries of bondage in five decades; the formal end of a system does not translate into a cessation of the practice of that system. As Brother Bob Marley, our musical prophet, reminds us: "No chains around my feet/But I am not free."

As we observe our independence and celebrate our contributions to the world, we are still grappling with the legacy of colonialism. Another of our musical icons, David Rudder, tells us a bitter truth—that we live in a world "that don't need islands no more." Our islands once made Europe rich—the root of their wealth lies in our little islands or as Walter Rodney would say, their development is a function of our underdevelopment. So, as we celebrate, we must also reflect on our condition, in all its manifestations. We Caribbean people like to party—for good reason—but we have at all times a duty to engage in a "conscious party." In other words, we must dance to the rhythm of freedom, for if you are/were bound in captivity, your dance can only be a dance of freedom.

The question before us this independence is, despite our challenges, whether we have done enough to translate our independence into a deliberate quest for freedom. Have we expanded the freedom-space since 1966? Are our people — especially the least among us — freer today than they were in 1966? If socio-economic poverty was the most damning consequence of colonization, what have we done to decrease its grip on our society? What have we done to turn the plantation model into its opposite?

Any fair observer must answer those questions more in the negative that the positive. After fifty-three years of independence, our country still resembles a plantation society. Our former colonial masters still control the drift of our collective motion. But we know enough now to know that that outcome was inevitable. The question is whether we have mustered the collective will to negotiate that inevitability. Again, the answer has to be more a no that a yes. Note, I am not saying that we have not attempted to deal with those inherent maladies, but in the end, we have to conclude that we have not been as persistent and consistent as we should have been.

Yes, our people in Guyana and the wider Caribbean have survived the last six decades—they have, in their native ways, tried to give character and dignity to our independence. They turned plantations into villages and areas of darkness into points of light. Many of us can today lift our gazes to the mountain top, not because of the freedom given to us by some political party or government, but because the people turned themselves into ladders for us to climb.

But even as we made those noble moves, our elites have let us down badly, especially the political elites. We hear the supporters of the various political leaders sing their praises. From Burnham and Jagan to Jagdeo and Granger, we construct these political deities and, in the process, diminish ourselves as an independent people. Not that these men and their governments do not have virtues, but they also have political vices—sometimes these vices were more the rule than the exception.

Their attempts at transformation were outweighed by a propensity for plantation-like dictatorship. I acknowledge all the admirable attempts they made, but in the end our independence is poorer—the price we paid for those positives is too high for a post-plantation society to pay. They all—all of them—ended up loving power more than using power to free our society from what the Kwayanas call "the scars of bondage." I know that I am offending my Jaganite and Burhamite friends, but the other narrative must be told. As Brother Bob Marley again reminds us: "Half the story has never been told."

I COME TO THE COALITION GOVERNMENT

When it came to power in 2015, I said it was best poised to correct the wrongs of the past—to write that other half of the story. Our society has thrown up social formations at different junctures in our history, but as CLR James would argue, those formations

have to be conscious of what they represent and must have the capacity to absorb the positive energies that are responsible for their evolution. On the cricket field, we saw that with Frank Worrell, Clive Lloyd and Viv Richards, but not with Brian Lara and

Chris Gayle. The latter two did not have the capacity to absorb the energies that made them possible. Hence, while they shone individually, the West Indian light rapidly faded.

I am afraid that if the Granger government did not have to an appreciation of its historical calling. Vision matters. A sense of your government's place in the historical trajectory of the society matters. I observe the elected leaderships and I see little sign of a willingness to engage history; to engage the present as the past and the future.

More of Dr. Hinds' commentaries can be found on his website guyanacaribbeanpolitics.news and on his Facebook page Hinds'Sight. Catch him on Facebook on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:30 pm for Politics 101 with Dr. David Hinds.

Rebuilding ...

FROM PAGE 13

Alcohol and substance abuse needed to be addressed and he noted that this was also placed at the level of the CDC. He also received support from the body and it was agreed that a playfield will be constructed at the edge of the community to keep the youth of the area occupied.

The following weekend villagers , with assistance from the police and coastguard teamed up and started clearing a section of land for the playfield. "It's a lot of work, we did the under-bushing but we have to now clear some roots and so before it can look like a playfield," he said. Noting that it is one of his dreams, the young leader said he plans to approach to government for assistance in furthering the construction of the playfield.

He said this section of the village, located near Father's Creek, was drained sometime in 2018 by the former government. The main populated areas remain waterlogged and he noted that this section needs to be drained. He said recent flooding saw the need for more drainage and irrigation works and according to him, a team from the government as well as the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA) visited Morawhanna recently to provide assistance in draining the area.

AgricultureTimaul told the Village Voice that although Morawhanna's population is small, its residents have a high literacy level and he noted too that more than 95% of the residents are farmers. Ginger, plantains, cassava and potatoes are some of the main crops cultivated at the community and according to him, he plans to introduce a agro-proceccing venture at the community.



The waterfront area at Morawhanna.

"This is something we need here , we can bottle pepper, cassareep and package other items," he said. In addition , he noted that the area is well-known for crab-catching and as such packaging the crabs for export is another option the community can explore.

The young leader said that he plans to inform the council and residents accessing funding from the government for this venture. He believes that as a small community, the residents can transform the area economically via agriculture.

Recent rains saw severe flooding at various parts of Morawhanna and Timaul noted that some farmers lost all their crops. He said some agriculture officials visited the area and pledged to assist the farmers in replanting their crops. He said the scale of the damage is still being ascertained.

The young leader enrolled in a Community Health Worker training exercise earlier this year at Mabaruma, the region's capital town.He said once he completes the programme he will return to Morawhanna to fully concentrate on developing the famous community . "As a young person I plan to rebuild Morawhanna to the number one community status in Region One," he said with enthusiasm.

Morawhanna, which has a rich Afro-Guyanese heritage , was buzzing with economic potential in the mid-1990s but the riverain community was reduced to a ghost town as erosion coupled with migration as a result of a lack of economic activities took a toll on the area.

The once sprawling community sits some 6 hours by boat from the Venezuelan border. It is located along the left side of the river and is the first port of entry for vessels traversing the waterways to the North West District sub regions of Mabaruma and Matarkai.

Region Nine Residents losing crops to flooding

...also battling over 140 active COVID-19 cases



Flooding in Aishalton



Scores of villages across Region Nine are still flooded with over 300 households indicating they are in need of assistance to get by. Earlier in May, reports coming out of the Region painted a grim picture of losses in crops compounded by over 140 active COVID-19 cases there.

In an interview with the Village Voice News, Regional Chairman of the Region's Regional Democratic Council (RDC), Bryan Allicock said that the situation is concerning as the floodwaters remain and rains continue to pour. "Water is coming back in some areas in the North, the whole roadway is washed away at the entrance to Massara. We have 17 homes underwater in Massara at the moment and then, in the South, over the Rupununi River, the water is coming up again. So, instead of going directly across, we have to go around," he said.

"We were counting those villages that are affected, they're sending in their numbers and we have over 331 families within the various villages and we're still expecting more numbers coming in...we will get probably over 400."

He said that North, South and Central Rupununi are affected. Some of the names of villages he called included: Sand Creek, Katu'ur, Kumu, Quarrie, Hiowa, Nappi, Parishara, Kaicumbay, Quatata, Yupukari, Katoka, Semonie, Apoteri, Rewa and Fairview among others.

Heavy rainfall, water flow from mountainous areas to lower areas and the rising Rio Blanco (White River) in Brazil have compounded the situation. Those with cassava crops are taking a big blow, Allicock said. He explained: "As soon as it stays underwater for more than three days, that's it and you can't really pull it out anymore because only the sticks are coming out and the tubes are remaining in there."

A resident of Aishalton shared with the newspaper photos of the floodwater still covering farming areas. "This makes transportation for villagers and Government officials difficult. They built a bridge there but there's a lot of water and vehicles can't pass there," one Mr. Hinds said.

In the case of his village, the crops most affected are cassava and banana. The RDC, in collaboration with the Civil Defense Commission (CDC) has begun addressing the situation by sending food hampers and cleaning agents to the affected residents. Heads and other CDC representatives, along with Prime Minister Mark Phillips, have also visited the Region to assess the situation.

The CDC has also sent cement to the Region donated by the Inter Caribbean Maritime Transport Inc. It was given to the RDC to be distributed to the residents whose homes have been damaged due to floods. Meanwhile, the RDC recently sent a new list to the CDC of the other items the Region requires. This is even as the CDC is spreading out its efforts to several other Regions in Guyana affected by flooding.

The Government has also pledged extended assistance to farmers of Region Nine who continue to lose their crops as a result of flooding during the May/June rainy season. Asked what he wanted the public to know at this time, Allicock used the opportunity to urge residents of the Region to adhere to the COVID-19 guidelines as there are some 146 active cases in the Region.

He said: "We're asking people to observe all the protocols. We have some [stubborn] people that still go about doing as they please and the virus is spreading through that means. Some are partying, some are holding other gatherings and I'm asking them to adhere to the instructions and observe social distancing, wash their hands, wear their masks wherever they go in public."

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CAN YOU IDENTIFY SOME OF THE JOBS THE MANUMITTED AFRO-GUYANESE WERE DOING ?

Double murder rocks Coomacka

Two men were killed at Three Friends Mines Coomacka in the Upper Demerara, Berbice Region early Saturday morning.

Dead are: Leonard Reec unemployed and Ronald aged 36 years of the same area.

Enquiries disclosed that during the month of April 2021 Ronald Wong was released from prison after he was convicted for attempted murder.

However, after being released he went to live with his uncle Leonard Reece who would usually cook for him on a daily basis.

Maurice Reece unemployed of Three Friends Coomacka Mines who lives in industrial Area Mackenzie Linden received a phone call about 01:30 hours from his niece Marlyn Lyckerish via cellphone who told him that his nephew Ronald chopped his brother Leonard.

Maurice then called his brother in law Walter Reece via cellphone who related the same story to him. He subsequently went to the Mackenzie Police Station and made a report.

The chairman of Three Friends Coomacka Mines who lives about two houses away from Leonard, mentioned that on 2021/05/29 about 01:15 hours while she was asleep at home she was awoken by sounds from Leonard's house. She immediately went out on her verandah where she saw a man jumped through the eastern window from Leonard's house and shouted twice in a loud tone of voice "murder".

She immediately raised an alarm and other neighbours came out and went over to Leonard's house where the gruesome discovery was made.

Leonard's body was seen with several wounds covered in blood in the said building in a pair of black boxer pants, while Ronald Wong's body was also found in a paddle boat in the river with several wounds lying face down.



In Memoriam

In Everlasting memory of



Sampson Alexander Saul

Sunrise - Thursday Nov 7, 1898
Sunset - Sunday May 28, 1989



Eric Anderson Saul aka Bove

Sunrise - Saturday May 5, 1928
Sunset - Sunday May 16, 1993

formerly of 10 Eldorado Village, West Coast Berbice

Remembering you is easy, we do it every day. Missing you is the hardest part as it never goes away. To hear your voice, to see your smile, sit with you and talk for awhile would be our greatest wish. Today, tomorrow, our whole life through we shall always love and remember you.

Lovingly remembered by your wife, children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, nephews, nieces, all descendants of Maybel Mitchell-Saul and Sampson Alexander Saul, other relatives and friends.

Inserted by Lt Col (Retired) Lelon Abrey Saul



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The Voice of Labour

Lest we forget- the 1926 Conference of Caribbean Labour Leaders

This conference was held in Georgetown, Parliament Buildings. At the conclusion of the Conference the undermentioned are some of the things Hubert Nathaniel Critchlow and other Labour Leaders agreed to pursue. They thereafter listed their demands and began a united struggle with the respective colonial authorities for: -

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEMANDS

1. Immunity for trade unions from claims for damages resulting from strikes
2. Immunity from charges of conspiracy
3. The right to picket peacefully
4. Minimum wage legislation
5. The forty-hour week
6. Old age pension
7. National health insurance and sickness benefits

Political demands

1. Federation (West Indian Federation –i.e., internal regional self-government)
2. Universal adult suffrage (i.e., one man one vote)
3. Limited powers of the colonial governors
4. Free compulsory primary education
5. Limitation on the size of a plantation
6. Nationalisation
7. State ownership of public utilities
8. Cooperative marketing of agriculture produces.

In 1926 Cheddie Jagan was eight-year-old and Forbes Burnham, three-year-old.

Today, when the Labour Movement stands up and fights and raises its voice in protest against acts and actions by government and employers considered inimical to workers' well-being, the Movement comes from a strong position of history, strength, authority and conviction. Having laid the foundation in post slavery society, as the first mass-based organisation to establish a programme to create a just and fair society for all Guyanese, it is a matter of necessity that the trade union continues to stand up and fight.

But the trade union cannot fight alone. The Movement needs the support of every worker, unionised or not; every citizen, in the workforce or out. Solidarity is strength and makes potent the struggle for social, political and economic justice for all. Labour has demonstrated over the years its interest resides not only in the workplace but includes the wider society.

It is our conviction that the trade union has a social responsibility and obligation to influence the welfare and standard of living of the community within which it operates. This community is called Guyana. The struggle that started in 1905, when dock workers downed tools in protest against poor working conditions, to the establishment of a programme in 1926 to realise voting rights and internal self-government, with voting right achieved in 1953, independence in 1966, and complete internal self-government in 1970 with Republican status, the struggle is still far from over. And even as gains have been made, these must be zealously guarded and protected lest they be eroded/removed.

The Guyana Trades Union Congress urges every citizen to mobilise, to cooperate in the building of Guyana, to unite in fighting together for our rights and freedoms, and protecting our resources from being exploited by foreign forces to our exclusion and detriment. As Guyana enters its 55th year, let us all resolve to fight together. And in the refrain of the national song, 'Let us Co-operate' by W. R. A Pilgrim:- "Can we do it? Yes we can."

Ann's Grove man scores 100 not out

Amid much fanfare, Nelson Barrington Clonmell ushered in his 100th Birth Anniversary with family and friends one day after Guyana celebrated its 55th Independence Anniversary.

Clonmell, who lived all his life in Ann's Grove on the East Coast of Demerara, was born May 27, 1921. He was married to the late Shirley Clonmell – a union that produced nine children, 25 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren.

On Saturday, two days after he celebrated his 100th Birthday, Cornmell,



Meet Nelson Barrington Clonmell who celebrated his 100th Birth Anniversary on Thursday, May 27



Nelson Barrington Clonmell and some of his grandchildren



in an interview with Village Voice Newspaper, said he worked at the Atkinson Air Force Base, which was operated by the United States Army Air Forces. That aside, he was also a carpenter and farmer.

Today, he lives with his daughter Orna Gulliver, granddaughter Daicea Mahaica and great grand Taliah Kennedy.

The centenarian said it was his heart desire to reach 100, and it was a blessing to have celebrated with his family and friends.

Clonmell said he loves puri and curry, cook-up, roti, whole wheat tennis rolls and ground provisions. He was keen on noting that he has a love for salt.

"He lives on coca cola drink every day n lime drink with salt in it," his granddaughter Mahaica told this newspaper, while adding that he takes time to exercise.

Describing her grandfather as a strict but very jovial individual, Mahaica said he doesn't allow his age to stop him from doing anything.

"Although he's a hundred years old he would climb trees, pick up clothes on the line , cut trees , burn garbage , cut pieces of woods, peel coconut, grate the coconut and feed fowls in the yard , water plants, wash clothes ,pick fruits, plant fruits and vegetables," she said.

She also noted that on a daily basis, he enjoys looking at National Communication Network (NCN).

'Pay the security guards well'

...Dharamlall charges Queensway after nearly $1B contract award

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development last week signed four major contracts for works to be completed in Region Six, East Berbice Corentyne.

The signing of the contracts was done by the Regional Executive Officer, Narindra Persaud in the presence of Minister of Local Government, Nigel Dharamlall, Regional Chairman and the four contractors, N & S General Engineering and Contracting Services, Premium Asphalt, Shaffeeullah Sawmill and Queensway Security Services Inc.

Over 1 Billion dollars was signed over to do rehabilitation work at the entrance of the #63 Beach; rehabilitation of the #61 beach entrance; extension of the Berbice High School and Security Provisions for the Regional Democratic Council.

A total of $31.4 million dollars was allocated to do the rehabilitation of the #63 Beach entrance by Shaffeeullah Sawmill; $28.7 million to Premium Asphalt for rehabilitation of the #61 Beach entrance; $14.8 million to N & S General Engineering and Contracting Services for the extension work at the Berbice High School and $988,786,754 to the Queensway Security Services for provision of security service to the Regional Democratic Council.



Chief Operations Officer, Lancelot Khan signing the $900 million contract for security provisions for the Regional Democratic Council

Dharamlall noted that the government continues to spend time in the fields to assess the implementation of each project and ensures they are executed to the specifications of the contract. He said it is important that every contract is completed in a timely manner and suits the expectations of the people of Region Six.

"The budget for Region Six is in excess of $6 billion dollars and we are signing a portion of this budget for these contacts here in Region Six. We have more to do but I thought that, with this being such a significant quantum of the budget, we spend some time speaking about it publicly. Region Six is one of the contiguous regions where a lot of investments will be placed in this region outside of the RDC and through different agencies of the government including at the level of the central government"

Minister noted that with the current circumstances in Region Six it is the government's duty to perform exceptionally well as there have been too many reports of poor quality works being one and poor quality services being provided.

As such, $988, 786,754 was signed in contract to the Queensway Security Services to ensure advanced and high-quality services are provided to employees of the security firms.

This came following several complaints made to President Irfaan Ali about the injustice of the security service providers towards those persons who were hired. Minister Dharamlall urged the contractor of Queensway Security Services to ensure that the persons employed are being treated fairly and that they are being paid on time.

"We see our budget as a source of income, employment and livelihood for our people and so we expect you to ensure that whoever you have employed, firstly perform their duties and secondly, you also have an obligation to them to ensure that they are being paid and that all of the discounts that have to be made are being made to their benefit"

Minister noted that they have had several complaints about employees NIS not being remitted not only in Region Six but all other regions. As such he urged all the contractors to ensure all their staff are being paid and that deductions, as it relates to NIS and others are in order.

"We don't want to get to a point when someone is 60 years old and they have no pension to get from NIS or even to a point where someone is earning either directly or indirectly from the government resources or taxpayers that when they turn up sick they don't have the support they desire simply because their NIS is not in order"

Dharamlall stated that it is quite evident that there are a number of dilapidated infrastructures across the country. As such he noted that transformation will take place since several projects are underway. He further stated that they will restart the public placement of unpriced bill of quantities in or around the project sites and also have site visits conducted by the public works department and that all visits be countersigned by the contractor or their authorised representative on the site.

In an attempt to being of great benefit to villages and project areas, the Minister told the contractors, if the need arises for more workers, they should employ skilled or even unskilled people from the area to boost the village economy and create employment for those who are in need. All the contractors have pledged to begin their work in the coming weeks.





Thinking Global: How Colwayne Morris worked his way up from rural Belladrum to the University of Missouri to fulfil his dreams

By Lisa Hamilton



Dr. Colwayne Morris graduates from the University of Missouri with his PhD in Animal Science - Monogastric Nutrition



Morris in 2015, working along with Partners of the Americas prior to leaving Guyana to study at the University of Missouri



Morris' extended family at this Master's Degree graduation

Growing up in the rural village of Belladrum on the West Coast of Berbice, 33-year-old Dr. Colwayne Morris didn't know then that he would go on to achieve his PhD at the University of Missouri and therefore fulfil his dream. All he had was his passion, determination and his trust in God. In the end, these turned out to be his unique recipe for success.

Morris was born while his mother was just 16-years-old. His father, also a teen at the time, was a pork knocker working in Guyana's interior. For the most part, he was raised by his grandmother in Belladrum within an extended family. The family produced crops and reared livestock. Every time an animal became sick they would phone the veterinarian but there were instances when an animal died before the veterinarian arrived. As a youngster, Morris often wondered what could be done to prevent this.

There and then, intrigued by the vet's know-how to treat animals and propelled by his own desire to prevent sick animals from dying, Morris decided he wanted to become a veterinarian.

However, growing up wasn't easy. Not coming from an affluent family, there were things Morris wanted for himself but couldn't afford. Before he became a young entrepreneur in his own way by selling items such as pickled mangoes and pointer brooms. He continued doing so all the way up to high school.

REFOCUS

When he began attending the Bygeval Multilateral School -- at the time the second-highest ranked High School in Region Five -- though he initially chose the Science stream, fate would have it that, in the first week, he'd move over to the Agriculture Science stream. While at Bygeval Multilateral, Morris' passion for agriculture, particularly animals, grew. One of his teachers would always make reference to the Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA), so, after he graduated high school with passes in six subjects, he enrolled at the GSA.

Pursuing a Diploma in Animal Health and Veterinary Public Health, Morris got off to a rough start when he failed four courses within three terms which was termed as a failed year. However, because he had an overall high percentage, the institution offered him a repeat. "That's what humbled me, that failure." Morris said. "From then on I started to develop a habit of studying with my classmates and I left GSA passing with credit. I was the person with about the third-highest percentage in my batch."

Looking back, he considers his time at GSA as the best of his academic life -- both socially and academically. At GSA, he developed an interest in animal nutrition through his interactions with Dr. Patsy Francis and through the institution's merging of theoretical and practical teaching.

Morris said: "I was doing surgery and nutrition at the same time -- two courses together -- and I realised the importance of nutrition in wound healing and management, and the importance of preventive medicine...I tell people I'm still running on GSA fluid right now because the amount of stuff I learned at that institution I haven't picked up anywhere else."

After successfully completing his training, the institution hired Morris as the Assistant Veterinarian and he began working on the livestock farm the following week after his final exams. He worked there for approximately two years assisting veterinarians in handling, diagnosis, treatment, surgeries and necropsies of farm animals. He also conducted laboratory and other practical sessions primarily with Animal Health and Veterinary Public Health students and was the Supervisor responsible for the Small Ruminant section of the Farm.

Referring to the GSA as "a good investment", Morris now encourages other persons to attend the institution. Meanwhile, he advises the GSA to put greater emphasis on encouraging and assisting its students to become entrepreneurs to improve the future of agriculture in Guyana.

"If you have that entrepreneurial component to the curriculum, folks won't be leaving GSA trying to look for a job, they would already have something going," he suggested.

IT TAKES SACRIFICE

After being encouraged by his former lecturers to enroll at the University of Guyana (UG), Morris did so at the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry in 2009. He pursued a B.Sc. in Agriculture selecting the Animal Science option. While there, he was still involved in providing animal health service in various parts of the country. He volunteered as a veterinary technician during the quarantining of improved genetic materials (pigs) into Guyana from the United States.

He volunteered as a stockman and a veterinary technician during the introduction of the Texel breed and Texana (sheep) to Guyana. Between 2008 to 2010, he assisted with Artificial Insemination and Embryo transfer in Guyana's local Barbados Black Belly Ewes. He also volunteered as a veterinary technician during the Swine Flu surveillance in Guyana with Dr. Gavin Peters of the Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA).

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Thinking Global: How Colwayne Morris worked ...

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That was not all, Morris also worked on a part-time basis at Pets 2000 Veterinary Clinic, where he assisted Dr. Nicholas Waldron in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases of cats, dogs and farm animals, as well as in a wide array of surgical veterinary procedures and necropsies. These involvements were apart from his participation in other extra-curricular activities on and off-campus.

What some did not know at that time was that Morris was struggling financially. He had moved from Belladrum to South Georgetown but still faced difficulties. While working at the GSA he had saved money to study at UG for two years but in one year his money dried up, spent on transportation, food and other expenses. "Many times I walked to UG [from South Georgetown], many times I ate bread alone all week, many times I slept in UG in the classroom. I had friends who I studied with who had similar struggles and we did it together," Morris recalled.

"It was tough. Have you ever had involuntary fasting? No food. I remember myself and a friend of mine walking from the Agriculture Department to the printing area at UG, walking and looking for money on the ground, looking for coins because we didn't have it...stay positive, even in sad situations. The bible tells us that -- in good times and bad times, praise Him."

He is thankful to God and his family and friends who assisted him along the way. In 2012, Morris completed the four-year program at UG with honours, graduating in just three years due to his previous experience at the GSA. That same year, he began his career by working with the Partners of the Americas on the Farmer to Farmer program as a Field Officer, assisting the Country Coordinator in designing and implementing projects. He was also attached as a Senior Field Extension Officer.

A NEW CHAPTER

It was during a symposium at the University of Guyana in 2014 that he met Professor of Animal Sciences at the University of Missouri, Dr. David Ledoux who offered him a six-month internship at his laboratory at the University. The offer came with the possibility of him completing his Master's Degree there. Around this time, he had received over a dozen scholarship rejection letters from the Public Service Ministry Scholarship Division in Guyana. Coincidentally, also around that time, he was finally accepted for a partial scholarship through the Organization of American States (OAS) to attend the University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Agustine campus. However, Morris declined this offer after getting full confirmation from Dr. Ledoux that he would accept him as a Research Scholar in January 2015. When he arrived at the University of Missouri, just halfway into the year, tragedy struck as he experienced double major heartbreaks. One involved his relationship with the woman he'd planned to get engaged to and the other was the diagnosis of his paternal grandmother with Stage 4 cervical cancer. His grandmother subsequently passed away on November 12, 2015.



Dr. Colwayne Morris represents Belladrum, the village he grew up in.

"It kind of messed me up because I had anxiety. Before then I never knew what it was like and I would never wish that on my worst enemy. I couldn't sleep, I couldn't eat, I couldn't breathe. That was my toughest year emotionally but it was probably my best year academically. I had straight A's right through because I put my energy into something else," he said. During his time at the university, he was elected the Vice President of the Animal Science Graduate Student Association (AGSA) and representative to the Graduate and Professional Council (GPC) at the University of Missouri-Columbia. In 2015, he also completed a Diploma in Digital Photography and Video Editing. For several years he was the only black graduate student in his Department.

In 2017, Morris went on to graduate with a Master of Science degree (MSc.) in Animal Science with an emphasis in Mono-gastric Nutrition. He was then offered a PhD Graduate Research Assistantship by Dr. Jeffre Firman at the Animal Science Research Center, University of Missouri. There, he honed skills, conducted research trials and analyzed results in order to draw appropriate conclusions with broilers and turkeys on digestive enzymes and mineral digestibility.

He also wrote and reviewed protocols for animal research according to the University of Missouri Animal Care and Use Committee standards. He formulated poultry diets using low-cost computer-based methods. During that time, he also went on to become President of ASGSA and the Department's representative to the Graduate Professional Council. He was also selected as a Graduate Scholar of Excellence through the division of Inclusion Diversity and Equity where he participated in professional development sessions and provided mentorship to undergraduate students.

In the summer of 2019, he was accepted as a Poultry Nutrition intern at Tyson Foods Inc. in Northwest Arkansas after the connection was made by a professor he knew from another university. During this time he would travel the world and attend several programmes and conferences through Tyson Foods or by applying to attend.

"That helped to build my confidence. There aren't many people looking like me within my industry so me going out there and manoeuvring and connecting with people, that was a plus and it's what got me where I am today," Morris said.

REACH BEYOND WHAT YOU SEE

Following delays brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, on May 7, 2021, Morris graduated with a PhD. in Animal Science - Monogastric Nutrition. It was through his networking efforts that he subsequently began his career as a Technical Account Manager for Poultry in the US with Zinpro Corporation in 2021. He now hopes to gain hands-on experience with the various facets of the poultry industry and develop his knowledge in areas of animal science. He would also like to expand his horizon by applying the techniques learned in his field of study.

Dr. Morris represents Guyana wherever he goes and is always ready to market his country as one of the best places on earth. He said: "Regardless of what goes on in Guyana, I'm very proud of where I'm from, proud of the community I grew up in. It definitely helped me stay grounded and humble and all of those qualities are good for young people going forward."

When asked for his advice for Guyanese who similarly want to pursue their PhD, Dr. Morris said that it takes discipline, passion and determination.

"First of all, you've got to really want it and that's where that self-motivation comes. For me, it was not just for the betterment of myself but for my family. Then, it takes discipline to focus on what you want. Finances might not be there... but you must believe in yourself that you can do it, that you can do anything you want to do," he encouraged. He also urged Guyanese young people to pursue areas of study that may not yet exist in Guyana so that their knowledge can eventually become beneficial to others. He encourages them to think globally about the impact they can have not only in Guyana but around the world.

Bethany residents on edge as lax enforcement of lockdown sees 33 test positive for COVID



In recent weeks, the village of Bethany off the Essequibo Coast has seen a steep increase in COVID-19 cases and calls by residents for the village council to enforce an ongoing lockdown have fell on deaf ears.

At the same time, residents told the Village Voice that the newly elected toshao spends most of her time outside the village on the Essequibo Coast and communicates with the council via WhatsApp.

Bethany is located along the Supenaam creek, some five miles from the busy waterfront area.

While repeated attempts to contact Toshao Sonia Latchman on Saturday were futile, the Village Voice was told by health officials from the area that two weeks ago three persons, including a health worker and a midwife tested positive for COVID.

This alarmed residents and last Saturday, a mass testing exercise was undertaken. Following the exercise, 24 positive cases were recorded while 6 new cases were subsequently recorded this week. "The toshao comes in here from Aurora, passes instructions and she leaves," a resident who spoke under the condition of anonymity noted.

He said that the situation is worrisome since Bethany is home to some 400 residents and most than 30% of that number a young persons. He said residents continue to travel to and from the village despite the ongoing lockdown measure and this he noted may have contributed to the pandemic's presence at the village.

He said a young resident who travelled to Bethany from St Cuthbert's Mission off the Soesdyke Linden Highway several weeks ago was the first person who experienced symptoms of the disease.

Residents noted that the village leader works on the Essequibo Coast and as such, she spends most of her time outside of the village. They noted that health issues, such as the pandemic, require leadership to be on the ground.

Guyana has seen a high increase in COVID-19 cases in recent months and the fatality figures have climbed rapidly during the month of May as more than 80 deaths have been recorded during that period. The authorities have been urging persons to get vaccinated at various vaccinations sites set-up across the country.

From homeless boy to tech genius

— Carl Handy tells how he overcame poverty to now own a tech company

By Gabriella Chapman

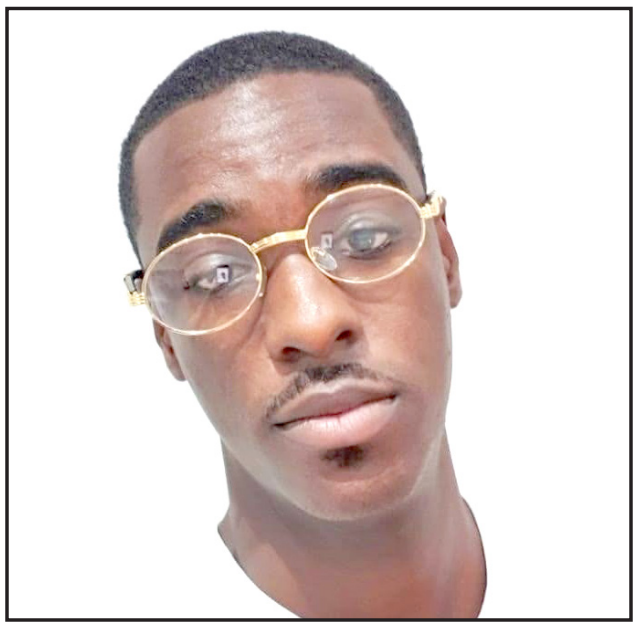
A positive outcome in the future of a child growing up in extremely poor conditions, especially in a third world country like Guyana, may seem impossible to many. Though it may be tougher to earn notable achievements, especially experiencing poverty while at a tender age, or the age where peer pressure and the life of crime is ever so prevalent, it is definitely not impossible.

Testimony to this is 25-year-old Carl Handy, owner of a software company named Kalpa Services. In an interview with Village Voice News, he shared details about the challenging life he endured as a child.

Handy shared that the biggest challenge in his life was overcoming poverty, after growing up in Plantation Liliendaal, familiarly known as A field Sophia. "I've been homeless twice, suffered from severe depression and had suicidal tendencies. I was raised by a single mother, with help from my grandmother (her mother). That of course came with its own challenges. But she did the best she could to provide for my brother and I. Our house was a tiny wooden thing, probably 15x20, that often leaked when it rained. I can't tell how many times we'd be on the roof patching holes. We slept on mattresses on the floor and had no electricity, so studying was tough. We'd hurry home to catch daylight so we could revise and do homework cause the lights from candles and lamps were too dim," the young man recounted.

These conditions were endured for his entire school life. But he never succumbed to the hardship of his childhood. Handy was adamant that regardless of his circumstances, he will commit to doing his part in preparing himself for a better, brighter future.

"I studied for CXC under candle light. I used to go to school and sleep in class because I'd be up all night writing out SBAs and doing other homework. In fact, if it wasn't for my aunt, who was the deputy of my school, I wouldn't have gotten most of my SBAs done and wouldn't have even written CSEC cause my mom couldn't afford it. Thanks to her, I was able to write all 10 subjects I wanted, and passed all. I got three 3s, five 2s and two 1s," he shared with this publication.



25-year-old Software Developer, Carl Handy

After completing high school with excellent grades, things really began to shift financially for Handy, as he was able to gain employment.

While in high school, Handy took a liking for a career in Law, but he knew he couldn't afford to attend the University of Guyana just out of high school. So he worked and began saving money for his tuition.

"The extra income helped a lot, but I soon realized that it wasn't going to be enough. So I started thinking of ways I can bring in extra money. I taught myself PC repair and started doing that part time for a while. That led me to network with some very genuine people who took a liking to me and mentored me to some degree. They had me read business books and taught me things that really shifted my mindset and the way I viewed money," he said.

In 2014, Handy got a chance to study law at the Antigua State College, after his grandmother reached out to some of her friends there and got him enrolled in their associate programme for the 2014/2015 semester.

He said that the Law programme was significantly cheaper than UG so it made sense to travel. However, halfway through the Law programme, Handy made a spontaneous decision that he has not regretted.

"It was during the 2016/2017 semester I decided to put law on the back burner and pursue a career in software development, after seeing IntellectStorm launch Directory gy. My thought process was, 'even though my grades are good and I will likely get a scholarship to attend UWI, finding a job in the field is going to be rough, and the future is tech.' So in the spur of the moment I booked a ticket back home and made it my mission to land a job at IntellectStorm and I did several months later, in February of 2017… With law, there aren't too many moving parts when looking at a case. So there's rarely any opportunity to apply creative problem solving. A stark contrast when compared to software development because almost every challenge is unique to the product you're building. The switch really allowed me to push the limits of my thinking," he told Village Voice News.

Handy is now reaping the fruits of his resilience, persistence and labour. Today, he is self-employed, owning his own software company that he formed last year after quitting his job at IntellectStorm.

Kalpa Services (his company) designs and builds websites, mobile and web applications. He disclosed that most of their clients are based in Germany, UK and the USA.

He is also an active open source-contributor, currently working with Prismic.io - a California based tech company, to help improve their developer experience.

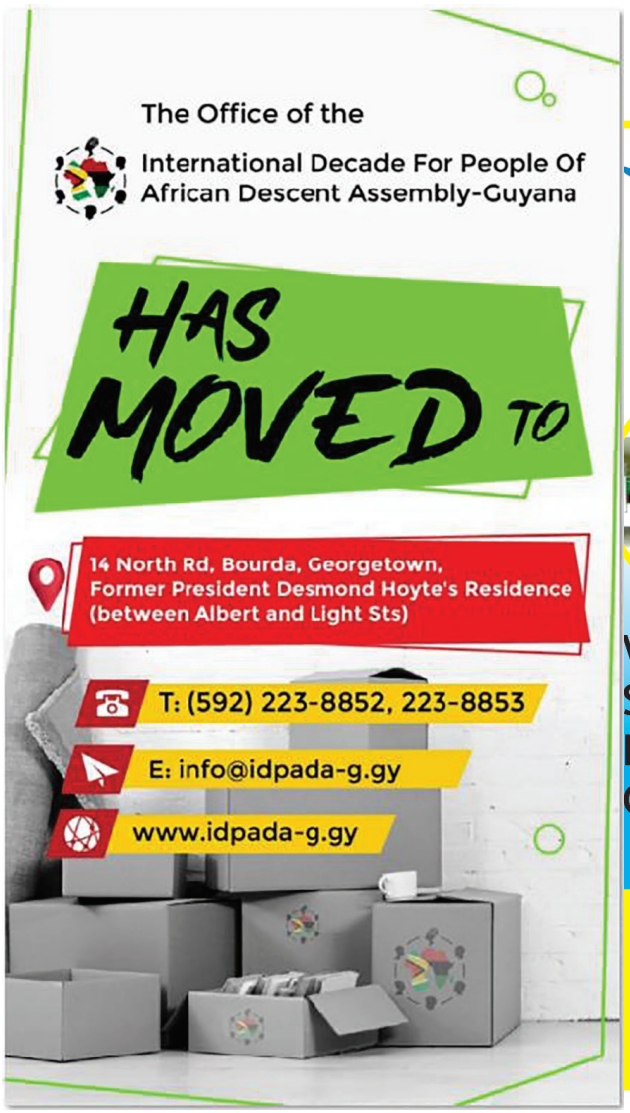
Handy said that others who may be going through similar circumstances he endured, must know two important things.

"First, find a mentor or mentors. I definitely wouldn't be here without the wisdom of those who did it before me. The financial literacy they imparted and I later built up, was what got me out of poverty. I took eight years to go from wondering where my next meal would come from, to now not even bothered by prices when I shop. Sendly, money is a by-product of value added. So

instead of thinking, 'how can I make more money?', think about the value you can add to others," the young man imparted.

In addition to his academic achievements, and overcoming poverty, Handy also made the decision to become a humanitarian.

"I'm a Project Periwinkle Ambassador. I joined this organisation's fight against stomach cancer after losing someone who was like a mother to me in 2019. I'm also actively contributing to 'theKeepers'. A project that aims to bring to life a digital archive of all the contributions of black women and girls throughout the history of hip hop. This project is the brainchild of Akua Naru, an American hip hop artist and poet," he shared.





Legislature lockdown



And this is my perennial disquietude, who or what can perform a deep-sea political salvage of PPP? For this demise doesn't warrant a post-mortem, for astute minds can differentiate causation from association. Notwithstanding, admission is mine that many explanatory hypotheses have been resident idle in my grey-matter. But rumination, not cattle related, did refocus my intellect to a Pradoville associated inhaled sea-salt underpinning. But such an illumination, require your indulgence, which humbly I beseech.

Unquestionably, applicable in this pedagogic epistle is Dewey's constructivist theory which requisite prior knowledge, for which observations of accelerated sea-salt metallic corrosion, serving as the edification scaffolding. Moreover, building on this constructivism concept, notwithstanding lubrication, corrosion is irreversible with inevitable mechanical incompetence ensuing.

For the aforementioned informs the pathophysiological framework, underpinning PPP incompetence. Fundamentally, inhaled salt concentrated sea air, diffuses across the lungs' semi-permeable membranes, dissolving in the bloodstream before permeating organs via microscopic capillaries. But with salt being neurotoxic, neuro-corrosion rapidly overtakes PPP limited thought faculties, for which reversibility fails, even with the lubrication powerhouse, Exxon. Thereupon, blinding incompetence pervades

INHALE TEIXEIRA

And this blinding incompetence was laid bare in two recent Village Voice News accounts. For the narrative was one of a Joe Harmon polite reminder to Manzoor Nadir, 'The Sleeper of the National Assembly', that it's narcoleptic state has had over 81 days expiration. Bharrat Jagdeo, displaying pathognomonic features of a corroded thought faculty, completely missed the point and context in rushing to inform Joe Harmon that he lacks the moral authority to speak on such matters, since APNU+AFC did worse. So query I did, of the keeper of black-books, if APNU+AFC did worse, does this justify PPP outperforming them? But thankfully my memory being vodka clear did remind me that the doors of Parliament, under APNU+AFC, were glued consequence of a NCM for which ungluing was dependent on an election or an agreement between leading political minds, for which the very Jagdeo stated, over my dead body. So with APNU+AFC rationale re-infused in thought faculties, the pertinent question is, why PPP has more fear of Parliament than nights in their jungled cemeteries?

But then PPP Chief Whip Gail Teixeira, politically comatose after the NCM, answered in the most gratuitously impetuous deportment, the Jagdeo directed question, and in so doing sublimely exceeded Dr. Anthony, on the buffoonery scale. For Dr. Anthony record is one of stupendously stuporous magnitude, only surpassable by a seismically clueless calamitous effort. And surely Mrs. Teixeira is of such ilk. For her exposition for the glued Parliament is one of PPP prerequisite time and space to focus on Covid, without Parliamentary distracting oversight. Surely, this must be the most combustible nonsense ever spoken, since man evolved bipedal.

The fact is, the rest of the Caribbean is managing Covid while simultaneously managing other matters of the State. America is managing Covid even as the House and Senate address matters of the State. Britain is managing Covid even as the Commons provides oversight to Boris Johnson's Government. Canada is managing Covid even as Parliament debates matters of the State. India is managing Covid even as Parliament debates billions for Modi's mansion. The Palestinians and Israelis are managing Covid even as they address other matters of the State. So why can't PPP?

THE NUMBERS

In fact, with devotion to Covid, the minimum the masses expected was the development of a de novo, Sputnik-PPP Covid vaccines. But that was not to be, begging the question, why has PPP preferred laboratory over legislature? Certainly, such answers mandate numbers analysis, which once again I've pilfered from Village Voice News. For a recap would painfully remind us that we had record Covid deaths in January, February and March which was doubled in April. To date, 26 days into May, we have set a new record. Further, analysis of Regional patterns have Region 4 consistently as the top Covid hotspot, which may explain PPP Parliamentary lockdown. Furthermore, the prior months death patterns, across all age spectra, remain high. Dr. Anthony's vaccination report outlined to date, 66.2% over 60yrs have had their first vaccine. 40-59yrs-33.7%. And 18-39yrs-27.2%. But this update critically fell short of acknowledging and explaining the concerning exponentially increasing Covid deaths, month after month despite vaccination. And with no acknowledgement there weren't plans to curb these deaths.

Then Dr. Anthony clumsily attempted to rationalise the increasing infections among the young, while tiptoeing around the increasing deaths. "When we look at the number of new infections that have been occurring, we're seeing that those new cases are predominantly between 18 and 40. So, this group is more vulnerable to the infection because they're more active, they're moving around, they're coming in contact with persons who are positive". The conclusion came with an appeal to the young to be vaccinated. But once again, Dr. Anthony missed multiple opportunities to educate the young. For he should have also appealed for face-mask compliance. For social distancing. For avoiding crowds. For closed airports. For lockdowns. For vaccines take months for full effect hence vaccination should be married to Public Health Practise.

Notwithstanding, Dr. Ramsammy prior near death experience when Dr. Anthony inserted politics into Covid, Dr. Anthony inexplicably repeated his indiscretion. "We continue to urge the leadership in Region 10, persons who have influence in the community, to advocate so that people can go out and get their vaccines. We're seeing an increase in cases in Region Ten as well, we have right now more than 140 active cases in Region 10, and there are communities where we've seen more than 50 cases." Surely, PPP is in charge of all of Guyana; albeit illegitimately. Note: PPP should insert thoughts and not politics into Covid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Clearly PPP legislature lockdown has failed, for once again there are record deaths this month, which once again mandates professional guidance.

1. Stop politicisation of Covid and develop a national approach to Covid management.

2. Vaccination must be in conjunction with Public Health Measures. Vaccines should've good efficacy against variants.

3. Lockdown country and not Parliament. Close all airports. Lives over livelihood.

4. Have user friendly vaccination centres. Presently users have to broadcast to cocked ears, sensitive details of their medical history. For such a practice will surely demotivate many, including HIV, mental health illness etc, from vaccination.

5. Abort the victimhood mentality, for the only victims are the infected and dead. Further, our Covid catastrophe demands thinking out of the box which may include,

• Vaccination linked raffles with prizes to attract the young. Likewise vaccination linked raffles with prizes to attract seniors.

• Financial incentivised vaccination.

• With the citizenry not going to the vaccination centres, the vaccination centre must go to them. Vaccine on wheels.

• Vaccination at places of work incentivised with free lunches.

• Have a designated vaccination day.

CONCLUSION

Thankfully, there is more to a country than Covid. And for this, the rest of the world has Parliamentary oversight, except PPP. And with the Speaker rightly challenged, Jagdeo provided a toddler level answer, "Mom, Joe did worse." But this is much deeper. Covid has now gone beyond a national catastrophe. A forewarned PPP went fishing. An opened Parliament would demand answers for the populace. Hence the reasoned it's glued. Further evidence of PPP scant regards for us.

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NOTICE

DUE to unforeseen circumstances,
the committee of management is
unable to have our fortnightly meetings,
the committee of management hereby
apologizes to all members for
any inconvenience caused.
However, we will notify the public
as soon as the situation is rectified.

Thank you.

Why BCCI wants more time on T20 World Cup decision

(CRICINFO) The BCCI will ask the ICC to defer the decision on where the 2021 men's T20 World Cup will be played this October-November. Board president Sourav Ganguly informed the members at a virtual special general meeting (SGM) on Saturday that the BCCI will ask the ICC for another month and utilise this time to gauge various factors that could determine if India will be fit to hold the marquee event.

Ganguly is expected to place this request formally at the ICC Board meeting on June 1. In a media release after the SGM, the BCCI said the members - state associations - had "authorised" the board's office bearers to write to the ICC to seek an "extension" to take an "appropriate call" on hosting the T20 World Cup.

WHY DOES THE BCCI WANT MORE TIME?

There are two reasons. The Covid-19 pandemic has added another layer of complexity to an already knotted issue of tax exemption that the ICC wants the BCCI to sort with the Indian government. The ICC wants a complete tax waiver for it to maximise on the profits derived from running a global tournament.

At the SGM, the members were informed that the BCCI would end up paying the Indian government close to 46% of the estimated total revenue for hosting the T20 World Cup. That amount, an official who attended the meeting, said was close to INR 900 crore (US $125 million approximately).

The tax exemption has been ICC's longstanding request to the BCCI, who were named hosts for two world tournaments in the current commercial cycle: the men's T20 World Cup (October-November 2021) and the men's ODI World Cup slated for October 2023.

There is a precedent for ICC's concern: having failed to procure the tax exemption from the government in the 2016 T20 World Cup, the global body withheld close to US$20-30 million from the BCCI's share of the central revenue pool. Last year, the ICC even threatened to withdraw the BCCI's hosting rights for the T20 World Cup if the Indian government didn't offer a tax waiver.

Last December, during another meeting, the BCCI told the state associations that the board was looking at finding a middle ground and could end up paying anywhere around INR 200-900 crore as tax to the Indian government for hosting the World Cup. The members had then said that despite a hefty amount involved, the BCCI should pay, if necessary, but host the tournament.



BCCI president Sourav Ganguly briefed the members at BCCI's virtual SGM on Saturday BCCI

Members have been informed the board's talks with the Indian government have been encouraging, with a solution likely to be found.

The second significant challenge for the BCCI is to see whether all 16 participating teams of the T20 World Cup would want to travel to India during the pandemic. The second wave of the pandemic has brought the country to a near standstill, with several states in the midst of consecutive lockdowns. The governments of several countries have red-listed travellers from India, in some cases even their own citizens, like Australia did.

In April, just before the IPL started, the BCCI had proposed nine venues to the ICC: Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai, Lucknow, Dharamsala, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad, which was also marked to host the final on November 14.

However, the ICC had to cancel a routine inspection in April after India was put on the red list by the UAE, where the global cricket body's headquarters are based.

Internally, the BCCI has acknowledged the concerns players and their respective countries will have about travelling to India. These include: a probable third wave coupled with the challenge of creating a tournament bubble across multiple venues, which would entail a lot of travel. As a fall-back option, the BCCI has decided the UAE would be the cover. On Saturday, the BCCI top brass told the members that the board would still retain the hosting rights even if the tournament was hosted in the UAE.

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Indian Premier League 2021: Tournament to resume in United Arab Emirates in September

(BBC SPORT) The Indian Premier League was postponed 29 matches into the 60-game tournament

The remainder of the 2021 Indian Premier League (IPL) season will take place in the United Arab Emirates in September and October.

The Twenty20 tournament was suspended on 4 May after several positive coronavirus tests among players.

It has been moved away from India because it is monsoon season in the country at that time. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said it had been a unanimous decision to resume the IPL.

There are 31 games left to be played, and the rearrangement of the tournament has had to contend with a packed schedule of international cricket. England end a five-Test series against India on 14 September and are set to travel to Bangladesh and Pakistan before the T20 World Cup in India begins in October. The BCCI has requested an extension of time from the ICC to decide on the hosting of the World Cup.



The Indian Premier League was postponed 29 matches into the 60-game tournament

'Scoring big hundreds and taking five-fors'

— Dean Elgar's South Africa ready for a 'new chapter'



Dean Elgar

(CRICINFO) Scoring hundreds, taking five-fors and becoming more consistent. These are on Dean Elgar's agenda as South Africa embark on a(nother) new era next month. Elgar will lead the team on a two-Test tour of the West Indies starting June 10, a series that was supposed to happen this time last year, as they aim to rebuild their red-ball game following two summers of indifferent performances.

Since Mark Boucher took over in the tumultuous summer of 2019, the South Africa have played just eight Tests, lost five and slipped to their lowest position on the rankings - No. 7. They have had three major retirements including former captains Hashim Amla - who continues to churn out runs in the County Championship - and Faf du Plessis, and star seamer Vernon Philander.

Elgar has been given the job for the next two years, effectively the next World Test Championship cycle, and knows it will be difficult. "Now that we are in a new chapter, we need to play more cricket and better cricket," he said on Saturday, ahead of the team's departure to St Lucia via Paris. "We are conscious that over the last period we haven't been very consistent. Our skill level hasn't been where it should be. We need to get back to a bit more of a consistent nature of cricket; a bit more of a South African way."

Which is what, exactly?

"We've always had a batting line-up that has scored heavily. And fast bowlers. That's the South African way," Elgar said. "We need to get back to scoring big hundreds and taking five-fors like it used to be."

You'd be forgiven for not recognising those things as hallmarks of the "South African way" because for the last two seasons they have hardly done any of that. Since December 2019, only Afghanistan have recorded fewer Test hundreds (two in two matches) than South Africa (three in eight) and they have played in far fewer Test matches.

South Africa's century scarcity has causes ranging from lack of confidence to tough conditions but ultimately, it has raised questions about whether they have the correct personnel in place to bat big. And they will be raised again on this tour. While Elgar and Markram are proven performers, the two Tests against West Indies is an opportunity for new vice-captain Temba Bavuma, with only one Test hundred in five years to his name, to step up, for Rassie van der Dussen to add to his first international century that came in an ODI in April and for Quinton de Kock to show he has recovered from the failed captaincy experiment. It is also a chance for a new middle-order batter to be blooded following du Plessis' retirement.

That player is likely to be Keegan Petersen, who Elgar seems to rate highly. "He has got a few years under his belt, domestically, and has scored a lot of runs," he said. "He has got a good energy, good attitude and he brings a different kind of dynamic to our line-up."

Petersen has been in and around the set-up since he topped the first-class run charts in the 2018-19 summer, when he averaged 60.88. He was mentored by then-batting consultant Jacques Kallis in the 2019-20 season and was part of the squad that traveled to Pakistan. He is likely to get the nod ahead of Kyle Verreynne, who was third in last season's first-class competition and is one of the other reserve batters in the group.

South Africa are also heading to the Caribbean with the "luxury," as Elgar put it, of four spinners in preparation for "low and slow," conditions. Keshav Maharaj will lead the pack with other options including George Linde, Tabraiz Shamsi and Prenelan Subrayen.

Despite the expectation that spin will play a big role, it's the other bowling discipline that Elgar wants to see improvement in. A six-seamer group will want to make a statement in this series, especially as South Africa have underperformed in this department too. They've managed six five-fors in eight Tests since December 2019, with Maharaj and Linde responsible for two of them. Beuran Hendricks and Anrich Nortje (three times) claimed the other four but Kagiso Rabada, the spearhead of the attack, has not taken a five-for in 17 Tests, since March 2018.

That was when South Africa beat Australia and it's fair to say, it's been mostly downhill since. It's up to Elgar to try and reverse the team's direction and he will start by working on their mental states. "It's trying to change players' mindsets; to try and get that buy-in from every individual and to try and get them to trust your process going forward," he said. "One of the more challenging aspects of the job will be to try and get the trust of the players so that they can trust the process, to believe in the process and to do it quickly and adapt quickly. It's something I believe very strongly in."

Elgar's era begins with the first Test on June 10. South Africa fly out on Monday and will serve a three-day quarantine on arrival in St Lucia. Provided they return two negative Covid-19 tests, they will be allowed to train from the fourth day but will remain limited to their rooms and will be able to make use of all the hotel's facilities after seven days.

While West Indies have begun the process of vaccinating their players , the South African players have been vaccinated as part of the Sisonke trial, a scheme running in the country for the one-shot Johnson & Johnson jab which has been made available to health workers and those from various sporting bodies.

Why BCCI wants more time on T20...

FROM PAGE 32

HOW LONG CAN THE ICC WAIT?

After the ICC Board's June 1 meeting, the global body's annual conference is scheduled from July 18. Usually the ICC sets up a local organising committee comprising its own officials as well as those from the host board at least a year before the event.

One significant concern for the ICC will be procuring the clearances from the governments including the host country for the 16 teams to arrive in time for the tournament. That would also include the necessary quarantine period as well as putting together biosecure bubbles. That travel is one key area where teams can get exposed was identified as an area of concern by the BCCI once the IPL had been postponed at the midway stage.

Champions of Europe!

…Kai Havertz gives Chelsea victory over Man City to win Champions League

(BBC SPORT) Chelsea won the Champions League for the second time with a fully deserved victory over Manchester City in the all-Premier League confrontation in Porto.

Thomas Tuchel got the better of his Manchester City counterpart Pep Guardiola for the third time since succeeding sacked Frank Lampard in January to bring European club football's biggest prize back to Stamford Bridge for the first time since 2012.

Kai Havertz, blossoming after a slow start to his Chelsea career, got the winner three minutes before half-time when he collected a defence-splitting pass from Mason Mount to round City goalkeeper Ederson and score.

It leaves City still searching for the Champions League, the trophy that has always eluded them, and Guardiola cannot escape scrutiny for his part in this defeat after taking a tactical gamble which backfired.

Guardiola surprisingly decided against utilising either Rodri or Fernandinho as a defensive midfielder, leaving City with a muddled game plan that reduced their effectiveness and rarely presented Chelsea with any problems.

Kai Havertz's goal was his first in the Champions League

Chelsea had the better opportunities throughout, Timo Werner wasting two good chances before Havertz struck and substitute Christian Pulisic squandering another in the second half.

City, who lost Kevin De Bruyne to injury midway through the second half, threw on Sergio Aguero for his final appearance but there was no fairytale ending for the club's greatest goalscorer as Chelsea closed out the win.

Hero CPL squads revealed

(SPORTS MAX) Following the 2021 player draft of the Hero CPL, the franchises announced their full rosters earlier today.

Included in the squads are a number of overseas signings that include Shakib al Hasan, Chris Morris, Faf du Plessis, Matthew Wade, Sandeep Lamichhane and Shoaib Malik. There are also spots for talented Pakistani players Haider Ali, Azam Khan and Usman Qadir and Englishman Samit Patel, who will be playing at his first Hero CPL.

The full squads are listed below:

The Jamaica Tallawahs – Andre Russell, Shakib al Hasan, Carlos Brathwaite, Rovman Powell, Haider Ali, Chadwick Walton, Fidel Edwards, Qais Ahmad, Jason Mohammed, Migael Pretorius, Kennar Lewis, Veerasammy Permaul, Abhijai Mansingh, Joshua James, Kirk McKenzie, Ryan Persaud.

St Lucia Zouks – Faf Du Plessis, Keemo Paul, Wahab Riaz, Matthew Wade, Andre Fletcher, Kesrick Williams, Usman Qadir, Samit Patel, Obed McCoy, Rahkeem Cornwall, Mark Deyal, Roston Chase, Javelle Glenn, Keron Cottoy, Jeavor Royal, Kadeem Alleyne, Alzarri Joseph.

Trinbago Knight Riders – Kieron Pollard, Ravi Rampaul, Sunil Narine, Colin Munro, Sandeep Lamichhane, Darren Bravo, Lendl Simmons, Khary Pierre, Isuru Udana, Sikandar Raza, Anderson Phillip, Denesh Ramdin, Tion Webster, Akeal Hosein, Jayden Seales, Leonardo Julian, Ali Khan.

St Kitts and Nevis Patriots – Dwayne Bravo, Chris Gayle, Evin Lewis, Fabian Allen, Rassie van der Dussen, Anrich Nortje, Sherfane Rutherford, Sheldon Cottrell, Winindu Hasaranga, Devon Thomas, Rayad Emrit, Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Colin Archibald, Jon-Russ Jagesar, Dominic Drakes, Joshua Da Silva, Mikyle Louis.

Barbados Tridents – Chris Morris, Jason Holder, Thisara Perera, Mohammad Amir, Johnson Charles, Shai Hope, Oshane Thomas, Kyle Mayers, Hayden Walsh Jr, Azam Khan, Raymon Reifer, Justin Greaves, Ashley Nurse, Shafiqullah Ghafari, Nyeem Young, Joshua Bishop, Samit Patel.

Guyana Amazon Warriors – Nicholas Pooran, Shoaib Malik, Imran Tahir, Shimron Hetmyer, Mohammad Hafeez, Brandon King, Naveen Ul Haq, Romario Shepherd, Waqar Salamkheil, Chandrapaul Hemraj, Odean Smith, Niall Smith, Gudakesh Motie, Anthony Bramble, Kevin Sinclair, Ashmead Nedd. The 2021 Hero CPL bowls off at Warner Park on August 28 with the final set for September 19.

'We're the best team in the ...

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"We fought so hard today. We knew it would be a tough game. In the second half we fought for our lives to get to this moment, to have this feeling. This is what I came to Chelsea for. It's a dream come true.

"The key was to get tight and be aggressive. I was getting tired as the game went on but when the Champions League is up for grabs, you don't really tire. "Everyone defended for their lives. We've won the Champions League so I wouldn't even care how we played."

'We wanted to be a stone in their shoe'

Thomas Tuchel has turned Chelsea around after replacing Lampard as manager and won European club football's biggest prize in just his 30th game in charge. The win comes a year after guiding Paris St-Germain to the final, where the Ligue 1 side were narrowly beaten by Bayern Munich. He told BT Sport: "To share it with everybody is incredible. We made it. Wow. I don't know what to feel. "I was so grateful to arrive a second time [in the final]. I felt different.

"The [players] were determined to win this. We wanted to be a stone in their shoe. We encouraged everybody to step up and step out, to be more brave and create dangerous counter-attacks. "It was a tough physical game. We had to help each other out."

German Tuchel was only given an 18-month contract when he joined the club in January and met owner Roman Abramovich for the first time in person after the game.

"Maybe I have a new contract now with that win," he said. "I spoke to Roman just now and it was the best moment for the first meeting, or maybe the worst moment. Maybe it can only get worse now."

'Tuchel the magician'

Former Chelsea striker Chris Sutton on BBC Radio 5 Live: "Perfect in Porto, terrific, they defended so, so well. Terrific from Chelsea. They deserved it, had Werner had shooting boots on, they would have been well out sight.

"Kai Havertz hasn't really turned up this season but he comes up with the all-important goal. They have been so well drilled and get the job done. It's massive for Chelsea and Thomas Tuchel.

"You wondered where he could take this team and he has taken them to Champions League victory. This is the one Pep Guardiola wanted to win and didn't do enough on the night. "Tuchel was fired up. Last season was a sore one for him. It's all well and good jumping up and down but [the result is] more to do with the work he is doing in the changing room. They have gone up a dozen notches since he came in."

Former Manchester United defender Rio Ferdinand on BT Sport: "To do what he has done coming halfway through the season is nothing short of a magician. "They've had to come together as a squad, a lot of doubt was put on them as a team and as individuals but now they have marched on. "He has come into this country and played Pep Guardiola's side three times this season and won all three."

Former Chelsea player Joe Cole, speaking to BT Sport: "To sit where we are sat among the fans, every man from [goalkeeper Edouard] Mendy to the final man in the squad is a hero. "That was an unbelievable performance. All these boys are heroes to me now."



'Let your bat do the talking'

— WI legend Lloyd encourages young batsman to answer doubters with lots of runs



Shimron Hetmyer

(SPORTS MAX) Legendary West Indies captain, Clive Lloyd, has called on embattled batsman Shimron Hetmyer to answer doubters by scoring a lot of runs whenever he gets the opportunity.

The 24-year-old has been in the spotlight in recent weeks after losing his international retainer contract with Cricket West Indies. The young batsman has long been considered to be one of the region's premier talents but has struggled to hit top gear in recent seasons.

In Test cricket, where he has not played for the team since 2019, he averages 27.93 having played 16 matches. In One Day International cricket, where he last played in January of last year, he averages 36.66. In T20 international cricket, he averages 18.95 with a strike rate of 116.97.

In addition, the player has struggled with fitness issues, twice failing a fitness test during the period, ahead of a subsequent tour of Sri Lanka last year and a visit of the same team earlier this year.

"The guy has got ability, we know that all he has to do is produce the runs and there should be no problem," Lloyd told the Mason and Guest radio program.

"We all know Pooran, Hetmyer these are very talented guys, but that talent must come out with runs. For a bowler it's wickets," he added.

"I would like to say to all the young people, Mr. Hetmyer and the rest of the gentlemen. They are asking you to be fit, they want you to produce the goods. If you do well, we would have a world-beating team."

'We're the best team in the world'

- says Chelsea's Mason Mount

(BBC SPORT) Mason Mount provided a superb assist for the winning goal Mason Mount hailed Chelsea as "the best team in the world" as the Blues beat Premier League winners Manchester City to lift the Champions League.

German forward Kai Havertz scored the only goal in the first half in Porto to give the Blues their second triumph in the competition after success in 2012.

City had been looking for a quadruple earlier this season but were beaten in the FA Cup semi-finals by Chelsea. "We are in a final and we won it. It's such a special occasion," said Mount.

Midfielder Mount, who provided the assist for the goal, told BT Sport: "I can't put it into words. It's impossible. I've played in two [previous] finals for Chelsea and we lost them both. It's all I've dreamt of, winning a trophy with Chelsea. "To go all the way in the Champions League, we played some tough teams. At this moment in time, we're the best team in the world. You can't take that away from us."

Mount was named in the provisional England squad for the summer's European Championship and will almost certainly make the cut for the tournament along with several other players from the final. He added: "Some of the boys from City will be meeting up with us and I know that will be hard. I spoke to them, they deserved to be here.

"It's tough for them but hopefully next season we'll be pushing for the Premier League as well."

Captain Cesar Azpilicueta hailed a "special, special day" and told BT Sport: "[Kai Havertz] was so calm. Not only that. He runs like crazy. That's why he deserves this.

"I came here in 2012 after that Champions League win. I wanted to repeat that Champions League success. It is amazing. My family are here. It is a special, special day."

Havertz has endured a difficult time at Stamford Bridge since joining in the summer from Bayer Leverkusen, struggling with his form as well as his fitness after contracting Covid-19. "I've waited 15 years for this moment and now it's here," said the match winner.

Man City 0-1 Chelsea: 'It was the best or worst first meeting' - Tuchel on finally meeting Abramovich

'A DREAM COME TRUE'

England international left-back Ben Chilwell is another who was signed by former manager Frank Lampard last summer.

The former Leicester player suffered heartbreak in the FA Cup final against his old side when he saw an injury-time goal disallowed as the Foxes went on to lift the trophy. Chilwell said:

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Champions of Europe!



…Kai Havertz gives Chelsea victory over Man City to win Champions League

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'Let your bat do the talking'

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'Scoring big hundreds and taking five-fors'

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— Dean Elgar's South Africa ready for a 'new chapter'

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