



Mt. Roraima



# The Voters will decide on Election Day

*By: TNR Staff*

According to Tony Jones, who is seeking to become part of Methuen city government, victory on Tuesday, November 7, will not only be a fulfillment of the journey that began many decades ago as

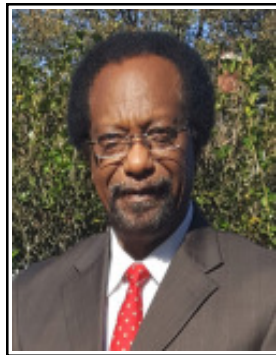


a voice of reason for the poor and disadvantaged but achieving a significant platform from which to serve residents. To

do so, Tony intends to rely on his full repertoire of ideas and practical experience gained from years of community engagement (political and social activism).

When elected Tony plans to focus on issues such as: Public safety, tax reduction, economic expansion, affordable housing, the opioid addiction, infrastructure improvement and cultural diversity with the implementation of his proposed project "Methuen Harmony Week."

Tony has knocked on numerous doors and interacted with many residents always with respect and a willingness to listen to their concerns/issues. He held several campaign events and is confident that Methuen residents will elect him the next Central District Councillor.



*Tony Jones*

# Hero of Tiger Bay

*By: Francis Quamina Farrier*

There is a document on my desk as I write this feature which states; "Co-Operative Republic of Guyana. CERTIFICATE OF DEATH No.0049177. Full name of Deceased: Christopher Stephenson. Date of Death 20th October 1997.

However, twenty years after the heroic death of Christopher Stephenson, there are some citizens who feel that he must never be forgotten, and his heroic actions on October 20, 1997, must be officially recognized with a National Award.

Guyana's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Hamley Case, Chairman of John Fernandes Ltd. Chris Fernandes, Retired General Manager of the Georgetown Water & Sewerage Commissioners, David Dewar and Raymond Shaw, have all expressed interest in elevating Christopher Stephenson as a Guyanese hero. "His instinctive action was to save two lives." says Raymond Shaw. "He was not a rich man, and he had the responsibility of his children to look after. "Yet, without hesitation, he responded to the need of his fellow man" according to Raymond Shaw.

The story of the tragic, but Heroic Death of Christopher Stephenson, is fading from the Guyanese memory. But since on Friday, (October 20, 2017), it will be the twentieth Anniversary of that landmark incident, I thought it appropriate to tell that story again of true Guyanese heroism.

It has gripped my thoughts from time to time, over the past two decades. It has also gripped the thoughts of other Guyanese over the past twenty years. It is a tragic yet great **See page.....10**

# President to address the National Assembly

*By: Tiffny Rhodius*

President David Granger will be addressing the 71<sup>st</sup> sitting of the National Assembly when it reconven later this week.

The address by President David Granger is customary upon the resumption of Parliament after its recess. When Parliament recommenced last October, the President outlined his administration's legislative agenda to address good governance, national development, crime and security, the recovery of stolen state assets and the pursuit of a 'green' agenda.

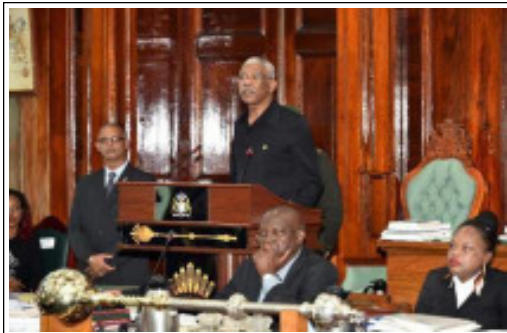
Also during the upcoming sitting, Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Basil Williams S.C, is expected to introduce the Protected Disclosures Bill Number 12 of 2017 and the Witness Pro-

tection Bill Number 13 of 2017.

The Protected Disclosures Bill seeks to combat corruption and other wrongdoings by encouraging and facilitating disclosures of improper conduct in the public and private sector, while protecting those persons making disclosures from detrimental action.

The Bill also seeks to establish the Protected Disclosures Commission to receive, investigate or otherwise deal with disclosures of improper conduct and related matters.

Meanwhile, the Witness Protection Bill makes provision for the establishment of a programme for the protection of certain witnesses and other persons, and to provide for related matters.



*Pres. Granger addresses National Assembly*

## Within This Issue

PPP not willing to cooperate.....	2
Just my opinion .....	3
Commentary.....	4
No winners in secession.....	5
Facing the facts.....	6
The politics of deceit and exclusion....	7
Voicing concerns.....	8
GTU plans two-day strike.....	9
The closure of two sugar factories.....	9
Technology is shrinking the world.....	11
The PNC in motion.....	12

# Municipalities seek more engagement

## *A call for interactive and informative meetings with Ministries*

*By: Crystal Stoll*

Mayors and town clerks cross Guyana, met with members of the Communities and Finance Ministries, at the Tower Suites Hotel to discuss issues surrounding local government in Guyana.

The all-day meeting saw deliberations, which were held under the theme “Strengthening financial management for sustainable municipal development.”



*Gathering of mayors and town clerks*

Several mayors and town clerks were very satisfied and praised the consultative initiative of the two ministries.

Mayor of Georgetown, Patricia Chase-Green said the discussion was very thought-provoking, especially since it drew attention to policies and processes that should be implemented as it relates to financial management.

“We have recognised that auditing has not been done for all of the municipalities over a number of years... we talked about expenditure, procurement and the policies that more or less are supposed to be in place,” Mayor Chase-Green said.

She alluded to the session as a learning experience as she was able to gain clarity on several matters.

“I hope the Ministry will have more of these sessions to bring mayors, town clerks and finance chairmen all up to date on the policies we ought to have in place... especially those places with internal auditing,” she said.

Mayor of Bartica, Gifford Marshall commended the Communities Ministry for organising what he described as an instructive session for all municipalities.

“Financial management remains a major concern for all of the municipalities. And Bartica being one of the new municipalities, it is an area in which we need capacity building and training,” Marshall stated.

He added, “Meeting the relevant persons from the Ministry of Finance and Communities would have impacted us and we look forward to more meaningful sessions like this.”

Also, Mayor of Rosehall, Vijay Ramoo explained that he has been advocating for gatherings like these for some time now, and is more than elated to have attended this consultation.

The municipalities are expected to enhance their financial management from the very productive meeting.

**Minister of Social Cohesion is interested in ‘on the ground’ approach to developing National Unity.**

## **PPP not willing to cooperate**

*By: Abel Seetaram*

WE have heard the leader of the opposition calling on Guyanese, especially PPP members and supporters, not to cooperate with the government towards having a better future. We must take lots of things into consideration as to what the man is calling for.

We must also understand that since May 2015, when this government took office, the PPP has never cooperated with the government, be it at the highest level or the lowest level. At

Parliament to date, they cannot name one member from the opposition side to be nominated as deputy speaker of the National Assembly. They are telling all their RDC and NDC chairmen and councillors not to cooperate with the various regional administrations. They have been lambasting everything this government has been doing to better the infrastructural work in our land.

They now see the need to support teachers, sugar workers, rice farmers, fisher folks, and the many other working class groups of this country. They now create division amongst some religious groups and are celebrating a national holiday or a day that was declared a national holiday on a different day.

I was told that the leader and a few members of the PPP attended a church service in Berbice over the weekend. Yet those are the ones who are separating the nation, allowing the racial side to kick in and be in the minds of some people, but yet for all they now decided to show their godly side. I don’t think God will accept someone that faked his marriage, who is creating division among the people, who said if Jesus was in Guyana he would have voted PPP, and who wants to punish the people, etc.

Imagine at the PPP press conference after the chairman of GECOM was announced, those PPP members who attended and sat at the head table seemed to be out of voice, but rather we all know that they were harnessed by the leader of the opposition. The man alone must talk because it seems as if he alone has sense in the PPP. It was shameful. But that’s how dictators behave: they must say everything, go everywhere, etc. and don’t do anything.

Imagine, this man is telling Guyanese not to cooperate with the government. He is asking workers to stop cooperating and do what they want. But he is not telling the workers when they do what he wants, who will feed them and their children? For sure, the leader of the opposition won’t take out money from his pocket and give it to every family deciding not to cooperate.

The man wants us to believe he cares for Guyana, but yet for all he decided to pull his members out of the Border Commission. Which man will have his country at heart and do not want to defend his land and people? The man is only showing his real side, all he cares about, and for, is power.

It is very blatant that the leader of the opposition is using the people who support his party to destroy Guyana. But that won’t happen. Dr. Doom should look at the crowd he attracted at his village meeting in Chesney on the Corentyne over the weekend, a handful of voters with lots of small children. That alone shows that Berbicians won’t listen to the race-baiting from this man.

I was told yesterday by someone about an incident, whereby a young man who works with CORE Region Five was chased out of Bath Settlement Freedom House because he was working with the project. It’s shameful that under the PPP they could not have come up with a project that would enhance the environment. So they are chasing those who want to see a better Guyana.

Since this government took office, the PPP wasn’t cooperating and no one expects them to at this time. In Region Five, almost the entire work programme for 2017 is being completed without the input of the PPP’s RDC chairman and councillors. Works are being done across the region, within every NDC.

In Region Five, the positive works will continue even if the PPP decided to protest day after day and months after months. The people are seeing improvement within the region and that is what the PPP is afraid of – DEVELOPMENT under the APNU+AFC government.

I call on all Guyanese to reject the opposition leader’s call and let’s work together for a better Guyana.

MAY 12TH 2015

MARKS THE  
DAWN OF A  
NEW ERA

A PHASE OF  
ENLIGHTENMENT  
WHEREBY THINGS HUMANLY  
POSSIBLE ARE  
ACCOMPLISHED BY ALL

**Remember Change  
Begins From Within  
Each Of Us  
Join Other  
Concerned  
Nationals And  
Fashion The  
New Guyana!**

*Five decades later, the real cause of the explosion on board the Son Chapman and those responsible for its detonation are yet to be determined. This inaction—the absence of a final resolution has prompted calls for an inquiry into the tragedy. The first terrorist act in Guyana, which resulted with 43 people being killed.*

**Advertise**

**NOW**

**'THE NEW ROAD'**

Email: Executive Director

[guyanacsjad@gmail.com](mailto:guyanacsjad@gmail.com)

**CSJAD: General Membership  
Sign Up Begins Soon  
Request a Form**

Email:

[guyanacsjad@gmail.com](mailto:guyanacsjad@gmail.com)

**EDITORIAL BOARD**

Carlyle Harry  
Rachel Exeter  
Noel Moses

Gulianne Jacobs  
Tony Jones  
Derrick Arjune

*'The New Road' serves as an instrument to inform the Guyanese Diaspora. It is a monthly publication of the Centre For Social Justice And Development Inc.*

*All articles herein are determined for relevancy. The views expressed are those of the authors. Our editorial board reserves the right to reject or edit all pieces or give credits where necessary.*

**JUST MY OPINION - Guest Columnist**

## Change from outside

By: Peeping Tom

Guyanese came out in their numbers on May 11, 2015 to vote the mighty PPPC out of office. The supporters of the AFC and the APNU had smelt the possibility of victory ever since the 2011 elections delivered a minority government.

The supporters of the AFC and APNU were emboldened by that result, and with the two parties merging into a pre-election coalition, they smelt the possibility of dethroning the mighty PPPC, which had never in the history of Guyana lost an election.

The coalition really did not dent the PPPC's support base, as many felt. The result of the elections showed that the PPPC got virtually the same percentage of votes as it did in the 2011 polls and the joint opposition did the same.

The political change that resulted from 2011 came from outside of Guyana. What caused the change was therefore the marriage between the AFC and the APNU.

The match was not made locally. In fact, it was made in the Bahamas by foreign forces, which had brought an influential figure from the AFC and another from the APNU together and there the Nassau Understanding was born.

That explains how the APNU and the AFC united. What it does not explain is how the PPPC, which since 1992 had always secured a majority, slipped to under 50% of the electorate. Again, one has to look outside of Guyana for the explanation.

It was the migration of large numbers of Guyanese during the final years of the Jagdeo regime, which caused the support base of the PPP to shrink enough for them to lose the elections.

The coalition chances were helped by United States meddling in the elections through certain artificially created civil society groupings, as they had done in Venezuela earlier. The US also contributed to the PPPC defeat by their liberal visa policy leading up to both the 2011 and 2015 elections. A number of PPP supporters took advantage of that policy in sufficient numbers to affect their majority.

The external supporters of the AFC in Canada were of the view that they helped in effecting change in Guyana. The AFC supporters in Canada, for example, were of the view that their US\$75,000 donations swung victory the coalition's way. They have no idea that what they gave was chicken feed when compared

to what it would have cost the AFC to run that campaign. So it was not the foreign money that caused the APNU+AFC coalition to win the election; it was other external factors.

Guyanese at home took credit for the victory. But when they thought they were voting for change, they now are of the view that what they got was neither change nor exchange. What the Guyanese voters got was shortchange.

The APNU+AFC is worse than the PPP at its worst. The coalition is hopeless, hapless and helpless. The electorate in Guyana is polarized and change is not likely to come from within. You just have to look at how the controversy of the appointment of the Chairman of GECOM is unfolding to understand that change is not going to come from within. Both the AFC and the WPA are now beyond any form of political redemption.

But it seems that a political savior has been born and that savior is from outside of Guyana. The AFC's membership in Canada has disassociated itself from the party unless the executive of its party disassociates itself from President Granger's decision to appoint a Chairman of the Guyana Elections Commission.

It seems as if the change that people wanted all along will come not from inside Guyana but from outside. The actions of the AFC Canada Group are unprecedented in the political history of Guyana. Never before has something like that happened.

There are major concerns among PNCr supporters in New York about the way they are being treated by the government. But they have never come out and taken the sort of action that the AFC Canada Group has done. These actions of the AFC Canada Group can signal a decisive break with the traditional follow-the-leader politics, which has led to so much apathy in Guyana.

Perhaps things are changing. And perhaps the change that so many Guyanese voted for will come from outside of Guyana. We will have to wait to see if other AFC groups will follow the members of the AFC in Canada.

*"Everyone has the right to a standard of living- adequate for the health of himself and of his family...."*

**Why Defer Today's Possibility for the Uncertainty of Tomorrow**

**Concerns about the Birthland**

As someone, who along with other brothers and sisters battled feverishly to engineer Governance change in the Birthland, I have to be naturally concerned and worried about the rumblings that are (reportedly) occurring over there.

I am not in a position to comment on who or what is wrong within this effervescence, but it is troubling to hear, read and learn about, simply because those waiting in the wings will fuel each and every split and crack in the Government's armor.

In addition, I have to remind that Coalition Parties and Governments naturally encounter and experience difficulties in holding themselves together, and in the case of Guyana, that Coalition only has a one-seat majority in Parliament.

Several prominent Analysts and Commentators are calling on the Government to beef up its Public-Relations' apparatus in order to counter the actions and activities of opposition Parties and Interest/Pressure Groups.

I subscribe to those calls, and urge the Coalition-Government to pay attention to those calls, especially within the context of members, supporters and well-wishers looking for immediate satisfaction of their needs, wishes and desires; coupled with the Opposition's on-going strives and eagerness to 'remove and replace'....And don't overlook the variables of Race and Class.

In closing, it is incumbent on me to wish Mr. Tony Jones all the best, as he seeks to be part of Methuen city government. Election Day is Tuesday, November seventh.

*Carlyle Harry*

---

Here we go again! City Hall in the news. Do you think it is for something positive like fixing the roads, or improving street lighting, or commissioning a new state-of-the-art abattoir and meat-processing facility? Of course not. It is about them facilitating, condoning and attempting a cover up of a dreadful crime against a juvenile.

The town clerk wants citizens to believe that one day, whilst conducting an unrelated meeting in his office, someone sent the juvenile victim in the Sex and the City case without prior notification to see him, who was allowed in without any let or hindrance, and all he the town clerk did was ask the youngster his name and age and then sent the boy on his way. Oh boy!

Has any member of the public ever tried to meet with the town clerk? And was that person successfully able to meet with him? Or did they have to try and try and try again? Is having the victim visit him in his office and interrogating him, even if it were just two questions, not a meeting and an interview?

But the question is why did it take approximately three weeks to bring the matter before the Legal Affairs Committee and two months before bringing the matter to the attention of the police? And he has the audacity to say that he finally contacted the police in order to "preserve the good name and image" of the City Council. Yes you read correctly, to "preserve the good name and image" of the Georgetown City Council. Now this is no time for the town clerk to be making sick jokes like that. The Georgetown municipality must have the worst reputation in the world.

This is the same man, the town clerk, who objected to a City Councillor approaching and asking one of his children a question about him, but he is free to question other people's children who are victims of a sex crime. How funny? The depravity of the Council came out in the suggestion by the mayor that the whole of the downstairs needs reorganising. One has to assume that she is referring to the lower level of staff

occupying the ground floor. But what about the upstairs? Does the town clerk not need to go on his accrued leave? Those preventing an effective audit being carried out at the Council don't need to be gotten rid of? The Human Resource Department officials that failed to interdict the offending Lance Corporal, but who kept him on the job not need to have disciplinary measures taken against them?

Heaven help the citizens of Georgetown as they are sat upon by the 'Fantastic Four.'

*Jermain Johnson*

---

THE United Nations (UN) and its sister organisations will be collaborating with the government of Guyana to aid in constitutional reform.

This was announced by Prime Minister Moses Nagamootoo, who is currently performing the duties of the president. He delivered these remarks at an event held in commemoration of United Nations Day.

In light of the recent controversy regarding the appointment of retired high court judge, Justice James Patterson as the new chairman of the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM), the prime minister explained that persons "should interrogate the prescriptions by which appointments such as these would take place and the prescription is laid in our constitution" to better understand the recommendations that determined the appointment.

According to the Prime Minister, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have volunteered and pledged their support to facilitate an investigative team to determine the necessary steps to be taken and ways to fund the necessary requirements.

This is vital, Prime Minister Nagamootoo outlined, since in the near future once the constitution is advanced, it will afford citizens "a comfort level that they can trust our laws and that our laws can be followed in a way that all will feel comfortable and secure." He added, "There should be no insecurity — whether political or ethnic — in Guyana, because there is a deficiency in our supreme law in our constitution."

Guyana's Constitution is an arrangement of fundamental principles that govern the state. Constitutional reform seeks to modify some fundamental structures of these principles. The 1980 Constitution was reformed and the changes enshrined in the revised supreme law in 2001.

The administration's drive for constitutional reform began in June 2017, when Prime Minister Nagamootoo read the Constitutional Reform Consultative Commission Bill 2017 on July 27 for the first time in the National Assembly.

The UN has been incrementally aiding Guyana with the constitutional reform process. In February of this year, a team of experts from the UN body visited Guyana to explore the need for constitutional reform. The group met and discussed with the prime minister, ministers and senior advisors, the Speaker of the National Assembly and MPs, the leader and senior members of the Opposition, Constitutional Rights Commission members, the GECOM Chairman, a broad spectrum of leaders and activists of various civil society Organisations and the private sector among others.

The UN experts identified a wide consensus on the need for constitutional reform among national stakeholders, who acknowledged the need for long-term UN assistance in Guyana and anticipated benefiting from the UN's support of constitutional reform and tapping the good practices of other countries. Guyana joined the UN in 1966 and relations have since resulted in the body having 12 branches in the country. **(DPI)**

# No winners in secession- in Europe or the Caribbean

*By: Sir Ronald Sanders*

Should areas of countries break away and govern themselves as they see fit? That's a question that has been debated in several parts of the world, and is in focus now between Catalonia and Spain; Scotland and the United Kingdom, and to a lesser extent Barbuda and Antigua.

It should be noted that throughout history, communities which have been separated by religion, ethnicity, and distance (most especially water), have experienced movements for separation. In the Caribbean, Anguilla broke away from St Kitts-Nevis in 1971 during the British colonial era; Tobago agitated for years for secession from Trinidad; as recently as 1998 Nevis attempted a constitutional split from St Kitts; and on Barbuda, a separatist group has been expressing the desire to secede from Antigua, even prior to the formation of Antigua and Barbuda as a unitary state in 1981 when it became independent from Britain.

While separatist groups raise their voices loudest and receive the most attention from media, support for them amongst their own communities is never unanimous; there are many who doubt the wisdom of separation in economic and security terms.

As examples of this, an attempt in 1998 in Nevis to force a referendum for secession from St Kitts failed to get the requisite vote to carry it, and a referendum on Scottish independence from the United Kingdom in 2014 resulted in 55.3 per cent of the electorate rejecting the idea. Even in Catalonia where emotions ran high, there is not comprehensive backing for separation.

In the case of the separatist group on Barbuda, at the Antigua and Barbuda Constitutional Conference with Britain in 1980 on independence, the Barbuda representative argued that he had been sent to the meeting "to seek separation" from Antigua. However, he was elected with 302 votes of the 522 Barbudan electors. In successive elections, support for separatists dwindled. The party in the vanguard of separation, the Barbuda Peoples Movement (BPM) secured less than half of the votes of the electorate in elections in 1984, 1989, 1994 and 1999. By 2014, the Barbuda electorate was split right down the middle with the BPM losing control by 1 vote.

In any event, the 1980 Constitutional Conference decided that Antigua and Barbuda is a "unitary state". It paid attention to the Barbudan desire for a level

of autonomy over the island's affairs and consequently agreed to give greater powers to a Barbuda local government council than existed under the 1904 Barbuda Ordinance and the 1976 Barbuda Local Government Act.

Significantly, the Conference also affirmed that land on Barbuda has always been the property of the Crown from the time of colonisation by the British. This decision rejected a theory by Barbudan separatists that they had somehow acquired Barbuda in common, and all land in Barbuda was owned by all Barbudans and that none of it could ever be sold, and only they could decide who could lease any of it.

The Barbudan separatists tested this decision in the Courts several times, losing the argument on every occasion with Judges finding that, as a matter of fact and law, land on Barbuda belongs to the Crown and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda is the authority vested with power and control over the land. This latter point has attracted significance recently after the decimation of Barbuda by Hurricane Irma on September 6. The Barbuda separatists have reverted to the dispelled notion that all Barbudans – wherever they live or were born – own all Barbudan lands in common, and only they can determine its use which would be on a lease-basis only. Reliance is being placed on a law, passed in 2007 by the former Antigua and Barbuda government in a deal for the parliamentary support of the Barbuda elected representative, which sought to "confirm that all land in Barbuda is owned in common by the people of Barbuda".

Legal experts have argued that the 2007 law is unconstitutional and of no effect, and is also discriminatory, since it permits Barbudans to deny land ownership in Barbuda to Antiguans, while Barbudans retain the constitutional right to own land in Antigua.

Barbuda's non-viability on its own has been confirmed in studies done by the British government in the pre-independence period and reaffirmed by the fact that, over the centuries since 1860 when Barbuda was annexed to Antigua, it has been financed almost entirely by the Central government of the country. For instance, for the years 2013 to 2016, the government had to transfer US\$13.5 million to Barbuda to sustain a population of 1,500.

Faced with a bill upwards of US\$200 million to rebuild Barbuda and re-settle

its inhabitants who had to be evacuated to Antigua, the Antigua and Barbuda government contends that land will have to be sold and leased on Barbuda, especially to existing Barbudan lease holders to contribute to its economic and social development.

On a per capita basis, the rebuilding of Barbuda works out at US\$133,000.00 for each man, woman and child – the cost of which would have to be borne by the 80,000 people on Antigua and the Antigua and Barbuda government – and they have no means to do so. It is also most unlikely that the international donor community will provide the full sum of US\$200 million. Even loans that the government might be able to attract will not reach the required sum and, in any case, will have to be repaid.

And this is the crux of the matter. Can the areas, which secessionists are seeking to separate from larger national units, prosper on their own? The answer in the case of Barbuda is clear. It cannot. It simply does not generate the income required to sustain the livelihood of its people, and unless it sells or leases land (as every other country in the world does) to investors – both local and foreign – it will not develop an economically viable economy.

In the cases of Scotland and Catalonia in relation to the United Kingdom and Spain respectively, while both are well-developed and would survive, they would be worse off financially, since their economies are tied-up with the countries from which the secessionists would like them to separate.

Further, they would become small states with little bargaining power in international trade and finance, and no military influence. It is true that the United Kingdom and Spain would also be weaker for the departure of Scotland and Catalonia. But the net effect of separatists winning would be significant losses for the people they are trying to lead. In this context, the observation of Lord Varys, in "Game of Thrones" resonates loudly: "He would see this country burn if he could be king of the ashes".

*You can respond to or view previous commentaries: [www.sirronaldsanders.com](http://www.sirronaldsanders.com)*

**CSJAD calls for a National Commission to investigate Racial Unity and an end to Racialized Voting**



## We should go out and VOTE

Next week Tuesday, Americans will once more be going to the Polls in order to elect Officials to serve them at various Legislative and Parliamentary levels.

(Let me remind you that Executive-Director of the CSJAD-Mr. Tony Jones will be running for Office in Massachusetts during those Elections.)

And once more, there is going to be numerous complaints and criticisms over poor (voter) turn-outs.

Former Chairman of the Republican Party, Michael Steele commented on Tuesday, October 24th "Plain and simple, elections are win or lost by voter turn-out".

What is disturbing to me, is the (apparent) ignorance of eligible voters about the importance of their votes; and that it is only their votes that count and matter.

• A point that was again recently stressed by (former) President-Barack Obama when he campaigned three weeks ago for Gubernatorial Candidates in Virginia and New Jersey...President Obama reminded the audiences that elections' results determine the choices of say Supreme-Court and Federal Judges, as well as determining electoral districts.

Remember that last year, President Obama had made popular "Don't boo,... VOTE"

My point is that folks can kick and scream, agitate and advocate, and picket and protest over White House decisions and treatment, but all of that could have been avoided, if they had gone out to the Polling-Booths and cast their votes for those Officials who would have carried out their wishes and desires.

In the words of Senate Majority Leader-Mitch McConnell "After elections, losers get to go home, while winners get to stay and make policies".

This concern is particularly applicable to minority voters who pollsters claim, "show low voter turn-out".

Yet in many cases minorities are the ones who are most likely to be affected by bits of adverse Legislation such as Welfare-benefits, DACA, Immigration-restrictions, threatened reversals to Obamacare, attacks on previous LGBT guarantees, payment for the border wall with Mexico, business-regulations, environmental-protection to name a few.

On the other hand, pollsters are demonstrating that richer-white persons can be more relied upon to go out and cast their votes.

• During her book-promotional tour, Secretary Hillary Clinton made mention of the large number of supporters who kept apologizing for not going out to vote for her, because "they thought that the results were already sown up—and that she had already won".

In emphasizing the point on the importance of 'actual votes' let me highlight another recent example that occurred in Cooks County, which includes Chicago...The residents won a repeal of a wildly unpopular 'soda-tax' in spite of a multi-Million dollar ad-campaign for keeping the tax...The Board of Commissioners voted 15-2 to repeal that Tax...Journalist, Guy Miller stated that the repeal was a big win for "consumer-freedom", as the potential health benefits were hugely exaggerated.

### APPEALS

During the Democratic-Party's Primaries that were held in New York City on Tuesday, September twelfth, I followed around some Brooklyn Office-seekers, hoping to gather creative and interesting manifesto stories for inclusion in future Newspaper columns.

Sadly, instead of being able to satisfy my curiosity and needs, I had to accommodate those Office-seekers making lengthy pleas and appeals around the need and importance for constituents to go out and vote, while ensuring that promotional signs were being erected.

In spite of those pleas and appeals, voter turn-out at those (September) Primaries was extremely low, with some Precincts only being visited by 11% of potential voters.

• Journalist Errol Louis in a column encouraging voters to go out and vote, reminded voters "you hold your respective self-interests in your own hands".

### IT'S ABOUT VOTES

In a recent article, Jonan Goldberg after detailing a variety of financial contributions that were made to Politicians as well as the influence of money on American politics, correctly concluded that "money might be able to influence votes, but unfortunately, money cannot vote".

Writing directly on fears that were being expressed about the NRA's locks on votes for amendments to current gun-laws, Mr. Goldberg reminded that since only a minority of Americans owned the majority of guns, if Politicians had respect for the voting-power of constituents, they would have shown greater respect to the views and feelings of those constituents, rather than the preferences of their financial backers.

He concluded "politicians may be craven, but their priority is winning elections, money-grabbing is just a means to that end...Some politicians secretly favor stricter controls on guns, but what keeps them from pursuing such restrictions isn't cash from the NRA, it is lack of votes from their passionate constituents...In other words, don't follow the money, follow the VOTES."

In summary, an appropriate explanation of the importance of the actual VOTE, is the failure of the Republican Party, (though it has the majority in the Senate, to WHIP enough votes from among its Members to repeal and replace Obamacare.

As Senator Bill Cassidy declared "the Bill collapsed, because we did not have the votes".

The point being made here, is that though the Republicans have the majority in the Senate, they cannot pass Bills if they do not have the votes, when those votes are needed.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Unfortunately  
it is the reality,  
that we cannot Vote  
by remote.  
We have to deliver that decision  
in person.  
Why the need to agitate  
or advocate,  
When we the voters could determine their own FATE.*

**Much has been done in Guyana since 2015  
but passed unnoticed by many people...**

**CSJAD Membership is  
open to Guyanese and  
their offspring.  
Support our fundraising  
drive for 2017**

*"Emancipate yourself from mental slavery,"  
because "None but ourselves can free our minds"*

**CSJAD fundraising campaign fiscal year 2017: Target US\$5,000- Please give generously**

# The politics of deceit and exclusion

*By: Lincoln Lewis*

ARTICLE 161(2) of the Guyana Constitution allows for the application of two options in arriving at the appointment of GECOM Chairman. Option one, (outlined in paragraph one) speaks to the criteria of a judge (past, present or potential) “or any other fit and proper person,” and paragraph two allows for the appointment of a judge where there exists failure to achieve what paragraph one sets out.

Every constitutional commission must be operational and a constitutional crisis exists when any is not established. The attention paid to GECOM makes it no more important than other commissions such as the Ethnic Relations Commission and Human Rights Commission that are still to be established. These commissions contribute to day-to-day governance and the welfare of citizens and every day they are non-operational our collective well-being and the nation’s stability are being compromised.

The appointment of Justice James Patterson as chairman, though his credentials and abilities are not being questioned, only a fool would expect it not to create the fallout it has. From the inception the interpretation of Article 161 by the President was not consistent with the criteria that had informed identification of nominees and appointments of previous chairs. The court’s intervention was sought by a private citizen and it has pronounced on the specific contention and entire article.

The departure from reliance on selecting a chairman from paragraph one creates new precedence and not unexpectedly a furor, not only in the manner in which it was done, but suspicion from the inception that this was the path the President intended to pursue. Where the President by his action may have thrown gasoline on the matter, he has only himself to blame for giving the PPP fodder to refuel and recover.

It is being observed that Patterson’s age to do the job has become an issue of contention which is called ageism. Government must take some responsibility here for making claim to the said discriminatory thinking in justifying its act to withdraw the service of others. I noticed a media story on this matter mentioning the cases of Justices Cecil Kennard and Prem Persaud, along with Hamilton Green, whose services were discontinued based on this discriminatory policy.

What was also noted is the absence of Green’s picture, but the presence of Patterson, Persaud and Kennard, where in our racially charged environment opens itself for misinterpretation, playing to racial fears, and engaging in racial accusations. It too cannot be ignored the race of the nominee has attracted condemnation on the misplaced notion that given Indians are the numerical majority, it brings with it expectation that they must be at the helm of everything.

This thinking too is discriminatory and it is being reminded that prior to Patterson this position was held by only one African, i.e. Rudy Collins. Where views of such sort are being allowed expression on mainstream media blogs with no moderating attempt to set the record straight, it makes it harder to help society in placing importance on truth and treating each other with dignity and respect.

It takes very little to further rend asunder this fragile nation and we all, where interest of country and people are foremost, must be careful of what we say and do. The PPP/C has said it will not cooperate with the government due to this incident, but to a great extent the society is failing to hold the PPP accountable for its abdication of constitutional responsibilities such as the non-appointment of its representatives on state boards and the refusal to elect one of its members to be Deputy Speaker in the National Assembly, which according to the Constitution must come from the opposition. Abrogation of these duties has been

premiered on that party’s argument that the 2015 elections were rigged and it has been cheated out of office.

The condemnation in some quarters that democracy is now being threatened and the selective claims and fear of rigged elections because paragraph two has been applied in appointing a chairman are too ignoring elections, though important, represent an aspect of democracy and equally important to democracy is daily compliance with the Rule of Law that include practices of good governance, honouring civic duties and responsibilities, and respecting citizens’ fundamental rights and freedoms.

Society is being selectively reminded of events, real or perceived, in this nation’s history which is dangerous and will continue to fuel division, ethnic/racial upmanship and a misplaced sense of superiority. The court vitiated the 1997 elections because they were fraudulent (euphemism for rigged). The Organisation of America States (OAS) deemed the 2011 elections not free from fear. In 2006, the AFC was denied its earned seat in Region 10, which GECOM erroneously awarded to the PPP. Were it not for the vigilance of Commissioner Vincent Alexander in 2011, the PPP would have again been awarded a seat by GECOM, which it did not earn. Reminding the nation of 1968, 1973, 1980 and 1985 must not exclude reminders of 1992, 1997, 2006 and 2011.

Instead of acknowledging the deficiencies in the system and seeking to fix them, emphasis is being placed on whipping up fear in society and refusing to hold the PPP equally accountable for electoral malpractices, clearly sending a message that some will escape accountability or their mis-steps deemed not as bad as others, when bad is bad and good is good.

In our racially polarised society, the absence of universal approach in dealing with issues will continue to hurt and divide, more than help and unite. Each and every one of us, as organisation and unit, has a social responsibility. The concentration to focus on some period and whitewash or ignore other periods is dangerous to the unity of this society.

The media have a responsibility to deliver truth and understanding and whereas they may be reporting what may be said, they carry responsibility to provide information that would help society to better understand the events and discussions at hand.

There must be rejection of the comfort to solely dwell in an era when grave and worse things have been inflicted by those who are alive and should be held accountable, lest the risk of these atrocities being repeated become prevalent and some feel free from reproach.

To the PPP’s stance of non-cooperation and promised acts of public protests, let there be reminders that those who today are seeming to facilitate such conduct when Desmond Hoyte challenged the PPP government, they condemned him and labelled his act threats to democracy and destabilising to the economy. In this instance they are prepared to condemn David Granger, even as they continue to remain silent or supportive of Jagdeo’s discarding his constitutional responsibilities and acting untowardly.

It was the PPP that first refused to have engagement with this government on governance because that party’s leadership opposed Moses Nagamootoo being leader of the government’s team. One would have expected that the PPP would have respected the right of the government to identify its representatives, bring and raise issues to the table that are of concern to the party and its constituents. This seems not to be its interest as its leadership remains angry the party has been placed in the opposition benches.

Even on the issue of sugar, it refused to meaningfully participate in the commission of inquiry on the industry. Neither did the leadership bring any proposal to a stakeholders committee established to address the industry, which was headed by Khemraj Ramjattan. Instead, the nation *See page.....9*

## The nation's well-being

Successive governments, including the present administration, have not been able to connect with the day-to-day activities of the average person in the country. It is either a case of neglect or being insensitive to the plight of the ordinary man.

Most governments have always strived to achieve the best for their people, but in the case of this government, the reality does not bear out this fact. Many have complained that since taking office, several members of the cabinet are aloof, arrogant and seem not to care about the well-being of the masses. Others believe that the government's focus on the economy is the reason that it has missed that very important indicator of growth.

The well-being of people is perhaps the most important aspect of any type of growth in the country. It goes beyond the traditional indicator of gross domestic product (GDP), which focuses only on the economic rate of the country.

Measuring the GDP of a country is done through the usual economic indicators that tell us whether the economy is growing or not. However, while there is a measurement for the economy, unfortunately, there is none to measure the welfare of the people. GDP was not designed to be an overall measure of the well-being of people, so it is inadequate in that respect.

However, there is a Human Development Index (HDI) that measures things such as life expectancy, education and standard of living, but is very seldom used in developing countries.

Here in Guyana, many are prosperous and have lavish lifestyles. Studies have shown that the well-being of people is based on an assessment of the quality of life and not mere financial wealth or income. For example, a poor person who is without resources but is healthy may have an enhanced quality of life.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the well-being of people is constantly developing. It is based on an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live, and their goals, expectations and concerns. It can be affected by the person's physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and his/her affiliations to their environment.

That said, the well-being of the people is critical to the growth and development of Guyana, and promoting it should be one of the government's main priorities. In essence, it should be pursued as a national goal. The well-being of the people coincides with their true happiness.

While happiness often refers to how people are feeling from moment to moment, it does not always reveal the truth about how they evaluate their lives, or about how they function in society. Well-being is a much broader concept that includes not only the happiness of the people, but also other things, such as how satisfied they are with their lives; having a sense of control over their lives, and having a sense of purpose to live and contribute to society in whatever way they can.

It comprises objective descriptions and subjective evaluations of physical, material, social, and emotional well-being, as well as the extent of personal development and purposeful activity.

It is true that the well-being of people increases production, promotes goodwill in society and contributes to several important factors, such as peace, civility and respect for Law.

It is also true that a happy, satisfied and engaged people are more sociable, active, altruistic, generous, tolerant, productive, creative, healthy, and often live longer.

A national policy should be established to help improve

the well-being of every citizen, especially the poor in the country by promoting a better life for all, and shaping a flourishing society where all citizens are respected.

## The sad reality on our roadways

What is happening to our country? Why are there so many accidents and deaths on our highways and byways? Who is in charge? And if those persons can show, rather than claim who they are, then they must step-up and aim to put an end to the continuing misery. It is obvious at this point that they have failed.

It seems that there is absolutely no leadership to address this recklessness. Road accidents have become the number two cause of deaths in the country. Many questions have arisen over the past few years regarding the role of government, particularly in light of the rise in fatal traffic accidents.

There is a misconception by many in the government surrounding politics and service. The truth is, while politics is about power, the practice of politics is primarily about service to country rather than to self. Governments should not be about serving the interests of the elites and those who govern. It should be about serving the people. And this was the unequivocal declaration by Mr. Granger when he was sworn in as President.

However, he must do more than talk. He must immediately take decisive steps. Traffic accidents and deaths should not be just a collection of statistical data, they should be acted upon with urgency to end the carnage. Whether the president would admit it or not, traffic deaths and accidents are among the myriad challenges facing his administration. The Ministry of Public Security and by extension the government should recognise the need for quick decisive action to tackle the problem. It is one thing to want to govern, but it is another to remove oneself from true dialogue and responsiveness to the needs of the people.

To some it may sound fickle, but a good place to start addressing this problem is to enable the safety of all road users by ensuring the roads in the city and the highways are free of dangerous potholes. Case in point... A head-on collision between a car and a paddy-laden truck on Number 59 Village public road snuffed out the lives of five persons.

As reported in the media, the accident occurred two Sundays ago and the five persons who perished were said to be heading to Number 63 Beach for an outing. While there were conflicting reports as to the cause of the accident, a police report clearly cited the huge pothole on the road as the probable cause of the accident that ended the lives of the car's occupants. Unacceptable.

And as if we were not already sickened by that senseless tragedy, the accident last Sunday at Vreed-en-Hoop, in which two teens and a young adult were killed when their vehicle struck a utility pole, emphasises how important it has become for the higher authorities to place themselves firmly in charge of this state of affairs. Our nation can ill-afford to lose so many of its citizens in this manner.

It appears as though the Corentyne disaster could have been avoided had the Region Six authorities heeded several requests by the residents in the area to fix the huge pothole. Both the regional and central governments are known to act very slowly and bureaucratic red tape, coupled with incompetence, has caused them to act much slower.

Bad roads, reckless drivers and apparently indifferent powers that be, have left us with a situation that has rapidly spiraled out of control. It is becoming quite unsettling that we are so often being exposed to the news of grisly deaths on our roadways. Unfortunately, this has become the sad reality.



## *The politics of deceit and exclusion*

(Continued from page.....7) continues to witness the pursuing of a strategy of using the supporters and sugar workers as guinea pigs to further the self-interest of a few.

At the same time Granger has to remember that he campaigned and won elections on the promise to practice the politics of inclusion and his government has a greater responsibility to work to make it possible. A conflagration, racial and political, is being courted in this society with the politics of deceit and exclusion. The media have to assist us in playing a meaningful role of tempering the desire of the provocateurs in our midst and also to avoid it.

Politicians are failing to realise for what they were elected, who elected them and are paying them, and what we would like to see of them. The masses want civil and consensus politics based on the principles that would safeguard and defend their rights, freedoms and management of their resources and business in order that their condition of life will see improvement and harmonious relations with their neighbours. The politicians seem to be forgetting this or don't care a damn about it, and we must hold them to account for seeking to divide us and hinder/retard our development.

The PPP has communicated that it will challenge the chairman's appointment in the court which is a step in the right direction to resolve conflict in society. At the said time, its leaders must not be insulated from performing their constitutional responsibilities and being held accountable for their stewardship of this country. There is no sacred cow, be it individual, race, party, government, etc. Once we function as members and organisations of society, all must be held to the same standards and must play by the same rules.

---

## **GTU plans two-day strike**

THE Guyana Teachers Union (GTU) is currently galvanising teachers across the country to join it in strike actions next week, following what it said was an unfruitful meeting with the Ministry of Education.

The meeting with Education Minister, Nicolette Henry, and other officials reportedly lasted under 10 minutes when the GTU team, headed by president Mark Lyte, walked out after the minister failed to address the issues placed before her, including the multi-year proposal.

GTU General Secretary Coretta McDonald told Guyana Chronicle on Thursday that the GTU team was invited to the meeting with the education minister and was expecting some positive word on the way forward regarding the increase of salaries for teachers.

She said the minister instead began a power point presentation on something off topic.

"We turned up at the meeting that we were invited to and we wanted to hear about the minister's counter proposal to our salary proposal. Instead, the minister had a power point presentation to deliver on non-salary issues," she said.

According to McDonald, the minister appeared unaware of the issue and began talking about things unrelated to the subject matter.

Among those were her complaints that several regions failed to provide the information of upgraded teachers. The GTU immediately objected to the discussion, reminding the minister what the team was really there to address.

McDonald said the GTU team had to leave, especially since the minister thrust upon the members a proposal for teachers similar to what government announced last week for public servants.

She said GTU officials informed the minister that they would be willing to have another meeting when government gets the numbers right.

Teachers, she said, will be embarking on industrial actions next Thursday and Friday.

Meanwhile, in a Facebook post, the Ministry of Education said that its meeting with the Guyana Teachers Union was intended to discuss a number of issues that have been highlighted by the union.

Chief among the issues, the ministry said, was the proposed multi-year agreement (2016 to 2020).

"The proposal addresses both financial and non-financial matters. The President of the GTU, Mr. Mark Lyte said that based on the last meeting that was held with the Ministry in August 2017, the union would have communicated that it has no problem with the manner in which the Ministry will address the non-financial issues," the ministry said.

According to the post, Lyte stated that the GTU is very concerned about the financial aspect of the proposal regarding salary increases, debunching, allowances and duty-free concessions.

It was at this point that Education Minister Nicolette Henry informed the GTU representatives that government can only offer wage increases in keeping with those offered to public servants.

The ministry said GTU was dissatisfied with the response and decided that the meeting should not continue and together left the boardroom.

"Following the meeting, Minister Henry reiterated that at this point in time, the Government of Guyana is proposing to all of its public servants including teachers, increases which have been made public," the ministry said.

Last Thursday, the GTU had threatened industrial action, contending that its regular submission of issues to government was falling on deaf ears. These issues include the debunching payments, outstanding since 2006, the \$40 million housing project in the pipeline since 2006 and more recently, the salary proposal presented to the Ministry of Education.

---

## **The closure of two sugar factories**

*By: Leonard Gildarie*

The idyllic life of sugar-producing communities. There is something there that makes people get all nostalgic with that faraway look in their eyes when they talk about it.

Our country was built on sugar. Slavery, indentureship and the development of colonies along with the Dutch infrastructure we see today, with our kokers and drainage system.

When nothing else was happening in the late 80s, sugar helped Guyana. Today, that way of life is about to morph into something else, to make way for a profitable sugar industry.

We need to put it into perspective. Europe was the Caribbean's biggest customer, granting it preferential treatment and access to the market.

Once smiling with King Sugar, the producing countries had to now contend with competitive alternative sweeteners like beet, and people becoming more health conscious. Our prices fell.

A decade ago, and even before that, faced with an open market in Europe, its biggest customer, CARICOM countries opted to exit sugar, with St. Kitts and Trinidad and Tobago throwing in the towel. Jamaica invited private investors to run its industry.

To be fair, Europe did extend a phased cash payout to help suppliers in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) deal with a mandatory 36 percent [See page.....14](#)

# The Hero of Tiger Bay

(Continued from cover page) story of one of the greatest Guyanese Heroes of our time. And I need to add, that two decades after his death, he remains an UNSUNG HERO. A truism of Dave Martins' song, "Caribbean, where are your Heroes?"

About eight years ago, I decided to write a long poem which is entitled, "The Ballad of Christopher Stephenson", in which I have related what took place that fateful day, October 20, 1997, at the corner of Sussex and Hunter Streets, Charlestown, Georgetown.

Christopher Stephenson died a hero. He saved the lives of two men he had never known – Gerald Rodie and Ossie Roberts – both workers at the then Georgetown Sewerage and Water Commissioners (GS&WC). A nomination for him to receive a Posthumous National Award of the Cacique Crown of Valor, which is a special award for bravery, was submitted to the Protocol Division of the Ministry of the Presidency April last year, signed by the well-known Businessman, Christopher Fernandes, before Guyana's Fiftieth Independence Anniversary Celebrations.

But so far, the nomination has not been entertained. Is it that Guyana does not recognize such bravery as being worthy of National acknowledgement? Or is it because Christopher Stephenson was a dray-cart operator and a resident of the demonized Tiger Bay area in western Georgetown?

Paraphrasing the Book of John 1:46 from the Holy Bible, Raymond Shaw posed the question, "Can anything good come out of Tiger Bay?" His firm answer is, "Yes, here is an act worth showcasing. "Tiger Bay is just as good as any other ward of the city, if not better, and some attention should be paid to that area", Shaw concluded.

On the morning of October 20, 1997, Christopher Stephenson, functioning as a SINGLE PARENT, (his wife was a guest of the State at the New Amsterdam Prison at the time), rose early before dawn in his humble Tiger Bay abode and prepared breakfast for his four young children, and later saw them off to school.

He then set out with his horse and dray cart to secure what work the city had to offer him that fateful day. From Tiger Bay he took a southern direction into the Avenue of the Republic, into High Street, then into Saffon Street and finally east along Sussex Street. Approaching the Hunter street junction, he observed a large crowd which had surrounded one of the GS&WC manholes. Something was amidst, and Christopher Stephenson tied his horse to a post and went to investigate from a closer vantage point.

What Christopher Stephenson discovered, made him take immediate action. Two workers of the GS&WC were at the bottom of the manhole in a state of unconsciousness, having inhaled poisonous gas from a leak in the pipe line. No one was willing to go down into that filth and gas below to assist the men. However, Christopher Stephenson bravely went down into that stink GS&WC manhole, at the risk of his own life.

Down into the dark manhole below the surface of Sussex Street, he got to work, rescuing the first man, and bringing him to the surface on Sussex Street. Even though Christopher Stephenson was small of stature, he was large of heart, demonstrating what love he had, even for two men who were strangers to him.

Preparing to go down for the second victim, many in the crowd were shouting to him not to go back into that poisonous pen. But Christopher Stephenson would have none of that; the second victim had to be rescued. So down he went again, car-

**'Will-power is the key to success. Successful people strive no matter what they feel by applying their will to overcome apathy, doubt or fear'**

ing little about his own safety; in fact, his very own life.

He secured the second man and brought him to the surface to loud applause from the crowd. However, Christopher Stephenson had inhaled much of that poisonous gas and he collapsed onto the street. The three men were rushed to the Georgetown Public Hospital. The two GS&WC workers survived, no doubt because they did not inhale as much of the poisonous gas as Christopher Stephenson did while he lifted not just one, but both men who were much bigger than he was.

With such a physical task for his slender body, he certainly inhaled much more of the poisonous gas than the two men he lifted to safety out of that manhole. And so, while receiving medical attention at the Georgetown Public Hospital, Christopher Stephenson passed away, leaving his wife and four small children widowed and fatherless.

I first saw Christopher Stephenson – "THE HERO OF TIGER BAY" - lying dead in his coffin at the Merriman's Funeral Home. His wife was released from the New Amsterdam Prison, and her sentence commuted, so that she can be present at the funeral, and to be with her four young children, who needed their mother at that tragic time. She was beside herself with grief. The siblings of Christopher Stephenson, and other close relatives and friends were also crying inconsolably. It was an extremely sad occasion.

Present at that funeral, was the then Minister of Labour, Dr. Henry Jeffrey, who in making a speech to the Mourners, handed over a check from the Ministry of Labour, to the widow, to take care of immediate financial needs. Her prison sentence was also commuted on humanitarian grounds; with their father gone, those four very young children needed their mother to take care of them.

In his address at the Funeral, Minister Henry Jeffrey also announced that Christopher Stephenson was accredited posthumously, the status of 'Employee' of the GS&WC, so that his widow and his fatherless children, could reap the tangible benefit of a pension, for his death in selflessly and bravely, saving the lives of two GS&WC workers. Scholarships for the children were also promised, as long as they qualified when the time came around.

That small world of Christopher Stephenson's Tiger Bay, while demonized by so many, is not altogether unrecognized. During his tenure as the Secretary-General of CARICOM, Dr. Edwin Carrington paid annual visits at Christmas time and took goodies and friendly chats for the children there.

Guyanese Professor, author and Diplomat, Dr. David Dabydeen, also made tangible contributions to the children of Tiger Bay. He organized literary competitions and gave out substantive prizes to the winners. Those presentations were made at elaborate ceremonies at the neighbouring Hotel Tower on Main Street.

The question now is, Will Christopher Stephenson be posthumously conferred with that National Award of the Cacique Crown of Valour, bring closure to his widow and fatherless children, who lost their loved one because he dared to be "The Hero of Tiger Bay"? That depends on those who constitute the Guyana National Awards Committee, and in whose hands is that precious nomination, submitted to them since April 2016.

**BE GRATEFUL AND THANK THE PEOPLE THAT SUPPORT YOU ALONG THE WAY**

# Technology is shrinking the world

By: Adam Harris

Technology has really changed the Guyana landscape, but most of us have barely touched the surface. Indeed we have the smart phones that allow us to contact people just about anywhere. We can research any topic and we can find just about any place.

A long time ago I remember dreaming about sitting in one place and actually seeing someone in another part of the world in real time. I dreamed about what is now a conference call. Someone in an office communicating with his staff by a video link is a reality.

The courts are now using this technology with increasing frequency. A few months ago we took a case to the Caribbean Court of Justice. We made our arguments then returned home for the decision. That decision came via Skype. There I was in the Guyana Court of Appeal watching the judges in Trinidad taking their seats then reading the judgement.

That was nothing short of amazing, when we consider that a few years ago it would have been impossible. People do not necessarily have to come to Guyana to testify in a matter. They can do so from the confines of their home. They can be cross-examined and questioned.

When we travel overseas we find people by simply inputting their address in a phone or a device fitted in cars that are being produced these days. A voice directs you from the moment you drive off all the way to your destination. If there is a traffic jam along the way the voice talks you around it.

A policeman stops you on the road. Before he approaches your vehicle, he inputs the number of your vehicle and he is provided with a load of information. He knows the name of the driver and in that way he can determine if the vehicle is stolen or if the driver has an outstanding warrant.

That technology is coming to Guyana with the development of Information and Communication Technology. Doctors in one country can actually help those in another part of the world perform delicate operations. The foreign doctor is actually in the operating theatre seeing everything by way of a camera.

With such a development in technology, I am amazed that our children still ask people the meaning of words, because these days the dictionary is obsolescent. In fact, there is an application (app) that actually pronounces the word. The speaker can pronounce the word and the app will tell that person how to spell the word and the meaning of that word.

I work with a newspaper. People no longer have to rush out to get the newspaper man. They simply go online and can read anything they want. In fact, these days there are online newspapers. The publishers no longer have to invest in printing presses and all the accoutrements that go with it.

That is why I simply could not understand the hullabaloo about whether Justice James Patterson was ever a Chief Justice in Grenada. Opposition Leader Bharrat Jagdeo, at a recent press conference, said that people told him the opposite. The technology is there for him to verify what he was told. Instead we have this confusion nearly a fortnight after Justice Patterson took the oath of office.

Employers use the internet more frequently than we would want to believe. A man came to me to request that we take down some information about a conviction he picked up in the United States. He told me that he was trying to gain employment, but the potential employer would simply inform him that his conviction is a major stumbling block.

Confidence tricksters also use the internet to post fictitious resumes. However, they are unearthed by a simple cross check.

If the individual talks about attending a certain university, then that can be checked out. It is the same if the person fudges his/her experience.

This is how Kaieteur News was able to uncover the fact that Makeswar 'Fip' Motilall never constructed a road, although he presented himself as someone who had built roads in the United States. The newspaper should not have been put in the position to uncover the falsehood. The government, by way of due diligence, could and should have accessed the information.

That is why we should now not have the problems with hinterland schools being so disadvantaged. We did attempt to package programmes that we would have disseminated to those schools. A teacher would have been standing in a classroom somewhere and teaching children miles away.

Of course, there would have been need for supervision at the hinterland school, provided the teacher is au fait with the subject. This is being done elsewhere, and with our limited resources we should be making use of this technology.

Minister Cathy Hughes is busy setting up internet hubs along coastal Guyana, but I am certain most of the users are more interested in using the hubs for Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and the like. It would be interesting if we could use these hubs for education purposes.

They are excellent communication tools, to the extent that in the developed world every citizen is now a reporter. Only yesterday I saw a story about a woman recording an attack on a man and making her recording available to the police.

In Guyana, I have seen misinformation peddled as truth. One classic case involved reporter Nazima Raghubir interviewing President David Granger. There was President Granger talking about plantain chips and the like. The reality is that he never answered in the manner the video purported him to do. And that is one fear of social media.

Misinformation can be promoted as fact, and being the people we are, we would tend to believe what is presented. There is need for the presenters among us to be responsible.

Yet one should not limit the use of technology. We catch criminals through its use; we catch errant road users and we can monitor people. In the United States, policemen are forced to wear body cameras. That may be some distance away for Guyana, but it must be coming.

***How can the government spend money so lavishly while public servants and teachers receive a mere eight percent increase? (Freddie Kissoon)***

 Find us on Facebook **GTCSJAD**

**Root out corruption, jail offenders before the oil starts pumping**

**Remember LFS Burnham, Visionary Leadership His Legacy Not Yet Contextualized**

# The PNC in Motion

By: Dr. David Hinds

## Time, place, personalities and history

THIS column is mostly political history, but also partly contextualisation. Particularly, it looks at the earlier history of the PNC and its evolution over time as the party observes its 60th anniversary. I decided to focus on the history, because I have come to realise that it is a dying interest among our citizens, including our elites, which in turn leads to seriously flawed analyses of our politics and society.

I am often dismayed at the ignorance of the history of the PNC that resides among the younger and not-so-young members of that party and the public at large. It is my opinion that this ignorance is manifested by the over-reliance of PNC members on this and that project initiated by the party when it held office, rather any serious interrogation of the party's origins and evolution both as a product and shaper of post-colonial Guyanese politics and society. As is the case with such projects, the facts and analysis contained in this column are products of my own research and reading of what I unearthed. In that sense, there is bias contained here.

This past week the PPP observed the 25th anniversary of its return to power in 1992, after almost three decades in the opposition benches. Since the party equates that moment with the return to democracy, it frames its subsequent tenure in office as a historic intervention. Many independent observers and detractors of the PPP would obviously read that period in our history much different from the political ideologues at Freedom House. But I shall return to that in a subsequent column.

Whatever the PPP thinks about itself before and after 1992, that narrative is intertwined with its long-time nemesis, the PNC. The modern political history of Guyana cannot be properly written without due consideration of the PNC's role, which by all accounts is phenomenal. In our ethnically bifurcated country, the PNC has these six decades symbolised the political aspirations, survival and hegemony of one the two major ethnic groups. In many regards, for African-Guyanese, the PNC is the "race" and vice versa. The PNC, like the PPP, has, understandably, always disavowed this ethno-racial tag, but that has not stood in the way of the uncomfortable truth.

To understand the ethnic evolution of the PNC, one must be reminded of the very origins of the party, which lie in the ruins of the original PPP. The historic vic-

tory of the country's first mass-based party at the 1953 election proved to be both a moment of triumph and the origin of political dislocation. When the split was formalised in 1955, the Burnhamite faction walked away with the party's mainly African-Guyanese urban membership and a minority of the top leadership. Between 1955 and 1957, this faction functioned as PPP-Burnhamite and contested the 1957 election under that name.

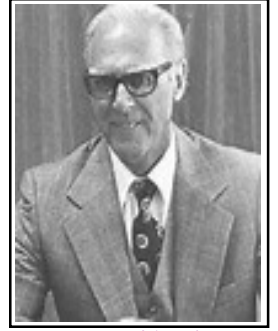
The PNC would come into being after the defeat of the PPP-Burnhamite by the PPP-Jaganite-PPP at the 1957 election. The Burnhamites had garnered 25.48% of the popular vote and won three seats, while the Jaganites got 47.5% of the popular votes and won 9 seats. It is obvious from those results that the Burnhamites had not yet emerged as a broad national force when it renamed itself, the PNC, in October 1957.

That would drastically change within two years. First, Eusi Kwayana, then known as Sydney King, would join the PNC shortly after its birth and bring into the party his following among rural African-Guyanese. He, Kwayana, had remained with the Jaganite faction at the time of the 1955 split, but along with other Black leaders, would leave in 1956 primarily because the leadership had begun to embrace a more Indian Guyanese outlook. He contested the 1957 election as an independent candidate and while he was opposed by the Jaganites, the Burnhamites did not field a candidate against him.

Kwayana became the PNC's general-secretary and editor of the party's newspaper, *New Nation*. He also wrote the party's song—he was also writer of the PPP's and WPA's party songs. Kwayana's entry into the PNC effectively began the consolidation of the PNC as the African-Guyanese response to the emerging Indian-Guyanese PPP.

This process was completed with the 1959 merger of the PNC with the Afri-

can-Guyanese middle class United Democratic Party (UDP), then led by John Carter. In effect, one can argue that this represented the real birthdate of the PNC. The PNC, like all our major parties, is really a coalition of various forces, often with vastly different outlooks. This early PNC brought together the ideologically moderate Burnhamites, the very conservative Afro-Saxons from the UDP and the radicalism of Kwayana and his followers. What they had in common was their blackness (race) which, after the lull of the early PPP, had again become salient in our politics.



Peter D'Aguiar

Of historical note is the fact that Peter D'Aguiar, who went on to form the United Force, had refused an invitation to join the PNC. Also of note is the role played by legendary Caribbean thinker, CLR James, in merger of the UDP and the PNC. The impact of the expanded PNC could be gleaned from its showing at the 1961 election when it garnered 40.99% of the popular vote (a mere 1.6% less than the PPP and a whopping 15.51% increase of its 1957 takings) and won 11 seats.

From 1959 to the present, the PNC has undergone tremendous change. It must, since it is part of a changing Guyana and a changing world. Its detractors, including this writer from time to time, give the impression that the PNC is stuck in time. That is wrong history and dishonest analysis. The early PNC, therefore, represented the massive ideological contradictions within its early leadership. King and the UDP faction soon found it difficult to co-exist ideologically and Burnham's own pre-occupation with top leadership could not co-exist with what was perceived as leadership threats from King and John Carter.

Carter was soon banished overseas and King was "expelled." These developments, in a sense, saw the emergence of a new PNC leadership dominated by Burnham's loyalists. By the time it took power in 1964, the PNC was not the same party that came into being in 1957-59.

For the next 21 years the party went in directions that few observers anticipated. First, it transitioned from a chaotic, eclectic ideology to a deeply Marxist-Leninist party. Whether one thinks this movement was politically opportunistic or not, the truth is that it transformed the party.

The second great development was its adoption of political [See page.....13](#)



Forbes Burnham



Dr. Cheddi Jagan

pro-Indian

Guyanese outlook.

He contested the 1957

election as an independent candidate

and while he was opposed by the Jaganites,

the Burnhamites did not field a candidate

against him.

Kwayana became the PNC's general-

secretary and editor of the party's news-

paper, *New Nation*. He also wrote the

party's song—he was also writer of the

PPP's and WPA's party songs.

Kwayana's entry into the PNC effectively

began the consolidation of the PNC as

the African-Guyanese response to the

emerging Indian-Guyanese PPP.

This process was completed with the

1959 merger of the PNC with the Afri-

can-

Guyanese middle class United

Democratic Party (UDP), then led by John

Carter.

In effect,

one can argue

that this repre-

sented the real

birthdate of the

PNC. The PNC,

like all our major

parties, is really a

coalition of vari-

ous forces, often

with vastly differ-

ent outlooks. This

early PNC brought

together the ideologically

moderate Burnhamites,

the very conserva-

tive Afro-Saxons

from the UDP and

the radicalism of

Kwayana and his

followers. What

they had in com-

mon was their

blackness (race)

which, after the

lull of the early

PPP, had again

become salient

in our politics.

Of historical

note is the fact

that Peter D'Aguiar,

who went on to

form the United

Force, had refused

an invitation to

join the PNC. Also

of note is the

role played by

legendary Caribbean

thinker, CLR

James, in merger

of the UDP and

the PNC. The

impact of the

expanded PNC

could be gleaned

from its showing

at the 1961

election when it

garnered 40.99%

of the popular

vote (a mere

1.6% less than

the PPP and a

whopping

15.51% increase

of its 1957

takings) and

won 11 seats.

From 1959 to

the present, the

PNC has under-

gone tremen-

dous change.

It must, since

it is part of a

changing Guyana

and a changing

world. Its detrac-

tors, including

this writer from

time to time,

give the impres-

sion that the

PNC is stuck in

time. That is

wrong history

and dishonest

analysis. The

early PNC, there-

fore, repre-

sented the mas-

sive ideological

contra-

dictions within

its early leader-

ship. King and

the UDP faction

soon found it

difficult to co-

-exist ideologi-

cally and Burn-

ham's own pre-

-occupation

with top leader-

ship could not

co-exist with

what was per-

ceived as leader-

ship threats

from King and

John Carter.

Carter was

soon banished

overseas and

King was "ex-

pelled." These

developments,

in a sense, saw

the emergence

of a new PNC

leadership

dominated by

Burnham's

loyalists. By

the time it

took power

in 1964, the

PNC was not

the same

party that

came into

being in

1957-59.

For the next

21 years the

party went

in directions

that few

observers

anti-

ci-

ated. First,

it transitioned

from a chaotic,

eclectic

ideology to a

deeply

Marx-

ist-

Leninist

party. Whether

one thinks

this

move-

ment was

politically

opportu-

nistic or

not, the

truth is

that it

trans-

formed

the

party.

The second

great

develop-

ment was

its

adop-

tion of

political

[See page.....13](#)

# The PNC in Motion

(Continued from page.....4) domination and authoritarianism as a mode in both party and government. What this meant for the PNC and Guyana was the awkward convergence of a progressive foreign policy, liberal to progressive domestic policies in the socio-economic sphere and a most regressive (authoritarian) form of governance. Ultimately, the former two could not survive the onslaught of the latter.

It is the most difficult part of the PNC's history for its members to come to grips with. Even President Granger, an astute historian, has not worked out how to locate and explain this part of the party's history. Of the current PNC leaders, only Carl Greenidge, Vincent Alexander and Aubrey Norton I have ever heard made any serious attempt to confront this moment in the party's history—I still remember Carl Grennidge's presentation in this regard at a symposium on Burnham at St Stanislaus in 2011, I think.

Along the way, Llewelyn John, a product of the UDP, and a key player in local government policy and electoral "reform" split from the party. The biggest break was between the PNC and Kwayana's ASCRIA in 1971. Kwayana, though expelled from the PNC, remained a big influence on the PNC's politics from 1964 to 1971. He greatly influenced Land Reform policy, support for African Liberation as foreign policy, support for African empowerment as domestic policy, the village economy as policy, government agricultural policy and the movement towards a Cooperative Republic. In fact, the name-term "Co-operative Republic" was coined by Kwayana. But Kwayana would break with Burnham and the PNC over government corruption—a development that would set in train a new period in Guyanese history that saw the emergence of the WPA and a new politics.

By the time Burnham died in 1985, the world had changed. The assassination of Walter Rodney had deeply damaged Guyana's image at home and abroad. The rise of Reaganism, the demise of the Grenadian revolution and the imminent exit of the Cold War meant the PNC's aces had less currency. So, even before his sudden death, Burnham had begun to search for ways to change course. He had begun to talk to the PPP, had brought into the party leadership and government a new cadre of technocrats and his anti-imperialism had become less bombastic.

What Desmond Hoyte did when he came to power was to escalate that which Burnham was hesitant about in his last years. He purged the Burnhamites who were generally contemptuous of him, slackened the authoritarian state and retreated from socialist economics. This transition culminated with free and fair elections in 1992, which saw the PNC lose power.

This precipitated yet another split in the PNC with Hamilton Green, the long-time PNC strongman, being expelled by Hoyte who replaced the "Greens" with a younger cadre of technocrats who had not grown up with the party—some of them are still in the party's leadership today. These technocrats were partly part of the REFORM component that emerged as the PNC's version of the PPP's CIVIC and the WPA's CITIZENS. Green's (GGG) would embarrass the PNC at the 1994 Georgetown municipal elections by soundly beating the party in its core constituency.

The PNC in opposition was a changed party. After 28 years, it knew nothing about opposition politics. As is the custom, many top leaders left. Hoyte had become bitter as the expected ethnic results of his policies had not materialised. He flirted with mass-protests, but pulled back when he realised that it was the new, younger leadership which was benefiting from this tactic. He and the PNC almost buried themselves politically by refusing to press for power-sharing with the PPP which, under the pressure of the protests, was prepared to concede. By the time Hoyte agreed to power-sharing, it was too late—Bharrat Jagdeo had taken over the PPP and had begun his crusade of PPP dominance and Indian-Guyanese hegemony.



Desmond Hoyte

At Hoyte's death, Robert Corbin, an unlikely PNC maximum leader, took the reins of the party. The world had changed from the days when he was a young PNC strongman and fire-brand. His leadership coincided with the weakest period in the party's history—both the party and its supporters were demoralised. Corbin was never allowed to govern the party as his predecessors did, largely because his peers did not see him as their intellectual equal—he suffered from not being able to fit into the "doctor politics" that dominates our culture. He was challenged by Vincent Alexander for the leadership, which in turn led to another purge from the party.

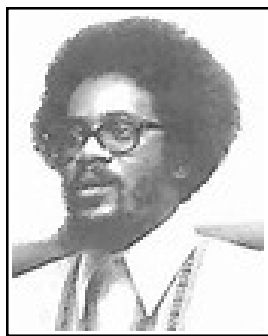
The 2006 election at which he was the party's presidential candidate saw the PNC's lowest returns ever at an election. In the end, there was another split. Raphael Trotman, seen as a rising star, left to help form the AFC and took with him a quarter of the party's electoral base.

But the very Corbin who led the party at its lowest moment would be the unsung hero of its revival. He knew the party had no electoral future as a winning party on its own and would have to forge alliances. He first sought power-sharing with the PPP, but even though Jagdeo expressed some interest, the initiative was scuttled by Mrs. Jagan. He then floated the "big tent" idea with the party's old enemy, the WPA, but the latter wasn't ready for the plunge— not with Corbin as its leader.

But Corbin continued to court the WPA, both in front of and behind the scenes, and by 2011, he scored a breakthrough when the WPA agreed to the formation of the APNU. The Corbin "partnership faction" was a minority within the PNC. Many still believed the myth that PNC could win alone, while others were still bitter at the WPA for helping to topple the party in 1992. Ironically, most of the PNCites in government today initially scoffed at the idea of the APNU partnership.

Corbin paid the ultimate price for choosing partnership over party—he could not be the leader. As he gracefully stepped away, he endorsed David Granger over Carl Greenidge in a bitter contest. Granger won and has since brought a new element to the PNC—the ex-soldiers, who have become a formidable force in the party. But Granger is not a natural PNC leader—he does not enjoy maximum support among the membership and the rank and file. And like Hoyte, he governs the party more as President than as party leader.

Under his leadership, the party has not regained its bluster largely because the APNU and the coalition have weakened its power as an electoral force. As was the case when it lost power in 1992, the PNC is yet to adjust to the new reality and figure out the proper role of the party in a coalition government and its relationship to its African-Guyanese base.



Dr. Walter Rodney

*The closure of two sugar factories*

(Continued from page.....9) price cut that it implemented on our sugar. Our prices fell over US\$600 per tonne to now just over US\$300. Get the picture?

The implementation of measures to open the sugar market to other sweeteners like beet, which is being produced right in Europe, came to an end last month, in effect making Europe an open market where anyone can sell sugar. Can we compete? That is the big question.

We reportedly received over 100M Euros from the EU over the last decade, building the Enmore sugar packaging factory for US\$12M. The rest of the monies were kept in the budget and used as the Government of the day saw fit.

Guyana, however, buoyed by the close linkages of the then ruling political party, the PPP, and the perceived fallout from making any moves that could affect its support base, balked at any moves that could disrupt the status quo.

In fact, in the latter half of the 2000s, Guyana embarked on its biggest infrastructure project, in terms of cost – the building of a state-of-the-art new factory at Skeldon, East Berbice, with expanded canefields. It was supposed to boost production and therefore increase profits.

*The absence of racial harmony precludes Guyana from being an equal, just and prosperous society- (Tony Jones)*

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5th**

Bridges Global Medical Missions: Fundraising Luncheon. At: Terrace on the Park, Flushing Meadows Park, Queens. Cost: \$125. Music: Foundation Band, Dj Flex etc. Call Noel: 404-454-6939.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9th**

Guyana Medical Mission of New Jersey: Medical Outreach in Buxton. From 9:00 a.m. At: Buxton Health Centre. Free Evaluation, Diagnostic Tests & Prescription Drugs, Eye Examination, (ECG/EKG), Cholesterol Screening, Blood Tests & more...

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11th**

Guyana Arts & Cultural Center: Pot Turn Down Saturday. (Lunch To-Go Fundraiser. From: 11:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. At: 2806 Newkirk Avenue, Bklyn, NY. Donation: \$15. Info. Call: 718-209-5207

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13th & TUESDAY 14th**

Department of Public Health Region 5 and Bridges Global Medical Missions: Two days of free medical clinic, which includes: Obstetrics and gynecology, ears, nose and throat, pediatricians, dental care etc. At: Mahaicony Hospital. From: 9:00 am/4:00 pm.

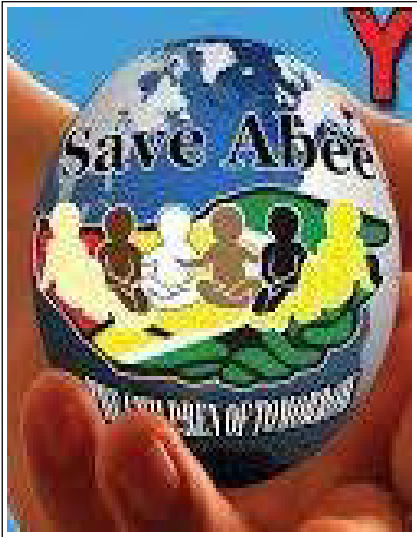
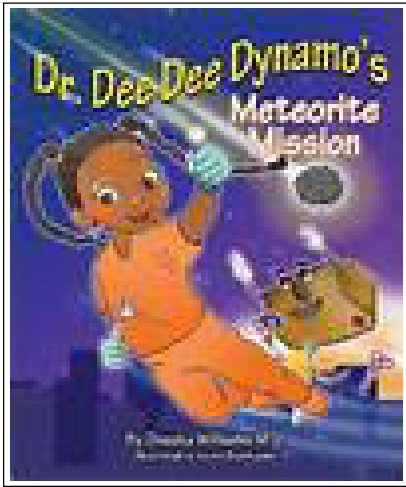
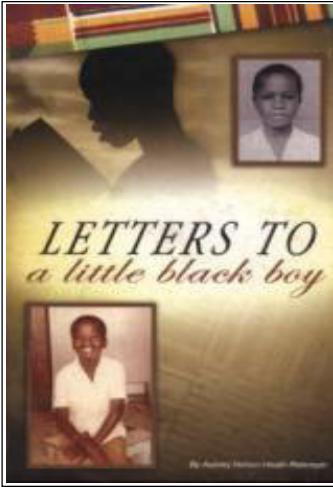
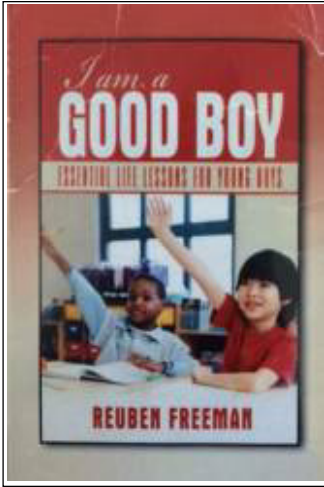
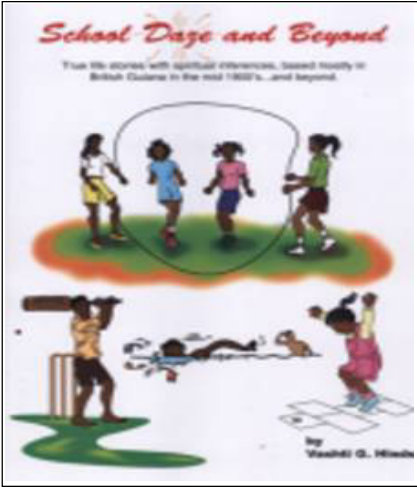
**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18th**

The Caribbean Voice: Invites you to its 3rd Annual El Dorado Awards & Dinner (In Guyana). At: Park Vue International Hotel Bouquet Hall. From: 6 pm. For info. Call Nazim: 644-1152 or in U.S.A. Contact: Annan: 646-461-0574 or Tanuja: 732-534-2846.

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2nd.**

Guyana Ex-Soldiers Assoc. (Canada): Annual Christmas Dinner & Dance. At: Elite Banquet Hall. \$60. Info. 905-567-4464.

**CSJAD: Catalyst For Authentic Political Discourse**



**Seek CSJAD Membership Now!**

[guyanaacjad@yahoo.com](mailto:guyanaacjad@yahoo.com)

Extraordinary people survive under the most terrible circumstance and they become more extraordinary due to it.

**THE ABSENCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS MAKES CLAIMS OF DEMOCRACY IN GUYANA A BIG GIMMICK**



It is important to emphasize that *Suicide* cannot be considered in isolation. Instead, the solution requires a collaborative and broader approach...

**A Crisis of Child Abuse in Guyana**

**NOTHING LESS WILL SUFFICE UNTIL THERE IS A REVOLUTION OF VALUES AND A MORE RADICAL RELOCATING OF POWER TO THE DISPOSSESSED**