



The Arrivals Terminal at Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Guyana where many will be arriving for the holiday season.

## Barbados says "Goodbye!" to their Prime Minister Hon. David Thompson



**Barbadians in mourning** viewing the funeral service of Prime Minister Thompson on a Jumbo Screen at Kensington Oval on November 3, 2010.

**Barbados** has been plunged into mourning with the death of Prime Minister, the Honourable David Thompson, He died at 2:10am on October 23rd, 2010, at his home in Mapps, St Philip, after battling pancreatic cancer. He was 48 years old Mr. Thompson leaves to mourn his wife Mara, their three daughters and adopted son, as well as his parents and siblings.

Thompson served as Prime Minister of Barbados from January 2008 when the Democratic Labour Party won the government from the Barbados Labour Party, whose leader was former Prime Minister Owen Arthur. He was first elected to Parliament in 1987.

It was during the month of May that Thompson, accompanied by his personal physician, Dr Richard Ishmael, announced to Barbadians that he was not well and was seeking medical attention. He made many trips overseas for treatment but the nature of his illness prepared many for his passing as few ever recover from pancreatic cancer.

He was buried in a State Funeral on November 3, 2010. It was attended by thousands at Kensington Oval. Attendees included the Diplomatic Corps, President Jagdeo of Guyana, and most of the Prime Ministers in CARICOM.

**Biography: Legal Education:** P.M. Thompson was a Lawyer. He gained a legal Certificate, Hugh Wooding Law School. In1984: University of the West Indies, Law Faculty, Graduated with Honours.

**Professional/Political Career:** 1986 - Admitted To Bar; 1986-1988: Part-time Tutor in Law, University of the West Indies; 1987 Elected to Parliament; 1991 - 1993 Minister of Community Development and Culture; 1992-1993: Served as Minister of State with responsibility for Finance, Minister of Finance; 1994: Leader of the Democratic Labour Party; 2001: Resigned as leader of the Democratic Labour Party; 2006: Leader of the Democratic Labour Party; 2008: Elected Prime Minister .

## Hurricane 'Tomas' hits Barbados, St. Vincent and St. Lucia

On Friday October 29, a tropical depression that earlier skirted the coast of Guyana moved northwestward and quickly became Hurricane Tomas. Barbados was caught unprepared but were lucky as it was just forming as a Category-1 packing gusts of 75 MPH(110km) winds and rain. Much damage was caused to buildings and flooding was a problem in some areas. Electricity, water and phones were also affected as power and telephone lines were damaged. Most services were restored within a week.

The storm gathered strength and moved on to St. Vincent and St. Lucia islands about 120 miles west of Barbados. They were hit with Category 3 winds of over 100 mph and much damage was done to housing and food crops. especially the banana plantations that are their main agricultural export. St. Lucia received the most damage before the hurricane moved west and then north west affecting eastern Jamaica, Haiti and western Cuba.

St. Lucia, heavily dependent on tourism, had serious landslides that have cut off road communications between the north and the south of the island (see page 9). LIAT, the airline has had to set up an air bridge, shuttling passengers between their two airports to aid passengers as well as to transport cargo. Barbados and other CARICOM countries are helping with emergency supplies as the devastation and food and water shortages are a concern.

**Links on damage in St Lucia and tracking map of Hurricane Tomas:-**  
[St Lucia reeling from Hurricane Tomas < click](#)  
[National Weather Service—Hurricane warning graphics showing the full tracking of Hurricane Tomas < click](#)

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## The Newsletter and Blog for Guyanese Individuals, Associations and Groups Worldwide

### Welcome to the Guyanese Online Newsletter

By: Cyril Bryan, Editor and Publisher

This is the **ninth edition** of the Guyanese Online Newsletter. The newsletters and Blog have been well received and reach thousands of Guyanese and their friends worldwide. I must thank all those who have commented and sent personal e-mails. Thanks also to the associations, and advertisers.



Cyril Bryan

### EDITORIAL - Amerindians 2-2

In the Editorial of the last issue of Guyanese Online I made the following statement in the last paragraph:

**Many Guyanese of "mixed" heritage have Amerindian ancestry due to 400+ years of contact. "Amerindians and those of mixed heritage (at least 30%) are therefore, becoming a force that could influence the political future of Guyana.**

**"The attention now being paid to our Amerindian ancestors is laudable. However, what is the price of so called "progress"? Does it mean the disrespecting of elders and the loss of ancestral lands, knowledge and wisdom? Does it mean giving them "peanuts", as they are used as backdrops in a human zoo for tourists, who pay thousands for the experience? Does it mean the further loss of ancestral lands as title is given to individuals and later sold to persons not of their tribe? Does it mean more mercury and cyanide in their water and fish? We have to ask these questions as we speed them into the 21st century with high-speed Internet, increased crime and their social destruction".**

Since then, a conference of the National Toshias Council (NTC), a body of leaders established under the Amerindian Act of 2006, was held, where the government announced that US\$8M, was being applied to various projects from the Norway Fund: US\$4M to demarcating the borders of the various communities, US\$1.5 million for solar panels for Amerindian houses and the remaining US\$2.5 million to finance development activities under the Village Transformation Plans. The government announced that the majority of Toshias agreed with their plans. However, there are many who do not. (See page 5 for concerns of Mazaruni Toshias).

Following this conference we now hear that the Amerindian Act of 2006, under which the Toshias Conferences were held, was never made into law (See page 4). This amazing revelation was not made by the political opposition, but by a citizen, Christopher Ram. Moreover, the Act mandates the yearly transfer of "20% of the royalties from mining activities to a fund designated by the Minister for the benefit of the Amerindian villages". This would translate into millions of US dollars from 2006 to the present. The Toshias seem not to be aware of these funds as they have never been discussed and no arrangement was instituted for their equitable distribution, irrespective of political control or allegiance.

#### Please note

This **Guyanese Online Newsletter** and the **Guyanese Online Blog** is designed, edited, produced and published by **Cyril Bryan**. Individuals, Organizations, Associations and groups should send their announcements, features, news, and event advertisements for publication to **Cyril Bryan** at: [guyaneseonline@gmail.com](mailto:guyaneseonline@gmail.com)

#### Note to readers:

Over the last nine months we have featured articles on the history, culture and admixtures of the various peoples that make up the population in Guyana and in the Guyanese Diaspora. In this issue we again feature the Amerindians, the "First Peoples of Guyana", whose ancestors have been settled in Guyana, and the countries that surround it, for over 10,000 years.

The Government has now hurriedly passed the Amerindian Act of 2006 and backdated a whole number of decisions. We are now awaiting an answer as to what has happened to the millions owed to the Amerindian communities. It is definitely an embarrassing situation for the Government, for they must have known that they were not allocating all the funds rightfully earned by the Amerindian Communities.

This Amerindian issue clearly illustrates what is happening in Guyana with those Communities. For instance, US\$8M of the Norway funding has been allocated to them, but half goes to outside "surveyors". The Amerindians say they know where their ancestral lands are, and that they fear that logging and mining interests will influence the demarcation process. As noted above, even more damaging is the fact that for five years, the Government did not allocate the funding agreed to under the Amerindian Act of 2006, although they did allocate funds based on their own criteria.

Amazingly, the opposition parties are not protesting or protecting the Amerindian communities from the obvious injustices. How could they not have been aware that the Amerindian Act was not officially passed into law, but was being applied—without the financial aspects in place to aid Amerindian Communities? The only people that seem to be asking really hard questions now are the representatives of the World Bank, who are responsible for the Norway funds allocation, and they are being told by Government not to interfere. So who is going to defend these communities?

The modern trend, in many societies, is to ignore and discard the teachings and advice of older generations, labeling them as being "backward" and hampering "progress". The younger Amerindians in Guyana must understand that their so-called "backwardness" has allowed them to survive for over 10,000 years. Their knowledge of life is deeper than our materialism. It is communal, holistic and spiritual. They are peoples with ancestral knowledge that should be preserved by recording their languages, oral memories, traditions, and medicinal knowledge as intellectual property, using the tools of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. If not, it takes just two generations to lose the ancestral knowledge, and we are well on our way to destroying the Amerindian people of Guyana by making them feel inferior, destroying and poisoning their habitats with logging and mining, and denying them their ancestral rights, guaranteed under the United Nations Charter for Indigenous Peoples.

#### SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO THE BLOG

If you would like to comment on this newsletter or Blog please go to comments for [November Newsletter link HERE](#) <click.

You do not have to use your actual name. In your comments. You can also write Cyril at [guyaneseonline@gmail.com](mailto:guyaneseonline@gmail.com)

## DIWALI 2010 Motorcade in Guyana

Thousands of Guyanese of all walks of life turned up outside the Campbellville Mandir and along the seawall as is customary to witness the well-illuminated vehicles which formed part of the annual Diwali motorcade on November 4, 2010.

At the 18:00hrs start time, at least 10 floats were already assembled but were soon joined by the other well-lit and designed vehicles which had various depictions of Hindu gods and goddesses, especially Mother Laxhmi. The number of spectators who gathered increased steadily and represented a cross-section of the various races.

The majority of the floats participated in the small category and the participants were from various Mandirs in and outside of Georgetown. In the large category, the float from the Edward Beharry Group of Companies was one of the impressive ones.

The entries were judged in the small, large and commercial categories. Twenty floats took part in the parade which eventually moved off from the Campbellville Mandir at 19:15hrs.

The floats were being judged based on their illumination, music, deportment and punctuality. The judging points were at the mandir, Conservation Tree and at the LBI ground, which was to be the final stop along the route.

Even as the floats moved off from Sandy Babb Street, most of the crowd walked along or some opted to walk along Sheriff Street in order to get to the sea wall to watch the procession as it moved along the Rupert Craig Highway, on its way to LBI.

Diwali is also known as 'the festival of lights', because on this day, people illuminate their home and premises with diyas which signify the triumph of light over darkness. [source](#)

**Article: "DIWALI around the World " .. article by Dr. Latchman Kissoon read article at this link [here](#).**

*Below are some of the floats in the Diwali 2010 Motorcade in Georgetown held on November 4, 2010*



## Amerindian Tashaos Council Meeting and Norway money

Norway has agreed to pay Guyana up to US\$250 million over the next five years to retain its rainforest and abide by a strict set of rules for forestry management that can impact on the forestry and mining sectors. The first US\$30 million is due to be paid now.

The World Bank and Inter American Development Bank playing major roles in managing Norway's funds through the Guyana Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (GRIF) to ensure transparency and accountability.

Addressing participants at the opening of the conference of National Tashaos Council (NTC), a body established under the Amerindian Act, he said that:

At least US\$8 million would be spent on Amerindian communities to be used as follows: US\$4 million for land demarcation; US\$1.5 million for solar panels for all Amerindian houses and the remaining US\$2.5 million would finance development activities under the Village Transformation Plans.

Apart from the Norwegian funds, the Guyana government plans to buy a bank of at least 20 computers and provide Internet access to each Amerindian village to speed up communication between people in remote riverain, mountainous and savannah communities and elsewhere.



President Jagdeo addressing the National Tashaos Conference of Amerindian leaders on October 25, 2010, held at the Lillindal Conference Centre.

Jagdeo noted that: "It's not just about making our entire country computer literate but in ensuring that people in remote communities can communicate instantaneously within Guyana and the entire world—using the Internet to broaden their perspectives to whatever is happening everywhere else," said Jagdeo.

[US\\$8M for land titling, solar power in Amerindian communities – Jagdeo](#) <read full article here

## A windfall for the Amerindian communities

### Surprise: Amerindian Act 2006, giving 20% of mining royalties only now passed

[Stabroek News Editorial: November 8, 2010](#)

So the proverbial cat is out of the bag. The government lulled the country into believing that a landmark, revamped Amerindian Act had been in force since 2006. Enter citizen Mr. Christopher Ram who exposed this charade in a letter to this newspaper in September when he pointed out that the Act had not been brought into force. There was then an uncomfortable and embarrassing silence from the government, usually a sign that it has been caught in flagrante delicto otherwise its defenders would have long been pressed into action.

During Thursday's sitting of Parliament, the Minister of Amerindian Affairs Ms Pauline Sukhai tabled the Amerindian Act 2006 (Commencement) Bill which aims to repair this monumental deception committed on the populace and, in particular, the indigenous people of the country. The Explanatory Memorandum to the bill said that it sought to validate the commencement of the Amerindian Act 2006 with effect from March 14th, 2006. More specifically "It validates all acts and things done between 14th March, 2006 and the enactment of this Act which would have been lawful if the Amerindian Act 2006 had been brought into force by Order.

"All persons are freed, acquitted, discharged and indemnified from all liability and legal proceedings of any kind in respect of acts and things done between the 14th March, 2006 and the enactment of this Act".

It was further stated in the Explanatory Memorandum that an Order was made bringing the Amerindian Act 2006 into force in April 2006. "This order was signed by the Minister but a Gazette copy cannot be found. Hence it is necessary to proceed by way of an amendment Act to bring the Amerindian Act into force and to effect the necessary validation".

Not since the vitiation of the results of the 1997 election has the PPP/C had to scramble to save face and to avoid a minefield of

legal complications. However, considering the healthy and justifiable public scepticism that is occasioned by the PPP/C's manoeuvres, the government will have to convince the people that this was indeed an oversight that shockingly avoided detection by the supremos in that ministry rather than a deliberate act of omission.

The Ministry of Amerindian Affairs, which was then led by the present Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carolyn Rodrigues, should be asked to publicly present the paper trail leading to the supposed attempt to gazette the commencement order. Those guilty of lapses should be held accountable as Minister Rodrigues herself should be.

There has for sometime been concern about the possible back-dating of gazettes to cover the unconstitutional non-assenting of bills. Not even the gazetting process can avoid the stain of chicanery under this administration. What a shame.

Now that the government has come clean and acknowledged that the Act was never brought into effect it must demonstrate good faith. Even if Minister Rodrigues and now Minister Sukhai had been labouring under the illusion that the Act was already in place surely both would have been acutely aware of the provision in the Act referred to by Mr Ram requiring the transferral of "20% of the royalties from mining activities to a fund designated by the Minister for the benefit of the Amerindian villages". Since 2006, the money accruing to Amerindian villages from the Guyana Geology and Mines Commission would have amounted to many millions. Quite interestingly, Mr Ram also pointed out that over this period that the GGMC transferred \$1.8B to the government's holding company-cum-investment gatherer, NICIL .....

[more](#)

Read full Editorial: ["A windfall for Amerindian Communities"](#)

## Eight Upper Mazaruni toshaos reject conference pact

**-say were not consulted**

[50+ Comments](#)

**Several Toshaos from the Upper Mazaruni have said that the resolution on the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) coming out of the recently concluded National Toshaos Conference (NTC) was drafted without their knowledge and are objecting to its contents.**

At their request, Stabroek News recently spoke with the leaders of Chinoweing, Jawalla, Kako, Phillipai, Kamarang/Warawatta, Kaikan, Arau, Paruima, who said that they refused to sign the document since they were not in agreement with its contents.

The resolution also affirmed support from the Amerindian communities for the Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) initiative and said that the NTC is the sole authority to represent Amerindian interests to the Government of Guyana.

The leaders said that on the final day of the conference, copies of the resolution were passed around for their signatures while it was being read by Yvonne Pearson, Chairperson of the National Toshias Council (NTC). They said that was the first time they saw the document. One Toshiao among them said regrettably he signed it because he saw the other leaders doing that.

The group opined that Toshias present at the conference affixed their signatures without fully understanding what they were signing. They believe that they should have been consulted in the drafting process so that their views could have been accurately reflected. This action, they opined, was a contravention of their rights to free, prior and informed consent.



Mario Hastings

Mario Hastings, Kako Toshiao, said that when he asked a senior official about the lack of consultation, she said that "there wasn't enough time since everyone was busy" and therefore she typed it. "That wasn't a good excuse," he said, adding that even an Executive Member of the NTC did not even know what the contents of the document were until it was given to him at the conference.

He also said that one of the clauses of the resolution, which states that the NTC is the sole authority to represent their interests to the government, is unfair.

He believes that this stipulation was a deliberate move to deter engagement with NGOs. "We have freedom to associate with whom we want to, you must not tell us how we must associate with," he added. "Consultation is not giving information, you need to listen to us," Hastings advised. The leaders held that although the NTC represents Amerindian interests, they do not have the right to make decisions without informing them.

On the LCDS AND REDD+, they said that they do not understand the conditions of the agreement entered into between Guyana and Norway. "If people who close to TV, internet and newspapers don't know, what about us? We far away," Hastings added. The Toshias said that they would like more details on the agreement between the governments so that they can fully assess the likely impact on their way of life.

One of the affirmations of the document is "full support for the reduced emissions for deforestation and degradation (REDD+) initiative." The leaders strongly disagree with this. They contend that they were not adequately consulted therefore it is erroneous to say that "everybody is informed."

"Consultation is a long process," said John Andries of Paruima, "it is not dissemination of information, rather engaging the other party." He added that the practice has been one where when persons visit the communities, they term it consulting. While some persons have remained silent on issues which affect them, Andries said that this did

not necessarily show their consent rather their lack of information.

One Toshiao opined that the conference was simply a political campaign and a way of trying to project an image to the World Bank that Amerindians are knowledgeable and in full agreement with LCDS.

Others indicated that while some leaders were able to speak about their problems, others were not given an opportunity, while others had their presentation time cut short. Norma Thomas of Kamarang/Warawatta said that when she raised the issue of a new secondary school to help with the overcrowding at the Waramadong Secondary School, she was given no reply. She said she saw a similar occurrence with other leaders whose issues were not addressed.

Meanwhile Andries said that the Toshias from the Upper Mazaruni have been labelled as problematic. He said this is not the case, since Guyanese have different problems and they refuse to sit by and not do anything about the issues which affect them. "If they are content, that's their problem. If we are not, then that's our problem." He said the conference was held to ventilate issues and all should have been listened to, regardless of issues.

Andries, who is also an Executive Member of the NTC, said that if the leaders were consulted on the drafting of the document then the ensuing confusion and opposition could have been avoided. Andries said not knowing about the resolution put him in a tough position since his fellow Toshias expected him to have knowledge of what was going on with the NTC.

The Government Information Agency said that out of the 171 Amerindian representatives at the meeting, 166 signed the resolution.

### Demarcation

On the issue of demarcation, he said that persons involved in the process do not know or understand the geography of Amerindian land. "They are drawing lines from their desks." He gave the example of Jawalla, whose line of demarcation left their land sliced.

From his observations, he said that the demarcation process has been accommodating of mining concessions while it is the communities which ultimately suffer. "We will demarcate our land regardless of the challenges," the Toshiao vowed.

Thomas added that Amerindians should be the ones involved in the demarcation process since they know their lands the best. "Imagine when they get it wrong they want us to apply for extension to our own land," Andries said.

He said that over the years, the number of cutter-head dredges in the Upper Mazaruni has increased. While communities have been involved in mining as well, he said that the difference was that they were not encroaching on anyone else's land in the process. The leaders felt that the issues which affect them differ by community and location.

There are some communities which have been paid greater attention by the government and therefore their lives are better than those who receive less. "If you want to see the situation of the communities, then you have to visit," one leader said.

Another said that while the President has often said that the situation of Amerindians here is better than in other countries, he does not believe that it should be boasted about and used to make Amerindians feel obligated. "This is what they should be doing; it is their obligation to the indigenous peoples," he said.

The leaders contended that they should be fully informed and consulted about issues which will affect their communities. "You can't take two communities and use it as a model for the whole country."

URL to article: [Stabroek News -Nov 03, 2010](#)

## “If Skeldon factory fails .. sugar is dead!” - Jagdeo warns

**President Bharrat Jagdeo** has warned that if his government's much-vaunted US\$200M Skeldon sugar factory doesn't succeed ... "well the sugar industry is dead".

It was the starkest warning yet by the Head of State on the Chinese-built factory which has lurched from one crisis to the next and is not working anywhere near to capacity.

Jagdeo was speaking at the commissioning of the Guyana Water Inc. \$1.4 billion water treatment plant in Corriverton, Berbice on Thursday. He lamented that the Skeldon Factory was not delivering the expected results and as a result the sugar industry is in trouble.

"This is a US\$200 million facility... unfortunately, it's not delivering the results we expected it to," Jagdeo said. "They have too many mistakes going on there and I intend to fix it...it has to change," he said. "We're not going to make that sort of investment to have a few people mess it up," he stated. "So even if it means personally I have to get involved, I will get involved to ensure that it is fixed...that it's delivering the kind of results that it should deliver so that we can safeguard the sugar industry," he stated.

"If that doesn't work well, because the European Union cut our sugar prices by 36 percent... if that doesn't work well the sugar industry is dead," he stressed. "It's dead. It's as simple as that because the bulk of sugar will be produced in the Berbice area," the President said, noting that the government had hoped that the sugar would have been produced at a lower cost so that the average cost would have allowed them to "to break even at least at the world market level."

The sugar corporation has been reeling from heavy financial losses and low production. The President's remarks came after a report in a recent edition of Stabroek News that sugar production was far behind target.

The President noted that several countries in the region had downscaled their sugar industries and he said that this was because they lacked the commitment. Jagdeo stressed that his government is committed to the industry and noted that sugar is the basis of much of the economic activity in the Corentyne.

"If sugar is not growing in this Corentyne, this place would be a ghost town...sugar not only pays the sugar workers but the shop keepers and everyone else- the market vendors and every single person here," he said. "It's the largest economic activity in this area. And if you change that income...this place becomes very, very vulnerable and I'm not going to let that happen because of a few people. So whatever it takes we're going to make it work, we're going to make it work," Jagdeo said. [more](#)

### COGENERATION AT SKELDON

The Skeldon factory has been designed to also generate electrical power by using the waste product of ground cane—bagasse, as power. It has been designed to export approximately 37,000 megawatts of power into the national grid, all the way to the Mahaica Bridge, in Demerara.

"This is a very critical component in assisting the Guyana Power and Light in providing adequate power, so it not only about sugar. Power derived from bagasse as the factory is working minimizes Guyana's dependency on fossil fuel," according to Agriculture Minister Persaud.

**GuySuCo** had projected a production of 290,000 tonnes of sugar last year (2009), which was later revised to 250,000 tonnes then 242,000 tonnes. The corporation finished the second crop around 235,000 tonnes of sugar.

This year (2010), the production target has been set at 280,000 tonnes. If the first crop is reported at only around 80,000 tonnes, getting anywhere near this figure will be unlikely. Sources say the lower than projected output will continue to deepen the corporation's financial crisis.



### “Proper management needed for troubled Skeldon factory” Says Agriculture Minister Persaud....

The need for proper management with greater focus and the right technical expertise are issues which have to be continuously addressed at the Skeldon sugar factory.

This is according to Agriculture Minister Robert Persaud following an unannounced visit to the Berbice location October 5, along with PPP General Secretary Donald Ramotar, who is a Director of the board of GuySuCo.

According to the Government Information Agency (GINA), the impromptu tour of the Skeldon Factory by the government officials was done to get a realistic, firsthand assessment of the 'inner workings' of the facility.

Persaud explained that the reason behind the surprise visit was mainly because of the suspicion that various aspects of the factory's operations are camouflaged during announced visits. "We wanted to get an on-the-spot feel of the factory and compare the reports that we receive from management," Minister Persaud said.

Making reference to a recent statement by President Bharrat Jagdeo expressing his disappointment with the factory's performance, the Minister said that "the President is absolutely correct in articulating Government's concerns as it relates to the need for the factory to upgrade its efficiency and capacity", GINA reported

The factory has been experiencing challenges in terms of technical capabilities and setbacks by management, the release stated.

GINA stated that the factory as well as the **cogeneration section** (see left), is now under the supervision of experts from India, who are working closely with the relevant technical personnel from Guyana in an effort to enhance the local skills and realize the full capacity of the facility.

## G\$3.6B (US\$18M) Hope Canal works begin

October 2, 2010 | By [KNews](#)

**Government, on October 1, 2010, unveiled a \$3.6B (US\$18M), alternative drainage canal for the Demerara area and described it as one of its biggest projects ever to be funded directly from its coffers**

Five years after the worst spate of flooding the country has ever seen coupled with the very real threat of a catastrophic collapse of the East Demerara Water Conservancy (EDWC), the government has finally broken ground on what President Jagdeo called, "a long term solution" to the threat of flooding from the EDWC.

According to President Bharrat Jagdeo, for many years villages in the area suffered from flooding with no immediate possibility of easing the situation when the EDWC is swollen to dangerous levels – a situation that occurs with greater frequency as each rainy season passes

The proposed channel joins the conservancy at a point on its north-eastern embankment and then cuts across 10.3km of the coast to spill directly into the Atlantic Ocean. Excess water from the Conservancy will drain into the canal via a three-door sluice at that end, run along the excavated channel and be spilt into the Atlantic via an eight-door high-discharge sluice structure. The canal also cuts one major roadway where the engineers have proposed a span resembling the truss bridges that currently cross the Mahaica and Abary Rivers.

Chief Executive Officer of the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority, Lionel Wordsworth, highlighted the project background for those gathered to mark the occasion – a group which included farmers and residents from the adjoining communities which were hardest hit in 2005 and stand to lose everything should a breach occur in any of the conservancy embankments

He noted that a number of relief options were considered in the aftermath of the 2005 floods; among these were channels at Belmont, Hope/Dochfour and Nabaclis. Eventually the Hope/Dochfour option was chosen and the next step became the proposed design of the structure.

Wordsworth said that a contract was signed with the consulting firm CEMCO on March 19, 2009 to deliver feasible design options in 16 weeks. The value of that design contract was some \$56.4M however the consultant was unable to deliver the service as agreed within the stipulated time frame – a lapse that the consultant explained himself.

Lead Consultant of CEMCO, Raymond Latchmansingh, explained the delay in the completion of the required design and report. He said that what was a four-month contract became a much tougher job when the terrain, varying soil types and logistics were factored in.

The first challenge was undertaking the topographical survey, this meant taking the measurements of the land they were intending to use, however as Minister of Agriculture, Robert Persaud, later explained, a large part of the land was swamp where the men would sink almost to their waists.

Coupled with torrential rains, this added up to a situation where the topographical survey extended long past the time it would have taken on dry solid land. The next step was a hydrological survey of the conservancy and the surrounding area – this entailed measuring the dimensions of the waterways, flow rates in the channels as well as charting and recording the rainfall in the area. [more](#)

## "Corentyne River Bridge may begin in 2011"

[Stabroek staff On October 4, 2010](#)

The initiative to construct a bridge across the Corentyne River may begin next year, President Bharrat Jagdeo announced on Thursday.

Speaking at the commissioning of the Guyana Water Inc. water treatment plant in Corriverton, Berbice, Jagdeo said he met Surinamese President Desi Bouterse again during his recent trip to New York and that they agreed to push the project. "We have agreed that we will jointly move expeditiously to bridge the Corentyne River. We want to start that project sometime next year," Jagdeo said.

During a meeting here on September 6, Jagdeo and his Surinamese counterpart announced that they had agreed to conduct a feasibility study into bridging the Corentyne River. The construction of the bridge was described as one of "vital importance" which would "further physically integrate" South America. Jagdeo said that if the countries were to depend only on the multilateral framework, it would take a long time so it was decided that this would be approached on a bilateral level. The feasibility study would not only look at the cost of the project but also at its likely development impact. During his presidential campaign, Bouterse had promised to build a bridge across the Corentyne River should he be elected. [more](#)

## Buxton's New Tipperary Hall



**Buxton's Tipperary Hall:** An artist's impression of the new multi-million dollar Hall was confirmed and unveiled following a meeting between President Bharrat Jagdeo and members of the Buxton Tipperary Hall committee that had been established to replace the 80-year old wooden structure.

The original wooden Tipperary Hall, which was located on Buxton Sideline Dam/Church of God Road, was the venue for several community activities, parties, receptions and other events until it fell into disrepair about 20 years ago.

The new concrete two storied facility would be of the same length and width as the previous wooden building, would be built at the same location. It would include a library, an office, classrooms for computer training centre, a lavatory block and auditorium with stage, changing room and a bar.

Vice President of the Tipperary Hall Management Committee Victor Graham was quoted by the state-run Government Information Agency (GINA) as saying that Buxtonians were elated about the timely progress made in the plans to construct the facility.

## Low fare airline likely to start service soon in the Caribbean

**REDjet, the Caribbean's first low fare airline, was formally launched in Barbados over the weekend and promises to build "air bridges" throughout the region by offering consumers rock-bottom prices.**

Over the last few months Guyana has been among several CARICOM states which have been discussing proposals with REDjet officials, Ian Burns, Chairman of parent company, Airone said.

Guyana and Haiti, Burns said in Barbados on Saturday, have given "conditional approval" for REDjet operations to commence in their territories in the near future. The response, he added, has been especially good in Guyana.

In October, a REDjet team met with President Bharrat Jagdeo to discuss proposals for the new air service. These discussions have been going on for some time.

When questioned further about the current state of proposals in Guyana and asked for an estimated time for service to commence, Burns declined to comment noting that key discussions were still happening and he could not release any more information on the project at this time.

However, Stabroek News understands that the service is expected to become operational in Guyana and sister territories before the busy Christmas season commences.

During the last four years, Burns explained, the company has worked closely with the region and invested millions into creating an airline based on a simple model which has been born in the Caribbean, for the Caribbean.

This new low fare service, he said, will give consumers more options and will solve the connectivity difficulties of the Caribbean. Air fare costs he said will be reduced by more than 60%. All flights on any REDjet route will start at US\$9.99 (before tax); a cost which he believes will definitely encourage island hopping and give a major boost to the declining intra-regional tourism.

Since 2006, he noted, there has been a steady decrease in intra-regional tourism and the industry has lost more than BD\$200M in recent times, Burns said referring to Barbados's situation.

REDjet is already fully staffed and all the mechanisms are in place to begin operations in Barbados, Burns said. There are also other representatives doing ground work and establishing the foundation for bases in other countries including Guyana. However, the company is still awaiting approval of their licence from the Barbadian Civil Aviation Authority.

REDjet has invested over BDS\$10M in Barbados, purchased two aircraft and is still developing its corporate offices, call centre and first aircraft base there. It has also created 75 jobs and promises to employ more than 100 persons directly or indirectly. [more](#)



Barbadian Minister of Tourism, Richard Sealy (centre) and REDjet Chairman/ Chief Executive Officer Ian Burns (right) standing with staff at the launching of the new low fare carrier

## Rockstone fish festival a success – Ministry

The Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Commerce lauded the Rockstone community's hosting of the 4th annual Fish Festival.

According to a Government Information Agency (GINA) press release this is the first year that the two-day Festival was hosted without support from the Linden Economic Advancement Programme (LEAP) and the Linden Tourism Association. The ministry markets the Festival as one of the popular calendar events which features fishing, cooking, camping, diving, swimming and boat ride competitions. Winners are awarded trophies and other prizes.

Director of the Guyana Tourism Authority Indranauth Haralsingh said "The Rockstone fish festival as a domestic event allows many of us to leave where we live and to travel this far and enjoy what another community has to offer...the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Authority will continue to support the Rockstone Fish Festival in terms of product development, marketing, training and we continue to promote this on our website; in our product literature and so forth." [more](#)

### Website Links Hotels, Eco-resorts, Interior Lodges, & Tour Operators

[Adel's Rainforest Resort](#)

[Ariantze Sidewalk Hotel Café and  
Jazz Club](#)

[Banganara Island Resort](#)

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[Roraima Airways, Hotels and  
Companies](#)

[Sleepin International Hotel](#)

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[Surama Eco-Lodge Rupununi](#)

[Timberhead Eco-Resort](#)

[Trans Guyana Airways](#)

[Wilderness Explorers](#)

[Zoom Inn Hotel](#)

## T&T PM says she was misunderstood

### “No Free Help” Controversy ...

**Trinidad, Friday November 5, 2010** – Trinidad and Tobago’s Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar has defended her country’s stance on providing conditional aid to Caribbean neighbours affected by Tomas last weekend, insisting that the position is logical. And she has blamed the headline in a local newspaper for her comments being blown out of proportion.

Her first response to the criticism came at a press conference which she held yesterday at a company which has a warehouse storing relief supplies, a day before a planned trip to St Lucia with a team of Ministers, military, technical, engineering and partnering organisations, to get a first-hand look at the devastation caused by Hurricane Tomas.

Persad-Bissessar had said on Monday that assistance given to the storm-hit countries would have to provide some benefit for the twin-island republic. So, for example, she said, “if we are giving assistance with housing...then we may be able to use Trinidad and Tobago builders and companies, so that whatever money is given, rebounds back in some measure to the people of Trinidad and Tobago”.

On November 4, the Prime Minister who has been severely criticised and described as “selfish” and “heartless” by some nationals and other Caribbean residents, stuck to her stated position and said that the ‘No Free Help’ headline on the story carried in the Trinidad Express newspaper had taken her comments “out of context”.

“When the US invaded Iraq and after they damaged Iraq, they then gave them the aid but the aid to reconstruct Iraq was what? They used US firms. They used the US materials. They used US companies,” she said. “Where would we source the materials from for construction? With T&T dollars in T&T. It seems to me a logical explanation of it.”

Providing much more information than she did on Monday, the Prime Minister explained that a support initiative is to be integrated with a new policy of emergency assistance that sees the government sourcing and providing much needed relief supplies to affected islands from local partners, where available.

“If we are to provide that assistance we will use T&T products rather than T&T dollars to convert into US which will then be used to buy materials somewhere else,” she said. [more](#)

## Grenada business - among most improved



View of Grenada’s capital city, St. George’s, and its Carenage Harbour

**WASHINGTON, United States, Friday November 5, 2010** – Grenada was among the 10 economies worldwide that most improved their business environment in the past year, according to ‘Doing Business 2011: Making a Difference for Entrepreneur’s’, the eighth in a series of annual reports published by IFC and the World Bank.

After improving contract enforcement and customs administration in 2008-2009, Grenada implemented three more business regulation reforms in the past year, boosting its ranking on the ease of doing business from 98 to 92 among the 183 economies surveyed by Doing Business. Grenada eased business start-up by transferring responsibility for its commercial registry from the courts to the civil administration; nearly halved the time needed to transfer property, and improved customs administration.

Other countries in the Caribbean that improved their regulations were Jamaica, Haiti and Guyana.

Jamaica eased the transfer of property by lowering transfer taxes and fees, offering expedited registration procedures, and making information from the company registrar available online; Haiti eased business start-up by eliminating the review of the incorporation act by the president’s or prime minister’s office; and Guyana made starting a business easier by digitizing company records, which speeds the process of searching company names and reserving a name.

Guyana also enhanced access to credit by establishing a regulatory framework that allows the licensing of private credit bureaus and gives borrowers the right to inspect their data. Additionally, improvements to Guyana’s risk profiling system for customs inspection reduced physical inspections of shipments and sped up trade. [more](#)

## “St. Lucia needs US\$500M to rebuild” - PM King

**CASTRIES, St Lucia, Monday November 8, 2010** – Prime Minister Stephenson King says it could take up to US\$500 million to repair the massive infrastructural damage caused by Hurricane Tomas just over a week ago, much more than he had initially estimated and significantly more than the island can afford.

He said that after scrutinizing the damage, he realised that the island will need a lot more to get back to normal and will not be able to do it alone.

“The damage is so extensive to infrastructure, to property, to lives, that EC\$100 million cannot do the job; it’s anything climbing to US\$500 million, for what I have seen taking place here,” he said.

King said the cost of damage to the John Compton Dam, the island’s main water source, would be a few million dollars alone and the community of Fond St Jacques would have to be declared a special enforcement area, allowing for many of the residents to be moved to other areas.

That relocation, the Prime Minister said,



Prime Minister King said the cost of damage to the John Compton Dam, the island’s main water source, would be a few million dollars alone and the community of Fond St Jacques (shown here), would be declared a special enforcement area.

would translate to new developments, new buildings, new housing, new infrastructure and utilities and, therefore, more money.

### Water concerns as source cut off

The government has announced a water related emergency because a landslide in the western community of Roseau has left the John Compton Dam inaccessible.

[more](#)

## THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA - STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012



University of Guyana Turkeyen Campus

### A Brief History of the University

The University was established by an Act of Parliament in April 1963. Its aim was 'to provide a place of education, learning and research, of the highest standard, and to secure the advancement of knowledge of arts, sciences and learning throughout

University education became free in 1974 and all students were then required to undergo a period of National Service. In 1994, the institution commenced a cost recovery programme, reintroduced tuition fees and the requirement for National Service was removed.

The University's main campus is sited on 127.5 acres of land at Turkeyen, approximately 8km east of the centre of the capital Georgetown. The Department of Extra Mural Studies was established in 1976 and upgraded in 1996 to the Institute of Distance & Continuing Education (IDCE). In addition, a second campus was created in 2000 at Tain, Berbice.

The University has now been in operation for forty seven (47) years and up to 2009 had produced 28,083 graduates: 26,923 from Turkeyen and 1,160 from Tain. Total student enrolment for both campuses has shown an annual decline from 5,715 in 2005/06 (5,625 in 2006/07, 5,265 in 2007/08 and 5,238 in 2008/9). Foreign students number less than 50 each academic year, mainly studying Law. The number of teaching units has remained unchanged since 2004/05 with full time faculty declining at the Turkeyen Campus and fluctuating at the Tain Campus. The majority of programmes are at the undergraduate level.

**Download a PDF Copy of the : [Souvenir Program—October 1963](#)**

**Inaugural Meeting - University of Guyana**

**Held at the Auditorium at Queen's College**

**On Tuesday 1st October, 1963 at 8.pm**

**Vice Chancellor and principal Lancelot Hogben: "A University in a Changing Society".**

## ugalumni

Welcome to the UG Alumni web site. The principal objective of this revamped site is to serve as the main contact point for our alumni worldwide. We are happy to know that you are a member of our illustrious family of University of Guyana Alumni.

Please forward this link to other alumni you may be in contact with. If you know of other alumni who have not yet added their names to our online database, kindly ask them to do so. Some of you have not added all your details to the database; please check your listing to ensure all the required information is there. We need to know what programmes you have completed and the year you graduated

**Check out this link:- [UG Alumni worldwide database](#)**

### Transforming the University of Guyana

The University of Guyana's 2009-2012 strategic plan is built on four (4) goals: Achieve higher quality teaching and learning aligned with expanded national needs, especially in science and technology; Improve institutional governance, administration and management by statutory and structural adjustments; Broaden the financial base of the university and enhance its ability to recruit and retain high quality staff, and Improve the teaching, learning and service environment. The plan, quite appropriately carries the theme - **Advancing Management, Infrastructure and Quality (AMIQ)**.

#### Increased funding:

Successful implementation of the strategic plan demands early provision of transformational funding to establish **immediately** a substantial project executing capacity.

The development of the University of Guyana along the lines defined in this strategic plan requires that it be funded at a level significantly above the current provisions. Guyana can afford a significant part of the requisite financing because of the value that investment in the University can add to the success of the plans of the government for the development of the country. However, a substantial part of the input must come from other sources at very early stages in the life of the plan. The University is not at present equipped in personnel capacity to manage such inputs and it is therefore an imperative that the first step in the execution of the plan must be the financing of a project execution capacity independent of the existing Bursary and linked to the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

#### U.W.I. Collaboration:

The second requirement for the execution of the plan is strengthening the specific component of our collaboration with the University of the West Indies that deals with the improvement of the level of qualifications of staff at the UG. The Plan must be supported by specific allocations to allow staff development to be unfettered by the pressure of unadjusted workloads for members pursuing higher degrees. Supernumerary staff is a fundamental requirement for this development.

#### Quality Assurance

The third requirement for the success of the plan relates to quality assurance provisions. Within three months of the start date for the plan, the University will have a quality assurance manual to guide its management of its quality as an institution of higher education. The financial implications of implementing the provisions and processes proposed by the manual must be met without fail.

**Meeting these three requirements** will ensure that the initiatives articulated in the plan will achieve the goals with which they are associated. The collective provisions will provide the transformational injection that will allow the University to generate a developmental dynamic which will change its attractiveness for independent funding outside of the traditional government sources. Failure to meet these imperatives will condemn it to a protracted demise as an institution

*The information in this article are from the U.G. Strategic Plan. Read the full document at the link below:-*

**[University of Guyana - Strategic Plan 2009-2012](#)**

## Victorians to honor ancestors

Five outstanding Victorians to be celebrated at ceremony in New York

**VICTORIA VILLAGE:** November 2010 marks 171 years since the purchase of the Village of Victoria on the East Coast of Demerara, Guyana, by 83 freed slaves. The descendants of these freed slaves will on November 6, 2010 honor and give praise to the eighty three men and women who had the vision and foresight to pool together their resources and invest in the cooperative venture that purchased Victoria.

Victorians also pay tribute and acknowledge the return on this investment by the original eighty three slaves who bought Victoria, and proudly boast of the leading educators, doctors, lawyers, engineers, playwrights, electrical and civil engineers, accountants, management consultants, land surveyors, nurses and public servants - authentic Victorians—who have risen to the top of their chosen fields and professions.

On Saturday, November 6, 2010, Victorians in the Diaspora will be commemorating this important date in their history by honoring the ancestors and celebrate the great accomplishments and achievements of fellow Victorians with the 2010 "Outstanding Victorians" Award. All are invited to attend.

### The Honorees Are:

- **The Victoria Reunion Organization** (Community service and development of Football in Victoria)
- **Ralph Moore** Village Chairman (Posthumous)
- **Trevor Thomas** (Education)
- **Joe Barlow** (Community Service)
- **Valda Thompson** (Community Service)

**FORMAL GALA & AWARDS CEREMONY** COMMEMORATING THE 171ST. ANNIVERSARY [\(see details here on website\)](#)

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## Guyanese Association of Manitoba

### GOLF TOURNAMENT

Saturday Sept 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 was not only a beautiful sunny day; it was also quite eventful and historical for the Guyanese Association of Manitoba. After 10 years of hosting the Golf Tournament, this year is one for the record books, not only was there several surprises, a record number for teams and participants but there were also people from all races, creeds and industries. One of the surprises was also a \$10,000 hole-in-one sponsored by Kenneth Chum Somnath. Nigel Tow won the hole-in-one competition on the 11<sup>th</sup> hole... a truly exciting accomplishment. Read the full account here: [GAM Golf Report](#).



The winning GAM Golf Competition team: "Guyanese Connections" -Subast Chandar, Somnath Kenneth, Ganesh Kenneth. At right is the player Nigel Tow who won the 10,000.00. hole-in-one competition.

## Guyanese Association of Barbados

The following events have been announced by GABI:

### CDB International Gala

The Barbados based, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) will be holding an International Gala to celebrate their 40th anniversary. The gala will be staged at grounds of CDB on November 6th 2010 from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The objective of the gala is to showcase the culture of CDB member countries. There will be 20' x 20' booths displaying/selling foods and craft. Games and jumping tent will be available for children. Entrance fee - Adults \$10; Children \$5.

### Diwali Celebrations

The Barbados Welches Hindu Temple presents DIWALI SHOW 2010. Come celebrate with our Hindu colleagues on November 13th 2010. An evening of Indian music, songs and dance performed by local and international artistes awaits you. This event takes place at the Ursuline Convent Hall, Collymore Rock. Entrance fee is \$50.00. Tickets may be obtained from Pandit Thakoor Prashad. Call: 434-4638 or 261-4529. Tickets will not be sold at the door

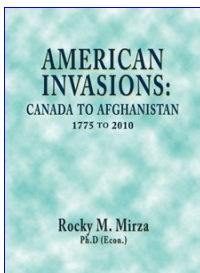
### UWI Students Week of Activities

The UWI Combined Territories Students' Association, an umbrella organization that is made up of the students from non-campus countries who attend the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill campus, will be holding a week of activities planned for November 7th to 13th on the campus. Guyanese students at UWI Cave Hill will be among those countries showcasing their food, arts, craft and culture

### GABI Annual General Meeting - December 4, 2010.

GABI will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Saturday December 4th 2010 at the St. Patrick's Parish Hall, Jemmot's Lane, St. Michael, Barbados. The meeting starts at 5:30 p.m. **Office bearers for the period 2010/2012 will be elected on this occasion.** Attendees will be invited to a 'lime' after the heavy stuff is over.

## American Invasions: Canada to Afghanistan, 1775-2010

**American Invasions: Canada to Afghanistan 1775 to 2010.** - by Dr. Rocky M. Mirza

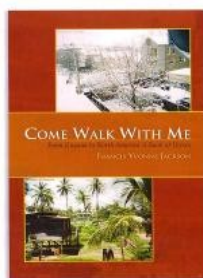
This is a thought-provoking analysis of the reasons for American invasions and warmongering over the last two centuries. Contrary to the views expressed by the Western media and Western historians the American Empire is **not** a force for the promotion of free thinking and democracy but instead a force for imperial conquests and imposed dictatorships through the use of a military-industrial complex, fed by the American Empire outspending the rest of the world combined, on weapons of mass destruction.

The American Empire has used and will continue to use the most sophisticated weapons, from nuclear bombs to bunker-busting bombs to land mines to chemical and biological weapons, on defenseless men, women, and children to feed its insatiable appetite for warmongering and imperial expansion heavens on every civilian on the planet.

Guyana-born, Dr. Rocky M. Mirza earned a B.S. in Economics from the University of London. He moved to Vancouver, Canada, to do his masters degree and Ph.D. at Simon Fraser University. Dr. Mirza is a faculty member of Thompson Rivers University. He published *The Rise and Fall of the American Empire: A Re-Interpretation of History, Economics and Philosophy: 1492-2006* in 2007. [Ordering Info and Link here](#)

### Guyana Community Outreach Yvonne Jackson's book for Charity

**Guyana Community Outreach** is a non-profit organization based in Chicago, Illinois, USA their address is P.O. Box 32132, Chicago IL 60632. Phone: (773) 471-6007. E-mail address: [francisyvonne@netzero.net](mailto:francisyvonne@netzero.net)



This non-profit, in operation since 2006, has been busy sending barrels, helping persons with disabilities and supplying books to libraries in Guyana.

Their President Francis Yvonne Jackson has written a book of poems of her life in Guyana and Chicago, and the proceeds of her book—"Come walk With Me", will be donated to the charity. Cost of book **Paperback \$19.99: Hardback \$29.99 + shipping. Call now and Order!**

### [The Arts Forum](#)

### [CHINESE ORIGINS: KEN CORSBIE](#)

By *Ameena Gafoor*

### THE ARTS JOURNAL

[Volume 5 Numbers 1&2- March 2010](#) <click here for link to contents

The Editor of The Arts Forum's Page, Ameena Gafoor, can be reached by E-mail: [theartsjournal@live.co.uk](mailto:theartsjournal@live.co.uk) or by phone: 592 227 6825.

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## The elusive Tennis Rolls

by Cynthia Nelson

Hi Everyone, Each Caribbean nation has its signature bread-roll with its one-of-a-kind flavour and texture. Trinidad and Tobago has Hops Bread, Jamaica has Coco Bread, Barbados has Salt Bread and Guyana has Tennis Rolls.

Many of us living away from home try to acquire recipes to recreate these unique tastes of home. Alas, while we may get something resembling the real thing in appearance and flavour, the real thing eludes us. Such is the case with the Tennis Roll; so called because of its perfectly round shape.

For a long time now, I (and countless others) have been trying to locate a recipe for Tennis Rolls without much success. I thought that I was close when I met one of the owners of the defunct Fung's Bakery whilst on a visit to Barbados, but no such luck. However, I did get some fleeting insights into the complexity of making this much beloved roll. I resigned myself to thinking that one day when the time was right, the recipe would be shared and hopefully, I'd have the equipment necessary to make Tennis rolls.



Pictures by Cynthia Nelson



So when I received an email from a regular reader of my column and blog, who has been living abroad for more than 30 years, telling me that she had found a recipe online for Tennis Rolls and that, "It was the authentic thing and surprisingly very simple", I knew I had to give it a try. I was skeptical, but the thing is, you just never know. I had a few articles to write that day and several assignments to grade but like I said a few weeks ago, when I want to avoid work, I bake. So I set about trying this Tennis Rolls recipe.

I am not a big bread lover but visions of a warm, hearty Tennis Roll, sliced in half and protecting thick slices of cheddar cheese was more than enough to motivate me. To wash it down, an ice-cold glass of cream soda made creamy with carnation milk. Ooo la la! Childhood memories of this after school snack thrilled me. My dear aunt, Betty, loves this combo too. My mom is not a big bread lover either; she prefers salt biscuits with cheese along with the cream soda and milk. But I digress.

I am not going to spend time telling you about the process of making the Tennis Rolls, let me cut to the chase and give you my verdict. **More** [\(read full article at link at here\)](#)

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Amerindian  
Heritage Month

## Dorothy Faria: Passing the Wapishana torch

Since 1995, every September has been designated as Amerindian Heritage Month, with celebrations and cultural presentations in Guyana. This article highlights the work of Dorothy Faria in preserving the culture and language of the Wapishana people, one of the nine Amerindian tribes of

By [Candace Phillips](#) On October 9, 2010 In [The Scene—Stabroek News](#)

**Dorothy Faria** dances. She then instructs interested hopefuls to replicate what they would have seen. From their performances, she decides which ones are malleable material; and assesses the least shy. These she picks to be members of Katiwau.

Katiwau (Sand Creek) is the name of a Wapishana cultural troupe, which Dorothy leads. Passionate about her culture, Dorothy teaches young people in her village various forms of their culture so they could be proud of their ancestry and able to pass it on to others in the future.

“We must not be ashamed of our culture. We should show the world we are proud and will always be,” she said. In the case of the young people of Sand Creek, South Central Rupununi, Dorothy does not believe they are ashamed of their culture per se. “Many want to be part of the group,” she explained, “but they get stage fright.”



Katiwau group performing a dance at the Cultural Extravaganza held at the Amerindian Village, Sophia during Amerindian heritage month in October 2010.

Dorothy, who was once a teacher, told *The Scene* said that she loves working with young people and sees them as means of transmitting Indigenous culture, which, she said, is slowly slipping away. While, the youth are members of the culture group, being in their presence, makes one realise that they have bonded as a family.

During her interview with *The Scene*, Dorothy is surrounded by several of the young members of the group who listen as she recounts how she began to teach dances, songs and skits in Sand Creek.

In 1995, when the idea of having a month designated for Amerindian Heritage was put forward, Dorothy was interested and sought to find a way to make a contribution. However, she was unsure of the organization of the celebration and decided to observe; which she did for several years.

Finally, in 1999, she realised that her contribution would be in getting young people to learn dances, songs and poems which they could perform during heritage month celebrations. The group was named Katiwau, which means ‘Sand Creek’ in Wapishana. Dorothy said she wanted the group’s name to reflect the heritage.

The initial group she had worked with attended the Regional Heritage Celebrations and was lauded for its performance. Based on the feedback, she realised that they group had great potential and since then Katiwau has performed at various heritage month celebrations in the region as well as in Georgetown. The group has also performed at Carifesta celebrations held in Suriname and Guyana.

Its performance was part of the cultural extravaganza held at the Amerindian Village, Sophia. Dorothy said she was very proud of her group which has 16 members between the ages of 11 and 16.

She said she spends a lot of time with these young people, who frequent her home to practice. In addition to being taught the art forms, they are also taught how to put together their costumes.

Making the costumes is hard work and requires the help of several other persons for the pain-staking task of pasting and sewing beads and feathers to assemble unique pieces. She said she looks back at costumes she had made in earlier years as compared to those made now, and see much improvement in them.

The group performs dances which are traditional to the Wapishana peoples like the Parashara and Mari-Mari. Though the names are similar to dances of other nations, Dorothy noted that there are differences in the steps.

Commenting on Wapishana culture, she said that much of it is still intact, but there are parts which have begun to slip away. The communities have been able to maintain their staple diets of farine, cassava bread and be engaged in activities such as hunting, fishing and farming.

Amerindian spirituality remains very much unshaken and Dorothy said she believes in the healing power of the Piaiman. She said the elders of the village are the holders of knowledge about herbal medicine. Further, the connectivity of Amerindians with their environment is very much still alive. She gave as an example the fact that the position of the moon and certain stars which tell a person when to plant crops.

“Youths today are rebellious. They only believe in nonsense,” Dorothy said, “I am proud of my culture; that is why I do this.” She believes that if youths listened to their elders and availed themselves of the knowledge, then their culture would still be there.

### Language and Cultural Preservation

Language is the main area identified as being greatly threatened. Dorothy said that when she speaks to members of Katiwau in Wapishana, they often look at each other and giggle. This inability to understand and speak their language, she opined comes from parents’ not teaching their children the language.

Dorothy is not only the group’s teacher but a second mother. Apart from her teachings on culture, she also gives them moral talks, teaches them to cook and about table etiquette. One of her most important teachings is instilling in them the importance to believe in themselves.

“Culture makes me happy. This is my passion,” she said. Members of Katiwau would do well to not only learn from, but to emulate Dorothy.

## Glimpses of Guyanese History

### — Road and rail transport From the British Guiana Handbook, 1922

**Guyana has always been a challenging territory to traverse. Decades ago, the colonial administration devised a public road, river and rail transport system to overcome this challenge. Guyana Review reprints a section of The British Guiana Handbook, 1922 which describes how road and rail transportation functioned over eighty years ago. Check to see how much has changed since then.**

#### Roads- in 1922

The roads of the Colony (other than Municipal) may be classified in three groups, viz:

(a) Main roads, comprising those running more or less parallel with the coast from Coverden on the East Bank of the Demerara River to Rosignol and Blairmont on the West Bank of the Berbice River, a distance of 89 miles; from Vreedstein on the West Bank of the Demerara River to Maripa on the East Bank of the Essequibo River, a distance of 44 miles; from Supenaam on the West Bank of the Essequibo to Charity on the East Bank of the Pomeroon River, a distance of 39 miles; and from Mara on the West Bank of the Berbice River to Skeldon on the West Bank of the Courantyne River, a distance of 73½ miles; and 32 miles of roads in the islands of Wakenaam and Leguan.

(b) Branch Roads, comprising:

(1) Approaches to railway stations, steamer stollings, etc.

(2) Roads along the banks of the Mahaica, Mahaicony and Canje Creeks, the West Bank of the Berbice River and the Nos. 1, 2 and 3 Canal roads off the Demerara River.

(3) Seawall and military roads in Georgetown outside the municipal boundaries.

(c) Villages and estate roads, forming the connection to villages and estates from the main and branch roads.

Classes (a) and (b) are maintained from general revenue, no special taxation being levied for their upkeep. Class (c) are maintained by the Local Authorities of the Villages under the auspices of the Local Government Board and the expenditure on this and other works such as drainage, sanitation, water supply, etc., is met from rates levied on owners of property in those villages.

The public roads of the Colony are being gradually extended with a view to opening up districts which offer scope for development and giving service where most needed.

**The Cattle trail** with outlets at Takama, 108 miles from the mouth of the Berbice River, and Arakwa 64 miles from the mouth of the Demerara River and running for 150 miles to Annai in the Rupununi District – serving the great cattle country on the intermediate and hinterland savannahs and providing a direct means of access to the frontier of Brazil – is a big step forward in the opening up of the interior.

When this trail is linked up with Georgetown from which the Southern road at present extends along the East Bank of the Demerara River as far as Hyde Park (23 ½ miles), it will be practicable to travel on horseback and, it is hoped ultimately,

by motor-car, from the capital of the Colony to the great grass savannahs extending down to the Southern frontier bordering on Brazil.

Another valuable piece of work is in hand – the completion of the Kangaruma Road branching off the Potaro Road – which will be a great advantage in this mining district and a step towards road communication to Kaieteur Fall.

New roadways are also being opened up in the North-West District, the section of 12 miles from Morawhanna to Wanaina Creek is built as the first step towards opening up hilly country which is more readily accessible from the coast in that part of the Colony than in other districts and is considered suitable for settlers.

This summary is by no means exhaustive and projects are in hand for the better linking up of the diamond fields with the steamer terminus as well as for opening up other areas which are difficult of access.

**Public transportation** facilities to the different parts of the Colony are handled by the Government through the Colonial Transport Department and by Messrs. Sproston, Ltd., as contractors to the Government.

The operations of the Colonial Transport Department extend at present along the coastal area from New Amsterdam on Berbice River, to Suddie and Pomeroon on the Essequibo coast and Bartica on the Essequibo River. Messrs. Sproston's services are carried on from Georgetown and New Amsterdam up the rivers towards the interior with one coastal service to Morawhanna in the North West District. The Government services come under three heads, Rail Ferry and Steamship, all working into one another.

#### Railways - in 1922

The most recent acquisition by the Government is the railways operating from Georgetown to Rosignol – 60½ miles Eastward along the coast – and from Vreed-en-Hoop on the West Bank of the Demerara River to Parika – a distance of 18½ miles. Since the passing of control of these railways from the Demerara Railway Company to the Colonial Transport Department, a great deal has been done to improve the service and greatly increased facilities are given to the public as regards both freight and passenger traffic. The Demerara Railway is reputed to be the oldest in South America.

On the East Coast, the Berbice trains leave Georgetown (the city) every weekday at 8 a.m. for Rosignol – 60½ miles – the terminus on the left bank at the mouth of the Berbice River, connecting with the ferry steamer to the Town of New Amsterdam.

On the West Coast, the trains leave Vreed-en-Hoop, the West Bank of the Demerara River, three times a day after the arrival of the Demerara River ferry steamer for Parika – 18½ miles – the terminus on the right bank of the Essequibo River and the connecting point with the steamer on the Bartica route, Adventure route, Supenaam route and Essequibo ferry

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## The growth of a Black peasantry in British Guiana and Trinidad after 1838

By Clyde W. Thierens

The high wages received by freed Africans immediately after Emancipation also helped to stimulate the rapid growth of a Black peasantry in British Guiana and Trinidad. Wages in these colonies ranged from one shilling and six pence to two shillings and one penny per task. Able-bodied Africans were often able to push themselves to complete as many as three tasks on some days. This enabled them to earn substantial sums which they saved up to purchase available lands in the colonies. To some measure, workers in Jamaica had similar experiences. However, the situation was somewhat different in the colonies of Barbados, Antigua, and St Kitts where the earnings of workers were as low as one shilling per day or less. The low earnings they received in those colonies generally prohibited them from purchasing scarce, highly priced lands in their territories.

The rapid growth of a Black peasantry in Trinidad and British Guiana was also stimulated by the weakened economic state of the sugar industry in the two colonies. Many planters found it difficult to cope with the loss of labour and the demands of the newly freed workers for higher pay and better terms of work. While being forced to offer inducements to keep workers, many planters found it impossible to remain in operation in the light of declining sugar prices. In these two colonies, as in Jamaica, a Black peasantry rapidly developed as a result of the post-Emancipation difficulties of the planters and their inability to adjust quickly. Many estates were abandoned as planters were forced to sell land to the Africans in an effort to cut their losses and accumulate desperately needed cash. The shortage of labour and capital led to reductions in the areas under cultivation. Between 1838 and 1844 there was a decrease in production. The situation worsened further in 1846 when the Sugar Duties Act was introduced. The drastic cuts in the price of sugar added to the planters' woes.

However, in contrast, the sugar industry in Barbados, Antigua and St Kitts remained dominant. Cultivation in these colonies actually expanded and production increased. The continued dominance of the industry precluded the significant development of a peasantry in these colonies.

As unprofitable estates in British Guiana and Trinidad were abandoned or sold, many planters sought to enhance their labour supply by selling some of their estate lands to the Africans. This resulted in significant purchases being made by the ex-slaves and the hastening of the growth of a Black peasantry. Much of the land acquired in this manner was partially drained and therefore 'workable'. This was in contrast to the Leeward Islands where any lands the ex-slaves could acquire were found in areas that were marginal to the estates and in difficult terrain. These lands, unlike much of those acquired in Trinidad and British Guiana, were unfit for effective utilization.

In Nevis, despite the collapse of the sugar industry, and then of cotton, a significant peasantry failed to develop partly due to a marked exodus of workers from the colony, in addition to the scarcity of land for this purpose. Similarly in Barbados, no real growth was experienced as only six villages were established by 1859. This was due to the unwillingness of plant-

ers to sell land to the ex-slaves and, whenever they did, they asked for exorbitant prices ranging from as much as one hundred to two hundred pounds per acre. However, a few ex-slaves acquired small portions of land from charitable proprietors.

Despite the chronic labour shortage in British Guiana and Trinidad, the decreasing levels of cultivation and production meant that many labourers could not be fully employed—especially during out of crop time. This helped to contribute to the rapid growth of a Black peasantry. In addition to this, the introduction of new techniques and machinery, to help counter the labour shortages, also reduced labour requirements and thereby 'pushed' more freed Africans into the ranks of the peasantry.

Throughout the British Caribbean, planters individually and collectively devised a number of official and unofficial policies to keep the freed Africans tied to plantation work. In British Guiana, and in Jamaica, acts such as the wanton destruction of fruit trees and provision grounds backfired on the planters. Instead of these acts achieving the desired objective of keeping the Africans bound to the plantations, they resulted in the opposite effect of driving the Black workers away from the plantations and making them more determined to free themselves as much as possible from being in positions where they could be victims of such spite and vindictiveness.

In Trinidad, planters' actions such as the introduction of the tenancy system, the withdrawal of allowances and the attempts to reduce wages, forced many Africans to leave the estates. Hall is of the view that there would not have been the mass exodus away from some plantations in some territories if planters had sought to foster better relations with the labourers. He contends that they may very well have fared better had they not imposed such harsh conditions for workers' use of estate residences and provision grounds.

The tenancy-at-will system, which combined rents and wages, and confined labourers to work on particular estates or be evicted, was utilized in Dominica, Nevis, Montserrat, St Lucia, Tobago, St Vincent and Antigua. Successful resistance was mounted by Jamaican labourers, leading to the withdrawal of the system in that colony in 1842. In St Lucia, the system proved ineffective because of the moderate population density of that colony. Implementation of the system in British Guiana and Trinidad was not vigorously pursued as it was felt that—as was the case in St Lucia—the low population density of these territories would have rendered it unsuccessful.

The Barbadian planters, by the Masters and Servants Acts, maintained their stranglehold on the labourers by keeping them working on the estates for wages that were less than market rates. Barbadian workers were forced to pay high rents for dwellings. They were only allowed to remain on the plantations at the discretion of the planters. With land in the colony already scarce, proprietors themselves immediately bought or rented any plots that became available so that African workers could not acquire them. African Barbadian labourers were forced to continue working under onerous conditions on the plantations or face starvation as a result of the employment of these strategies. [more](#) [Source URL](#)