



Canadian
SUPERBILT
SHUTTERS
& **BLINDS**



We Sell Only The Best Brands
Motorized Roller Blinds & Shutters

HunterDouglas



MAXMAR
WINDOW FASHIONS

ALTEX

John Persaud, CEO C: (416) 239 - 2863 B: (416) 201 - 0109

sales@superbilt.com canadiansuperbiltshutters.com

KEEPING ALIVE THE TIES THAT BIND

NOW IN OUR 41ST YEAR: 1983 - 2024

INDO CARIBBEAN WORLD

Vol. 41 • No 17 • May 8, 2024 • Tel: 905-738-5005 • 312 Brownridge Dr. Thornhill, ON L4J 5X1 • indocaribbeanworld.com • indocaribbeanworld@gmail.com

Veda Lall
— HOMES



**Most
Productive
Agent In
Canada!**

With over 20
years of combined
experience, we will
help you to achieve
your dream of
home ownership!

**Call
Veda
Today!**
Veda Lall
Broker

**416.
419.2140**

vedalallhomes.ca



Our Community Is Thriving!



In a session of community outreach, Vishnu Mandir and an expert cast of law professionals held its 2024 conference, The Law & You, which took place on May 4. This year the focus was on elder abuse, alongside the law professionals guiding lawyers-to-be who are planning to enter the profession. In photo are conference moderator, Dhaman Kissoon (third from right) with (left to right) Archana Medhekar, Anjali Ranjan, Christeena Lucknauth, Rangila Sengupta, and Hera Ramlakhan. *More on Page 11.*



The Vedic Cultural Centre held its Indian Arrival celebrations on May 4. At the event was Chef Dev (right) promoting his book, *Mad Love*, and Acting Consul General for Trinidad & Tobago in Toronto, Tracey Ramsabagh-Mannette. *More on Page 14.*



Radha Krishna Mandir's youths sparkle onstage during their festive *Vasant Ki Raat* last month

RKMCC's youth take emergent leadership role

By Romeo Kaseram
LJI Reporter

Cambridge – In a display of emergent leadership alongside the deployment of talent and commitment, a heartwarming and inspiring effort is now underway in the Waterloo Region by local elementary and high school students with Caribbean heritage, and by international students from India.

With their eyes on their future in Canada as adults, and with their focus on our future generations, the young students have assembled a fund-raising campaign with the aim to accelerate ongoing construction of the Radha Krishna Mandir & Cultural Centre in Cambridge, Ontario.

The campaign is titled *Touching 100k Hearts: Contribute \$20 Once to Complete Our New Temple Construction!* It

is seeking support from 100,000 generous individuals, who would each contribute only \$20 once to the new mandir construction project.

In what is a motivating show of focus, dedication, and commitment, the young people recently joined forces to pool their collective know-how, and are now spearheading the growing campaign to take RKMCC's dream for its new mandir over the finish line.

According to a release from the RKMCC, this talented group of fund-raisers are pumped, and are excited about the new building, which will provide more than just expanded physical space.

As the release noted, the students are wholly committed

See Page 5: Young leadership emerges

LIFE INSURANCE



Paul Ram,
Life & Investment Broker

MONEY FREEDOM INC.

AGE	\$100,000 M/F	\$250,000 M/F
30	10.00/09.09	13.73/11.70
35	11.00/09.90	15.30/13.05
40	12.78/11.70	19.13/16.43
45	16.02/13.59	25.88/19.80
50	22.05/17.73	36.88/26.65
55	27.27/20.43	56.03/40.95
60	39.69/28.62	88.65/61.43
65	62.28/43.20	142.20/94.50

Also offered: *Non Medical & Mortgage Insurance *No Load Funds *No Penalty RESP *Critical Illness *Universal Life *Dental & Drug Plans *Disability. (E&O)
Companies represented: Assumption, BMO, Canada, Empire, Equitable, Foresters, Industrial Alliance, Manulife, RBC.

Instant quote online: www.moneyfreedom.ca
Tel: 416.414.2204

Open 7 Days from 10 am to 10 pm

Ali's Roti Shop
1446 Queen St. W.

ALI'S ROTI

* Eat In or Take Out * We also Cater
Specialising in West Indian Dishes - Trinidad Style Cooking

1446 Queen St. W. Toronto
(1/2 Block East of Lansdowne,
North side, W. of Dufferin)

Only HALAL Meat Served

Tel: 416-532-7701

Now two generations serving our community

JAY BRIJPAUL
416-418-BRIJ [2745]

ANJIE BRIJPAUL
416-745-2300



\$1,089,000

Fresh As Spring!

Stunning home has approx. 2,400 sq ft of living space, a premium pie-shaped lot, and a gated 36' saltwater pool with large shallow area ideal for families with children. It features a beautifully landscaped backyard with patterned concrete all around, perfect for entertaining! The laundry is on the second floor for easy access!



\$498,000

Location! Location! Location!

This condo's amazing location makes for easy travelling! Close to the subway, public transit, Yorkdale Mall, shops, and restaurants. This newly renovated bright unit features beautiful laminate flooring, a clean kitchen, and an open balcony with an unobstructed view of the skyline!



\$819,700

Right Place Right Value!

This spacious five-level back-split has internal access to the garage. This home features a large kitchen and dining room, a private living room, and a family room with a fireplace! Located in one of Brampton's finest neighbourhoods! Come take a look!



\$1,100,000

Character Plus Charm!

One-of-a-kind home located in one of Toronto's most sought after neighborhoods! But location is only a bonus! Take advantage of the large kitchen, sep liv & din rooms, spacious bdms & a kitchenette in the primary room! Home has own det dble garage! Designed for distinction, home constructed with love and care. We invite you to explore the possibilities.



\$849,700

What a Sun-Sational Delight!

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



\$1,189,000

We Invite You To Inspect

Well-kept home with legal basement apartment! Enjoy grand double door entrance, modern LED pot lights, delightful kitchen w/ granite counters & stainless steel appls. Features warm, open-con. family room with gas firepl., oak hardwood stairs w/wright front pickets & w/o basement bright as daylight! Book to take a look!



\$1,290,000

Talk of the Town!

This beautiful bungalow is located in one of Toronto's most sought after neighbourhoods! Designed for happy living, this freshly-painted home has been recently renovated throughout, and features gleaming laminate floors, bright pot lights, brand new appliances, and boasts both modernity and marvels!



\$497,000

Can't Beat Location

Spacious & clean unit features 2 bedrooms & 2 washrooms! Open concept living area walks out to large balcony. Minutes away from the University of Waterloo! Freshly painted unit comes furnished, & features laminate floors, large windows & stainless-steel appliances! Comes with a parking spot!

TheBrij.com

3,500+ HOMES

* Sales mean both buyer and seller transactions from 1990 to 2016, Team Sales combined.

Jay Brijpaul, Broker, FRI

Direct: 416-418-2745 (BRIJ)

Office: 416-745-2300 ext 5292

96 Rexdale Blvd., Toronto M9W 1N7

RE/MAX

West Realty Inc. Brokerage
Independently Owned and Operated

**The Brij Team**

Anjie Brijpaul, MA
Broker

Office 416.745.2300

Fax 416-745-1952

anjiebrijpaul@gmail.com



The Vedic Cultural Centre in Markham and Lotus Funeral and Cremation Centre hosted a seminar on Planning Ahead on May 1. The complimentary event featured hosts and speakers, among them Kamal Bhardwaj, Lotus' owner and funeral director; Patricia Peter, a licensed pre-planner; and Sam Vig, from VIG Realty. Attendees heard from the experts about wills, power-of-attorney documents, and executor duties. Also included were presentations and discussion on funeral planning, payment options, and benefits; lifetime travel repatriation plan coverage; planning for downsizing; handling real estate affairs in probate; and minimising real estate burdens for beneficiaries. In photos, top left, are Bhardwaj (left to right), Peter, and Vig. Also in photos at top right and below, are attendees at the event. *Photos by Hinano Beekhoo*



Entertainers, devotees, and well-wishers at the concert; in bottom photo, the concert's host, Joe Jaglall

Maha Lakshmi Narayan Mandir's spring concert

Brampton – An engaged and interactive audience was treated to entertainment by the finest musicians and top singers over the weekend when Maha Lakshmi Narayan Mandir held its spring concert and fund-raiser at the Triveni Mandir in Brampton.

The sold-out mega concert was hosted by humanitarian and community leader, Joe Jaglall.

In what was a smooth-flowing and highly-organised concert, Jaglall deployed his stage and entertaining expertise that kept the audience mesmerised, engaged, and sitting on the edge of their seats as each performance unfolded.

As Jaglall told *Indo-Caribbean World* afterwards, "Months of planning with Maha Lakshmi Narayan Mandir's Pt Jageshwar Sharma and Akashvani Rythmns Band led to a sold-out concert of 700-plus attendees at the Triveni Mandir in Brampton. Pt Jageshwar and his team of devotees did an excellent job to help run a smooth concert."

Jaglall's effort was also later commended by attendees, who praised his leadership, dedication, timeliness, and delivery during the event.

According to one patron, Jaglall was "articulate, and he connected well with the audience".

And as was further noted, "From one person wanting to donate \$100 for Jaglall to sing a song, to him then engaging the audience that saw that \$100 grow into \$12,000 for that one song was quite a magnificent feat!"

Jaglall's dedication to the community and his volunteerism were also noted in the generous giving of his time and experience to many mandirs with no expectation of remuneration.

Maha Lakshmi Narayan Mandir is currently housed in a warehouse at Kitimat Road in Mississauga. The spring concert's objective as a fund-raiser was to start its building fund.

Proceeds from this weekend's auspicious start from sponsorships, donations, concert tickets, and other acts of generous giving could see their collective effort exceeding \$100,000 in funds, Jaglall declared.



Photos by Ramesh Ramkalawan

Among the evening's participants were Kevin Dhar, Sudesh Sewkumar, Anisa Dhar, Ron Chand, Derek Chitu, Vivek Bhatt, Sumana Ganguli Day, Pt Neil Dev, Suniel Patel, Neetu Rambharak, Sanjay Matadin, and the The Singh Sisters.

Also in the line-up were the Panwar Academy, Stephanie Jodhan, and dedicated members of the Maha Lakshmi Narayan Mandir. For more information, call Pt Jageshwar at 647-400-1463; or donate here: mlnmdonation@gmail.com.

DENTISTRY

DR. NAR DALJEET

DR. NIKHIL DALJEET

Ask us about our:

- Dental Implants (from start to finish)
- Invisalign (Misaligned Teeth)
- Snore Guard

DENTAL EMERGENCIES ALWAYS WELCOME

Servicing our community for over 30 years.

Now two locations to serve you better

2942 Finch Avenue East, Scarborough, Ontario (At Victoria Park) Village Square Plaza (Ground Floor)

416-492-3077 • www.tddental.ca

Second Office Location:

SmileVille Dental

86 Ringwood Dr, Unit 23, Stouffville, ON L4A 1C3

Tel: 905-640-4600 • www.smilevilledental.ca

Book Giveaway For Supernatural

Enter for a chance to win one of five copies of "Supernatural - Volume 1" - A compilation of thirty-two tales from the popular newspaper series, "Supernatural". Collect your own personal autographed copy of Volume 1 and be the first to know when Volume 2 will become available. Good Luck!!!

Kam Ali

Please leave your email address at: www.kamilali.ca/contact

VEDIC BOOKS

- Complete set of the Vedas
- The Upanishads
- Bhagavad Gita
- Ramayan
- Philosophy of Vedas
- Vedic Thoughts
- Vedic Vision - Sanskar Vidhi
- Quest - The Vedic Answers
- Vedic Marriage Ceremony
- Introduction to the Commentary on the Vedas
- Life & Teachings of Swami Dayanand
- Light of Truth
- Wisdom of the Rishies
- Gems of Vedic Wisdom
- Anand Gayatri Katha
- Daily Prayer
- Vedic Philosophy
- Whose Wealth?
- Mahabharata
- ... and many more

Call AVM Bookstore

416-805-2685 or 905-824-2685



‘Taste of Imdadul’ a highlight at Eid celebrations

By Sayem Khan
Special to Indo-Caribbean World

A constructive element of a prosperous society is the element of faith-based and religious institutions. These institutions are not only limited to providing a space for spiritual or religious activities, but also provide a platform to celebrate communal festivities and the successes of community members in a micro-level as well.

On April 27, Imdadul mosque organised its Eid dinner celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr, one of Islam’s largest festivals that marks the conclusion of a month-long spiritual exercise, the holy month of Ramadan.

Eid is not limited to expressing gratitude for having the ability to fast for a month and engage in spiritual acts. Eid is an opportunity to be thankful and to express gratitude for many other blessings the Almighty Allah has bestowed upon us, for instance the blessings of a loving family, caring friends, and a vibrant community like Imdadul.

The program started with performances of *Nasheeds* by a well-known *Naat Quaan* singer, Khalid Javid. The president of the Imdadul Islamic Centre, Mushtaq Rustam, welcomed the guests.

The dinner event was attended by more than 500 members of the mosque. A young *Qari* of the Imdadul Islamic Centre, Yaseen Khan, a grade 7 student at the Humber Summit Middle School, delighted the audience with his heart-touching *Quranic* recitation and explanation of the verses.

During the month of Ramadan as well, at Imdadul mosque, young *Hafidhs* led *Taraweeh salah* and mesmerised the audience

with their recitation.

The long-serving Imam of Imdadul mosque, Shaykh Muzammil Ali, delivered the keynote speech outlining some of the key takeaways from the month of Ramadan. He also made special prayers for the members of the community who are going through various hardships, as well as for the entire *Ummah* who are going through dire conditions across the globe.

An unconditional friend of Imdadul mosque MPP Tom Rakocevic was also in attendance. He presented certificates of recognition to outstanding volunteers of the Imdad centre during the month of Ramadan.

Coincidentally, it was also the final day of the “National Volunteer Week” which is an important event that is celebrated across Canada!

Brother Osman Khan, Secretary of the Imdadul Islamic Center facilitated the raffle draw, and the concluding segment of the event.

He invited members to join at the upcoming programs at Imdadul Centre during the month of May, including the Tulip Festival in Ottawa on May 11, and the Mother’s Day Program on May 12.

He also fondly recalled the contribution of all the donors and volunteers in making various spiritual and social welfare programs of the Imdad Centre throughout Ramadan 2024 a huge success.

At the end, guests enjoyed a wide selection of homemade locally-sourced hot meals, desserts, and beverages!


As many members might agree, the “Taste of Imdadul” is usually the biggest attraction of Imdadul Eid Dinner!

Happy

INDEPENDENCE DAY


GUYANA

Celebrating the spirit of freedom and unity on Guyana's Independence Day! Happy Independence Day, Guyana!




Shafqat Ali, MP
Brampton Centre

(905) 790-9211 | shafqat.ali@parl.gc.ca
225A-350 Rutherford Road South - Plaza 2,
Brampton, ON L6W 4N6



@shafqatalimp



4 indocaribbeanworld.com | may 8, 2024

Young leadership emerges as RKMCC's youths initiate fund-raising drive

From Page 1

to the pivotal role their new mandir will play, not only in their contemporary world, and later in their adult lives, but also in the wider community as well.

"[The mandir] will offer an array of additional services designed to enhance the well-being of the community and students. From yoga classes to meals, along with various recreational and cultural activities, the new RKMCC facility aims to become a cornerstone of holistic wellness for residents of all backgrounds," the release stated.

This uplifting campaign by the students was launched during the festivities at RKMCC's recently-concluded *Vasant Ki Raat*, which took place on April 7 at the Pearson Convention Centre in Brampton.

While the evening was filled with entertainment, good food, and generous fund-raising support by attendees, at the same time it also saw RKMCC's youths totally taking charge of the narrative for their future during their segment of the show with a thrilling display of talent, musicality, and uplifting faith.

Shreya Tripathi and Suraj Bhutani are among the numerous international students and prominent youth volunteers who are making a difference at the RKMCC, the release declared. It added that both youths are also driven to see the finishing phases applied as the mandir's ongoing construction continues to unfold.

For these young people, identification with the mandir touches their core, and holds more profound, futuristic resonances than just being a place of worship.

Instead, it is "a second home for many students, fostering a sense of belonging and community for newcomers to Region of Waterloo," the release noted.

With their fund-raising drive now underway,



RKMCC's talented and dedicated volunteers at the recent *Vasant Ki Raat*

RKMCC's youths are stressing "the urgent need for funds, citing the goal of securing partial occupancy from the City of Cambridge, which requires over \$2-plus million."

And as 14-year-old Devin Singh explained, **the youth's campaign, titled *Touching 100k Hearts: Contribute \$20 Once to Complete Our New Temple Construction!*** aims to garner support from 100,000 generous individuals, each contributing only \$20 as a one-time donation.

At the same time, 12-year-old Neelam Persaud issued the reassurance over potential concerns regarding their ability to handle finance, the release noted.

Persaud reassured all potential donors regarding the transparency and security of their admirable fund-raising process. As he stated, the group is using CanadaHelps, a non-profit platform. It is a platform that allows donors to go online, and for everyone to track their progress publicly, he stated.

The release also noted that Chanda Persaud, 12, and Divya Jatindranauth, 10, both third-generation youths from RKMCC, remain com-

mitted like their grandparents and parents in continuing the tradition of selfless service in the journey to fulfil construction of the new building.

At the *Vasant Ki Raat* event last month, Chanda spoke to the sold-out convention centre, reminding the audience that North America's Hindu community exceeds two million individuals. At the same time, Chanda issued the call for deployment of today's extensive connectivity within social media networks for global support for their charitable drive, the release stated.

And taking up a similar mantle of responsibility and commitment to their worthy cause, Divya encouraged attendees to each enable their networks and online connectivity by raising awareness among family and friends, and in so doing help extend the campaign's outreach.

There was an immediate groundswell of

appreciation at the *Vasan Ki Raat* event after RKMCC's youth concluded their presentation, with the audience heartily applauding the young people's initiative with approval as they exited the stage.

The youths' delivery was touching, and deeply gratifying, a member of the audience remarked that evening. And as a gesture of appreciation and recognition for their remarkable presentation, one donor was moved to double his donation, the release revealed.

"With each donation and show of support, donors are not only contributing to the physical construction of a building, but also investing in the collective welfare and vitality of not only students, but the entire community in Region of Waterloo," the release

affirmed.

The CanadaHelps effort was well underway late last week, and was close to raising \$3,000 in donations. It means RKMCC's hardworking and industrious youth are well into their journey to acquire an additional 99,850 contributors to achieve their sacred goal.

Click here to donate to the inspiring commitment by RKMCC's youth to their future, and to future generations. Parents can also donate on behalf of their young ones in recognition that one day their children too may be journeying on a similar community-driven, charitable, and inspirational path.

Or simply share word of this exciting campaign across your global network; also, you can send support and encouragement via email to this hard-working youthful fraternity at youths@radhakrishnamandir.ca.

With files by Bhaleka Persaud

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND ON ONE STAGE!

Radha Krishna Mandir
PROUDLY PRESENTS

BHAKTI SANGEET 2

Mega Concert

BUY TICKETS ONLINE

PT. NARAD GOSINE **PT. NEIL DEV PERSAD** **PT. HARDAT ASHWAR** **PT. RAJEEV PERSAUD**

SPECIAL GUEST APPEARANCE

SOLD OUT LAST YEAR **FOOD VENDORS** **Live in Toronto Canada** **SATURDAY JUNE 15TH 2024** **GET YOUR TICKETS EARLY! LIMITED SEATING**

SPECIAL APPEARANCES BY

IT ALL TAKES PLACE INSIDE THE BEAUTIFUL SRINGERI BANQUET HALL 80 BRYDON DR, ETOBICOKE, ON M9W 4N6

TICKETS ADULTS \$50 KIDS \$20 AGES 5 TO 12

FOR TICKETS, INFO & SPONSORSHIP
PRAKASH 519-571-4626
RYAN 416-560-6175
RAM 519-496-1743
JEAN 416-526-5780

DOORS OPEN 5:00PM
SHOW BEGINS 6:00PM

SEE HIGHLIGHTS OF LAST YEAR AND BUY TICKETS AT BHAKTISANGEET.CA

LOTUS Funeral and Cremation Centre Inc. **CREMATORIUM & VISITATION CENTRE** Compassion | Care | Convenience **Pro-tek Services** Facility Resource Management **Omefn.com**

KISSOON Law Office

NEW LOCATION
Suite 304 1 Greensboro Drive
Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 1C8
(Near 401 & Kipling Avenue)

Dhaman Kissoon's Areas of Practice:

- **CRIMINAL LAW**
- **IMMIGRATION LAW**

Lawyers available for referrals
Family Law, Real Estate Law, Corporate Commercial Law, Personal Injury Law, Civil Litigation

Tel: 416-234-1446
Fax: 416-234-0154
Email: dkissoon@bellnet.ca
Website: www.kissoon.ca

Editorial

Lifting regional cricket

The emergence of charismatic and eminent leadership in the Caribbean on the global stage continues to be noted in the vision, presence, and the aura of leaders as Barbados' Prime Minister Mia Mottley and Guyana's President Dr Irfaan Ali.

Such an emergence was notable earlier this month when leaders from member countries gathered in Trinidad and Tobago for the Caricom Regional Cricket Conference.

Following the event, Mottley indicated that the purpose of the gathering lay beyond the boundary of cricket. In fact, it was "about the development of our people", she declared.

She further noted that while the issue was about the game itself, fundamentally, it was also about national and regional development.

"This is about the development of our people at the very time when our young people are being threatened with all other kinds of distractions, some wholesome, some not wholesome. And, we, therefore, need to put the structures and the investment in place as a matter of urgency," Mottley stated.

It was within the framework of this growing urgency for enablement and agency that Mottley issued the call for restoration of the region's global dominance in cricket.

"I do not know of any sportsman or artiste who has reached the top of their craft who is not a global citizen. We are one of the smallest regions in the world, but we know global excellence, and it is for us now to ensure that having known it, we can regain it and sustain it."

It was left to another emergent and charismatic leader on the global stage to take up the attack from the other end.

In his spell at the wicket, Ali spoke to the rebranding of West Indies cricket. He also revealed that the Guyana government has been working with Cricket West Indies, the Caribbean Premier League, and the International Cricket Council to bring to life a 'World Premier League'. Such a move would "position the region on the global market".

He also insisted that an entire rebranding of the region's cricket is needed.

"Cricket is not only played on the field in this region; it is played in the hearts of our people; it is played to encourage positive living, and we have to look at the entire crick-eting ecosystem if we are to address the issues of cricket in the region," Ali affirmed.

And delivering perfect line and length, Ali maximised his pitch, declaring, "Cricket is linked directly to our economies, linked to our tourism products, and we have to honestly analyse whether we have to redefine our brand to incorporate all the factors that cricket is linked to in this region."

It is also noteworthy that Ali did not hesitate to call out the global system of cricket, which he said conspired against West Indian cricketing dominance over the years via weighted changes to the rules and regulations.

Said Ali: "We were known for fearsome fast bowling – real fast bowling; and then the systems were changed. The rules were changed to deny us of this brand of our cricket, and we allowed the rules to change without much protest."

He further asserted, "We in this region bring excitement with our fast bowling, with our attacking stroke play. We do not need to change this; we need to master this. We need to grow this, we need to expand this as our brand."

Ali also highlighted the overlap of Caribbean culture into our own and unique brand of cricket, and spoke to elements of identity that were essential to defining and establishing the region's rightful and deserved place on the global scoreboard.

As he accurately stated, "... [Beyond] the boundary, there are important things that we have to look at. Our vibes, our culture, our entertainment, our food, our tourism, our markets, our merchandising, integrating other sports with cricket. Societal integration, positive living, community orientation, all of these are factors beyond the boundary that must be integrated into this cricket plan that we must develop."

From our vantage as members of the diaspora abroad, it is reassuring that visionary and charismatic leaders as Mottley and Ali are now moving the score along; it is about time that we take back our game.

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

A look at 'arrival' through the lens of mourning

Birds chirping at each other, the sound of waves against the hull of a ship. The warm sea breeze filled the air. Row upon row, they waited patiently. Strangers who would only make eye contact with each other. Awaiting directions from a pale-skinned man in a foreign dialect.

Marched onto a ship, the first time for many, they would anxiously set off on their journey. Five months aboard across oceans. Some would become ill, others would perish. The Jahaji Bhai (brotherhood of the boat) formulated.

Their curiosity, hope, and desperation would result in servitude, toil, and punishment. This was not a celebration, this was merely the beginning of restrictive labouring, a life with limits, and the removal of humanity.

The arrival of South Asian Indentured workers to the Caribbean came as the demand for labour was significant. The abolition of slavery brought freedom to enslaved Africans, and to compensate for the labour, a source in a British colony, India, was leveraged.

A quick, easy, and cheap source of labour. Our ancestors were the replacement to fulfil quotas on plantations, and ensure that productivity was preserved.

Each May, the recognition of "Indian Arrival" to the western hemisphere is noted. However, the misconception of the actuality of this arrival plagues those who apply a modern interpretation to the event.

The current presence, and success of "Indo-Caribbean" community confusion, mask the true horror of the origins of the community.

The food, music, and dance that would emerge bring joy and jubilation. However, in only a few generations, the punishment of servitude is seemingly diluted.

Indian arrival is not a celebration; it is a marker in human history of a period when women and men were merely property, and a time when racism and subjugation prevailed.

We should not dignify this through celebration; and we should not limit our understanding of who we are by a false premise that "arrival" was a positive occurrence.

Our ancestors were lured into a false promise of prosperity, misguided by colonisers who would take advantage of their desperation.

Those who were tasked with "recruiting" Indians to leave British India were known as the *arkatis*. They were skilled and would tell false tales of feasts and amenities fit for royalty, and other tales that would appeal to Hindus in particular.

Simply remain enigmatic. This was the advice my grandmother poured into my emerging mind when I was a young boy growing up back in the homeland. She was speaking to me about keeping my mouth shut when inhabiting enclosed spaces, notably when using public transportation.

This advice she delivered in her own, inimicable invocation of her personalised and intimidating language, her indomitable instruction still resonating to this day, "Listen here, bwoi! Keep your trap shut!"

Now traveling abroad and beyond the confines of our village in my grandmother's day meant it was always a gregarious affair. To put a hesitant hand out by the junction and bring a taxi to a halt inside the diameter of a dime was where the rubber bit deeply into the road, so to speak.

Boarding the taxi meant sharing the back seat with two other riders, as was officially declared by the hand-scripted notification that was displayed just under the window of the driver's door, which stated unequivocally in thin, dancing type written with black paint, *Lic'd for 5 passengers*.

It meant two fares sat alongside the driver, with three more inhabiting cramped quarters in the back seat.

Entering the back seat of the taxi to the rustle of resentful clothing "dressing around" to make room for my sharp elbows and protruding bony occupation, could mean happily encountering a gurgling child with arms opened in greeting alongside a toothless welcome.

Or worse, entering the cramped back seat to the nightmare of a bawling toddler unhappy with the humid squeeze between a mother's familiar warmth, and the accompanying sugar-rot and unwholesome scent from an irascible rider nursing a massive rum-induced hangover.

Then there were those days when I took the public bus from "the plantation to the port", in the words of the late and eminent Caribbean academician Lloyd Best. Those were the heady days when I made my weekly exploratory trips from the village into the capital city.

Climbing onboard the bus meant abandoning all hope for solitude and introspection moments after the conductor punched a hole in the paper ticket to start off the long, bumpy ride to the capital city.



Ryan Singh

For example, these *arkatis* made claims that the Suriname was Holy ground, and the journey to Suriname would be seen as a pilgrimage to the holy land of "Sri Ram". "Sri Ram" refers to one of the most well-known avatars in the Hindu faith. Many Hindus regard "Sri Ram" as the epitome of how to live one's life, since "Sri Ram" follows Sanatan Dharma.

Which devoted Hindu, likely living in impoverished conditions, would not excitedly take the opportunity to move to the land of Sri Ram?

Such tactics that were used, misled Indentured workers, who in turn had little to no reason to return to British India once they were offered free passage back "home" as their contract was over.

Many stayed for a variety of reasons, for example, staying in Suriname led to better life opportunities financially and socially.

For many who made the long journey, from the moment they stepped on the boat, social identities that prevented people from interacting freely were left behind. The caste system, and religious division that existed before they made this voyage, no longer existed.

When they arrived, the primary source for planter control over Indentured workers was the Indenture Contract.

Planters saw the Indenture Contract as a legal instrument to structure labour relations, and fulfil their production and profit accumulation motives. The contract was regulated by colonial statutes, and required labourers to sign away their freedom for five years.

In return, labourers received limited wages, minimal amounts of land, and in some cases, a return passage to India once their contract was over.

However, planters were required to provide regular work six days a week for seven hours a day (outdoors), or ten hours indoors. Adult males received a wage of one shilling a day, while women and children received considerably less in wages.

In 1864, a vagrancy clause was implemented in British Guiana that restricted labourers to a two-mile radius of plantations. Labourers found beyond two miles outside their plantations without written permission would be liable for fines and criminal charges.

Certain measures were applied that prevented labourers from filing complaints against their employers.

Disguised promises, limited freedoms, and painful labour. When our ancestors arrived, they arrived in punishment, pain, and torture. This is not a moment to celebrate; it is a repulsive moment in human history that should be mourned.

For the two-hour stop-and-go ride in steaming traffic, with the bus driver swearing heatedly at horse cart drivers, taxi drivers, and immaculately dressed church-goers who shouted back invoking similar imagery, meant inhabiting a site of friendly chatter and cross-chatter among ticket-punched strangers.

All of these strangers, including priests, pundits, and street-slick hustlers heading to the horse races in the city, had absolutely no regard for my contemplative mien.

What the crowd on the bus ignored was a face intent on staring out the rattling windows into the interminable vistas of garbage dumps, where shirtless children played games of cricket just beyond tumbled-down wooden houses fronted by dented water barrels and skeletal hibiscus fences stripped of its waxen leaves by wandering herbivores.

So how could I observe my grandmother cajoling me with a wag of those instructive forefingers, saying, "Bwoi, you getting older, and you taking taxi and bus to go here and to go there. I telling you to mind your mouth. Don't talk your business on the road. Keep your mouth shut. You never know who ears listening, and then going out and broadcasting all your business."

Put another way, talking about your private business while traveling on the road inevitably put all your business back out on the road.

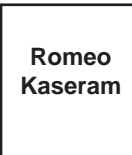
One might as well hire a vehicle, strap two loudspeakers to its roof, and make detailed announcements about your private life while driving at a funereal pace from street to street.

And so my grandmother's forefingers wagged like the tail of a hyperactive dog sent into transports of joy with the arrival of a plate of food and a cup of water.

Ma's hands were quite articulate during those moments of amplification that saw a forefinger drumming down, the staccato emphasis on the palm of her other hand like a dog's happy tail whacking the floorboards: Thump! Thumpity! Thump!

And so it was that my grandmother's advice to her growing grandson now exploring the world beyond the plantation was for him to simply remain enigmatic; and when possible, season it sparingly with as few grains of inscrutability as possible.

Today, it is no longer a trip from the plantation to the port; instead, in this time of social media immediacy and global dissemination, it is even more imperative to keep one's counsel.



Most Guyanese would support May 5 becoming ‘Indian Arrival Day’

Dear Editor,

May 5 marked the day on which the first Indentured labourers from India landed on Guyana's shores. It is a public holiday, and is officially called "Arrival Day", which implicitly conflates the arrival of all the groups brought to Guyana to join our Indigenous Peoples.

As usual, there were calls by Indian Guyanese groups and individuals for the holiday to be given the designation proposed by the Parliamentary Committee, "Indian Arrival Day", in 2004.

Before this, the day was first commemorated on the 100th Anniversary of Indian Arrival in 1938 with week-long activities. After a hiatus of two decades, its commemoration across Guyana as "Ramakhan Day" – from the first two persons, Ram and Khan, who stepped off the *Whitby* – in the 1960s, was initiated by the Gandhi Youth Organisation.

This celebration then morphed to "Indian Immigration Day" in the 1970s, and then from the 1980s "Indian Arrival Day" gradually took



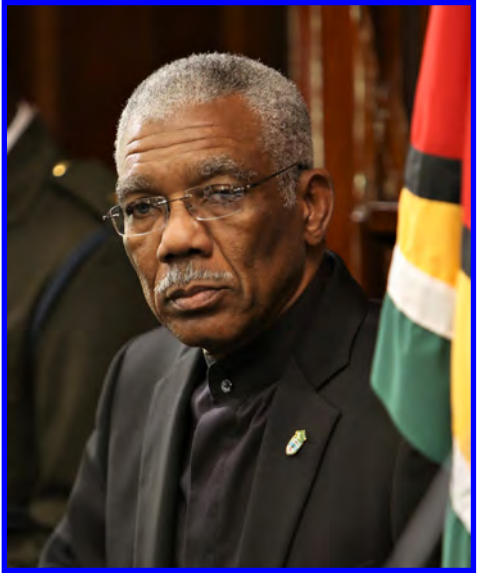
Ravi Dev

centre stage after the example of Trinidad and Tobago, which initially named their holiday in 1994 "Arrival Day", but changed it permanently in 1995 to "Indian Arrival Day".

On April 14, 2003, the PPP/Civic government had established a Special Select Parliamentary Committee, of which I was a member, "To Review The Public Holidays Act, Chapter 19:07".

More specifically it was to consider making May 26 a permanent public holiday (Independence Day), and May 5 to commemorate the arrival of Indians to Guyana.

The rationale for considering the latter holiday was stated in the introduction of the Report of the Special Select Committee: "Guyanese of Indian origin, who form a large portion of the country's population, had for a period of in excess of the past forty years, been calling for May 5 to be declared a statutory public holiday, in observance of the arrival of the first batch of Indian indentured labourers who came to the then British Guiana in 1838."



David Granger

More calls for May 5 Indian Arrival Day

Dear Editor,

A letter calling on the Guyana government to reinstate the "Indian" in "Arrival Day" and recognise May 5 as such was made by Ravi Dev, a former parliamentarian. This call has now become a yearly ritual. Sadly, it was the PPP parliamentarians who were largely responsible for this anomaly.

On the first Saturday of May 1838, about 400 Girmitiyas (Indentured Indians) survived the *kala pani* odyssey of more than 10,000 nautical miles across two oceans to reach Berbice and "Damra Tapu" (Demerara). Guyana bears the unique distinction of being the first Caribbean country to receive Indian labourers premised upon an arrangement brokered by John Gladstone, the wealthy Scottish absentee plantation owner. British Guiana was the only colony in which the first two ships transporting Girmitiyas, the *SS Whitby* and *SS Hesperus*, arrived on the same day in May 1838.

For Indentured Indians, their journey began with a pioneering, voluntary, as well as involuntary initiative, which today is nationally and officially commemorated in post-colonial diasporic societies to where Indians were taken: Jamaica (May 10 – Indian Heritage Day); Trinidad & Tobago (June 1 – Indian Arrival Day); Suriname (June 5 – Pravas Din); Fiji (May 4 – Girit Remembrance Day); St Vincent (June 1); St Lucia (May 6); Grenada (May 1); Mauritius (November 2); and South Africa (November 16).

Historically, the British Guiana East Indian Association, established in 1916, with its origin in Berbice, gave recognition to the importance of Indian arrival. The British Guiana Dramatic Society, starting in 1937, held its yearly theatrical performances in May.

The BGDS selected the month of May for their activities to mark Indian arrival to British Guiana, and to pay tribute to their patron-dramatist, Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet

and writer from Kolkata who was born in May.

In recognition of this historic event, in the preamble to his Message on May 5, 2021, President Mohamed Irfaan Ali, said, "I greet all Guyanese on the occasion of Arrival Day 2021. This special day is commemorated as a public holiday on May 5 each year. It celebrates the contributions to the national development of our African, Indian, Chinese, Portuguese and European ancestors and their descendants."

In contrast, former President David Granger's Message delivered the previous year read: "Indian Arrival Day is celebrated each year on 5th May. The East Indians who arrived came largely from the Uttar Pradesh and Southern Indian regions of India."

The presidential narratives are distinctly noteworthy. Emancipation Day is dedicated to our African brothers and sisters, Amerindian Month is dedicated to our First People, and the Chinese first arrived in January (1853). The two groups that arrived in May were the Portuguese (May 3) and Indians (May 5).

As early as 2017, Granger had established a precedent for the designation of Indian Arrival Day when he issued public notices proclaiming, "Chinese Arrival Day," "Portuguese Arrival Day" and "Indian Arrival Day".

That May 5 was officially intended as "Indian Arrival Day" dates back to a process started on April 14, 2003, when a Special Select Parliamentary Committee was established to review "The Public Holidays Act, Chapter 19:07".

The fact remains that Dr Cheddi Jagan was committed to recognising May 5 as a holiday. It now remains to be seen whether the government will continue to remain impervious to the sentiments of its large Indian constituency, who has provided unbroken multi-generational support.

Baytoram Ramharack, via email, New York.

Yet the Government's Resolution (No. 12 of 2003) 14th April, 2003 to establish the Committee declared that it should review as a possible public holiday "Arrival Day, that is to say, the 5th May, or, if that day is a Sunday, the following day."

In its conclusions, the Parliamentary Committee noted: "While the aforesaid recommendation (on the holiday be named "Arrival Day") is in keeping with our mandate, the Committee wishes to note that all the submissions favouring May 5 as a Public Holiday recommended that it be designated "Indian Arrival Day as is the case in Trinidad and Tobago."

The Report was presented to the National Assembly on 29, April 2004 and approved. The first "Arrival Day" Public Holiday was officially observed on May 5 of that year.

I made my objections known during the debate, but the government's decision was carried.

In the years since, there have been widespread calls from the Indian Guyanese community for the government to follow the recommendations of the submissions.

That decision, in my estimation, was actuated by a desire of the PPP government not to possibly alienate other Guyanese groups who had also "arrived".

African Guyanese have always argued – rightfully in my estimation – that since they were brought in chains as chattels, the commemoration of "Emancipation Day" on August 1 was most appropriate.

Indigenous Peoples could commemorate their presence during "Amerindian Heritage Month".

In the years following the passing of the omnibus "Arrival Day" legislation, none of the other groups, such as Portuguese and Chinese, whose arrival dates were respectively on June 3 and January 12 – took the opportunity to join in commemorating the occasion on May 5.

In fact there were expressions of disapproval from those communities that their arrivals were subsumed with a date that clearly marked the Indian Indentured's arrival.

However, in 2017, President David Granger initiated a precedent which addressed concerns about the government "favouring" Indian Guyanese, which we commend. He issued a public notice in early January 2017 to the effect that January 12 be henceforth designated as "Chinese Arrival Day", but not a public holiday.

Later, on February 27, 2017 he likewise proclaimed May 3 each year as Portuguese Arrival Day. The days have since witnessed commemorative activities by those communities. May 5 was designated "Indian Arrival Day".


We believe that as part of our nation building activities, our Guyanese society would almost universally support the reconsideration of the name of the May 5 holiday as "Indian Arrival Day".

And I submit that the time has come for the government to officially rectify the anomaly.

Ravi Dev, via email, Guyana.



A replica of the SS Whitby



GUYANA PROPERTY MATTERS

Does paying the Land Tax guarantee possession of your Property... Perhaps not!

By Maj Khan

It has been generally understood that one of the best ways to protect your property anywhere in the world is to pay the land taxes. The fact is land taxes must be paid, and in Guyana there is an annual filing requirement with a two percent penalty for failure to do so. The government arm responsible for land taxes is the Guyana Regulatory Authority.

The optics are quite straightforward; however there is *caveat* with far-reaching consequences, of which owners should be aware. Those who are familiar with land disputes strongly advise that taxes must be paid in person. Why? The receipts for paying land taxes are often handwritten on a carbon-copy book.

In fact, property transactions in Guyana including title, valuation, mortgage, and tax compliance receipts are all done on paper. In the age of the Internet, those living abroad are well-versed with the digital world, where access to home ownership is at their fingertips. In Guyana, the government has just implemented an e-service platform that will take time to develop. In the meantime, most land records are written or typed and housed in local offices. It means that remote property owners have to invest a great deal of time and funds to ensure their paperwork is in order.

Currently, most owners living abroad have a 'trusted' family member they rely on to ensure the daily upkeep of their property, including paying the land tax. If that receipt is written in the name of anyone else other than the registered owner, it can create conditions that are favourable for that individual whose name is on the receipt. Translation: that individual is in a position to file for possession of that property. This is especially viable if the owner has not visited the property for years.

Unfortunately, today property disputes are common, with siblings pitted against each other, parents against children, and families at war with each other. The stakes are high, and the price paid heavy – often with a bitter experience fraught with a gamut of emotions, with substantial time and monies invested over decades. And the question is always asked, "What could they have done differently to ensure none of this would come to bear in the first place?"

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

'Tomorrow's people' making a way in the world in the second migration

Dear Editor,

In the light of Guyana observing Arrival Day on May 5, I would like to take a look at the experience of Indian-Guyanese in Canada following the second migration of people of Indian origin.

Despite being approved as a national holiday in Guyana, namely Arrival Day since 2004, May 5 is truly Indian Arrival Day.

East Indian immigrants were recruited in India under fixed-term contracts (Indenture), and then brought to Guyana (then British Guiana) to provide manual labour on the European-owned sugar plantations of the colony from the time of the abolition of slavery in 1838 to 1917.

The first ship arrived on May 5, 1838, and over the years, just under 240,000 were taken to Guyana. Their indenture provided for return to their homeland upon completion of the contract; however, only about 75,000 opted to return.

Starting at the bottom of the economic and social ladder, and struggling in abominable conditions, with poor wages, and few, if any legal rights, the immigrants saved the sugar industry from collapse, built the rice industry, and laid a foundation for the success of their descendants.

By the time British Guiana gained Independence in 1966, and became known as Guyana, descendants of the Indian immigrants had made great strides socially, economically, and politically.

East Indians who emigrated from India to work as Indentured labourers in former British colonies constitute the first migration of Indians, whose descendants then emigrated in large numbers, primarily to the UK, the US, and Canada, with smaller numbers going to Australia and New Zealand. This movement formed the second migration of Indians, or people of Indian origin. For Indian-Guyanese, this second migration commenced in large numbers from the early 1970s to the late 1980s.

By the 1970s, Indian-Guyanese were well established as a major part of the country's middle class in businesses and professions of law and medicine, as teachers and public servants, and as medium-to-large-scale rice farmers.

However, the government's policies started to create uneasiness, and impacted negatively on Indian-Guyanese who were supporters of the Opposition party in Parliament.

The rice industry went into decline; Indian-Guyanese professionals in teaching and the public sector were discriminated against and marginalised; the private sector found it difficult to operate in an environment hostile to private businesses; bandits targeted Indians more and more; compulsory national service was instituted for students at the University of Guyana; and shortages of basic foodstuffs prevailed, especially items in the diet of Indians.

By the late 1970s, with the continuing deterioration in the economy, harassment and violence against political opponents of the government, especially the leaders and members of the newly-formed political party, the Working Peoples' Alliance under the leadership of Dr Walter Rodney, other ethnicities including Afro-Guyanese also started to emigrate in large numbers.

Political repression reached the level that for the very first time in history, Guyanese became eligible for refugee status in Canada.

Also, a new word "backtrack" entered the vocabulary of Guyanese, in reference to the unofficial, illegal, and often dangerous means and routes taken by Guyanese to reach foreign lands.

For a majority of Guyanese immigrants to Canada during this period, the decision to emigrate was not easy, since they were well-

settled in Guyana with good paying jobs, or as owners of thriving businesses; also, they lived in nice neighbourhoods where they owned their homes; while their children, in many cases, attended prestigious schools.

Immigration, in some cases, also meant leaving parents behind, something culturally abhorrent to Indians. Worse yet, following the Middle-East oil crisis in the 1970s, the government implemented a policy of foreign exchange control that made it illegal for anyone to take money out of the country.

This policy lasted until around 1991, and emigrants were allowed only around (Cdn) \$20 when leaving Guyana. This meant that Guyanese were practically penniless when taking up residence in Canada.

Many of the early immigrants had to adopt various strategies to survive during their first few weeks/months in Canada, seeking help from relatives, friends, former neighbours, and even strangers already in Canada.

In some families, parents came first and the children were left behind and to follow after their parents were financially able to support them. In other cases, a wife who was a nurse,

typist, stenographer, or teacher, came first as there was a demand for these professionals, and the husband and children followed later.

Many professionals were denied jobs for "lack of Canadian qualification", or "lack of Canadian experience" when they ventured in the job market, and even individuals who had senior or administrative positions were forced to take junior positions, or jobs unrelated to their qualifications and experience in Guyana.

Some individuals, especially males who were head of households, found their early years in Canada daunting and humiliating.

During the 1970s, when Canada faced a major economic recession, many Canadians lost their jobs, and visible minorities became victims of racial slurs and/or physical violence in certain neighbourhoods.

Indian-Guyanese, termed South Asians in Canada, were called "Paki", a derogative racial slur; also curry, a staple item of Indian meals, incurred hostility from mainstream Canadians expressing prejudice against South Asians.

However, activism by various social, religious, and political organisations kept the situation under control.

Life in Canada required major adjustments for new immigrants. For instance, women who had never held a paying job before were now required to work outside the home to supplement the family's income. This meant that husbands had to share with childcare and household chores, tasks that were considered "women's work" in Guyana.

Being in the paid workforce also gave immigrant women financial independence, and a stronger voice in decision-making. This change in family relationships, together with apartment living, coping with the winters, and bringing up children in an environment of children's rights and assertiveness, have not always been successfully negotiated, and in some cases have caused stress in marriages, leading to separation and divorce.

Not all Indian-Guyanese had negative experiences. Some assimilated very quickly, and a majority of Indian-Guyanese became well-established in Canada, which was seen as a land of opportunities.

Others seized the chance to advance themselves socially and financially, and create fresh opportunities for their children. In the words of Indian-Guyanese-Canadian poet, Peter Jailall, "Indians are tomorrow's people".

Indians of the first migration braved the dreaded *Kala Pani* [dark waters] to reach Guyana, and lay the foundation for their descendants to reach the highest positions in the country in every field.

Many of those descendants have since moved on, and now in Canada, their descendants are making their mark as scientists, professors, nurses, doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, accountants, business owners, and are thriving in many more professions.

Harry Hergash, Toronto, via email.



Peter Jailall

T&T can rise out of darkness of hopelessness, despair

Dear Editor,

No hole is too deep, and while it may take different time spans to come out of it, eventually we all can do so and reach the place we desire to be.

Our beautiful Trinidad and Tobago continues to face a very difficult period in its history. Rampant crime and harsh economic realities have led to many nationals succumbing to feelings of hopelessness and utter dejection. Many have failed, and have fallen victim to their circumstances.

I have known people, some close to me, who were doing well in their chosen field, but because of the economic downturn, they are now barely holding on. How many have lost their jobs and means of livelihood with the shuttering of Petrotrin? How many businesses, which closed during the pandemic and consequent lockdown, have never reopened?

People eminently qualified in specialist fields are now unemployed, and doing little odd jobs here and there when the opportunity comes their way.

On the crime front, many nationals do not feel safe – not even in their homes. Poverty is real in Trinidad and Tobago, and it feeds into our crime levels. Many find themselves at the bottom of economic holes, and the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots" keeps widening.

Amid all of this, let us keep our faith and hold on to a vision for a much better future for Trinidad and Tobago. As one song says, "We can make it if we try," and it is better to fail trying than to fail because we did not try.

What is crucial is if we ever hope to rise upwards, is our leadership learning to work with each other for the betterment of the country, and for the lives of nationals? Instead of trying to destroy each other politically, at every



Trinidad and Tobago nationals enjoy a day at the beach

opportunity and in every forum – which only creates more division in an already divided society – our politicians need to change their attitude for the sake of all.

It is a fact that the toxic political environment actually contributes very significantly to the deep divisions and mistrust in our nation. Once greed, power struggles, ego and party politics exist, Trinidad and Tobago cannot hope to rise out of this darkness of hopelessness and despair.

We are all part of the process, and we must do what is right without fear or favour, using our God-given expertise and skill sets. It must not only be about personal gain, but also for love of our country. All must get involved!

Yes, we can rise out of this darkness, but it will take total involvement and complete buy-in. There can be no space for selfish behaviour. Working together, and with God's help, Trinidad and Tobago can be a better place for all.

Arnold Gopeesingh, Trinidad and Tobago, via email.

Family Restaurant Now Hiring (Trinidad)

- Hiring for Kitchen work
- Hiring for Front staff (Cashier/Server)

Full time & Part time
Located in Rexdale

Contact
647.389.2210

Guyana govt plugging away at acquiring energy security

Guyana is poised to attain energy security within a few years, but for now the country continues to be plagued by its decade-old problem of blackouts and brownouts. It is rather disappointing for those who expected that the power supply would have improved faster in light of the government's efforts to address the problem.

At a macro level, problems in the electricity sector stem from increasing demand resulting from massive development initiatives, a shortage of qualified technical staff, and inoperable generation sets – but not due to a lack of effort by the government.

Last December, the government secured 17 reconditioned containerised electricity generation sets from APAN Systems for (US) \$27.5 million, but the Guyana Power and Light Inc has been unable to connect all the sets to the electricity grid.



Dwarka Lakhan

In addition, some of the sets were not functioning upon arrival in Guyana – which can be attributed to poor due diligence by the government buyers.

In a recent letter to a local newspaper, former Public Infrastructure Minister under the previous APNU+AFC administration, David Patterson, stated that GPL had procured 17 third hand containerised sets of unknown quality and procurement methodology.

As he stated, “Five months after the purchase, only four sets are operational, it is understood the remaining sets have several defects, which have rendered them ineffective – a prime example of poor technical management.”

Patterson also blamed the poor state of electricity on bad investments, the brain drain, and a botched maintenance plan. He accused the administration of creating the conditions to chase away senior technical electricity sector workers, buying second-hand fossil fuel generation sets, and having a poor maintenance plan.

“As soon as the PPP returned to office, they fired all the senior technical staff on the pretext that they were super-salaried. Since then, more than 95 percent of the technical staff has resigned, taking up international job offers,” he stated.

In an effort to alleviate the power supply problem, the government in early April announced that it is finalising a deal with a Turkish company, Karpowership, to rent a 36 megawatt barge, in an effort to satisfy peak electricity demand at a time when several generators are giving trouble, according to Vice President Bharrat Jagdeo.

He noted that peak electricity demand in the Demerara-Berbice Interconnected System is just over 170 megawatts, but existing generators are pushing just about 160 megawatts.

Karpowership, would sell the electricity at four US cents per megawatt over the next two years until the Wales Gas to Energy natural gas-fired electricity generation power plant is completed in 2025.

Jagdeo said Guyana would supply the fuel to the barge, and that users would not have to bear any additional costs for electricity.

To address the shortage of technical staff, the government also announced in mid-April that it will be hiring Cuban engineers to manage the GPL electricity system.

According to President Irfaan Ali, the government has approved GPL's hiring of ten additional engineers with the “relevant skills” to ensure maintenance and reliability of the system.

“They have very skilled technical personnel who they are willing to deploy immediately to work in the system, and to help us technically,” said Dr Ali.

He also noted that GPL has sought “many times” to hire Guyanese engineers, but “we have not been successful because of demand in other areas”.

GPL has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the InterEnergy Group to manage its electricity supply. IEG has its headquarters in the Dominican Republic.

Meantime, in early April, Jagdeo hinted that the State-run electricity sector could face a management shake-up, even as the government searches for more electricity generators to bridge the demand gap.

“We have to fix it. Whatever it takes, we can't continue with these blackouts; whether it means management changes, upgrading management, buying more power which we are looking at now,” Jagdeo stated.

In the midst of the country's energy shortage, the government remains optimistic that its future electricity generation plans will not only resolve the problem, but will reduce the cost of electricity, benefitting both businesses and consumers.

The capstone project in the government's energy security plans is the proposed 300 megawatt (MW) combined cycle gas turbine power plant at Wales on the western bank of the Demerara River.

The project encompasses the establishment of a 300 MW power plant, as well as a Natural Gas Liquids plant that entails the construction of 225 kilometers of 12-inch pipeline to transport a guaranteed minimum of 50 mmcf of natural gas from offshore Guyana to the Wales Development Authority.

This project represents the single largest investment made in the country's electricity sector. Construction of the pipeline is being led by Exxon, and is projected to cost approximately (US) \$1.3 billion. The current estimated cost of the entire project is approximately (US) \$2.2 billion. So far, the government has spent \$24.6 billion to meet start-up costs associated with the project, and has budgeted \$43.3 billion this year to facilitate the construction of the plant and associated facilities.

The second major project on the government's agenda is the proposed construction of the 165 MW Amaila Falls Hydroelectric Project. This project was previously shelved way back in 2013 as a result of lack of political consensus.

In further diversification of the country's energy mix, the government commissioned a one MW solar farm in Lethem last year, and commenced work on a 1.5 MW solar farm in Bartica, and 0.75 MW in Wakenaam.

This year, the government has launched a tender for the completion of a total of 33 MW solar photovoltaic (PV) system to be connected to the GPL power system. These PV systems incorporate five MW at Onderneeming, three MW at Charity, four MW at Trafalgar, three MW at Prospect, three MW at Hampshire, four MW at Block 37 (Millie Hideout), eight MW at Retrieve, and three MW at Dacoura.

At the household level, a total of 166.82 kW of solar PV systems at 39 locations across the regions were installed last year. This year, the government will roll out and additional 30,000 solar PV home lighting systems to the hinterland and riverain areas.

GPL will become the off-taker of the planned power generation projects, including the 300 MW Gas-to-Power, 165 MW AFHP, and the 33 MW solar PV systems. This will require investment in resilient transmission and distribution infrastructure in order to deliver reliable and improved quality electricity to customers.

The power generation projects will be integrated into the



Bharrat Jagdeo



Irfaan Ali



Karpowership's barge will supply 36 megawatts of power to GPL

electric power systems via a combination of 230 kV and 69 kV substations and transmission and distribution lines. The new power grid will be supervised and controlled by a modern control centre, which will be constructed at Goedverwagting.

If all the power generation projects materialise according to plan, Guyanese will be well set to benefit from an abundant supply of lower-cost power as the country transitions to its next phase of development. This will hopefully resolve the issues related to power shortages. For now, Guyanese will have to contend with stop gap measures designed to ease power shortages.

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

Happy

Mothers Day

Your love, strength, and endless sacrifices make the world a better place. Thank you for being the heartbeat of our lives



Shafqat Ali, MP
Brampton Centre

(905) 790-9211 | shafqat.ali@parl.gc.ca
225A-350 Rutherford Road South - Plaza 2,
Brampton, ON L6W 4N6



@shafqatalimp





In photos, at top left, Rotary Club of Brampton Flower City President Dhaman Kissoon (at left) makes a cheque presentation to the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation; in top photo at right, guests and members in a group photo; and at bottom, left, guests at the Woodbine Banquet Hall. *Photos by Ramesh Ramkalawan*

Brampton Rotary Club’s Spring Fling

The Rotary Club of Brampton Flower City recently held its annual Spring Fling at the Woodbine Banquet Hall in Etobicoke.

The event was a sold-out one, with more than 500 guests in attendance. During the evening’s proceedings the club inducted four new members.

In addition, the club made cheque presentations to four charitable organisations: \$3,000 to Peel Addiction Assessment and Research Centre for funding to the Drug Treatment Court in Brampton; \$3,000 to Victims Services of Peel; \$2,000 to ICAN games for Autistic children in Peel; and about \$3,000 to the Princess Margaret Cancer Foundation for its new initiative, Cricket to Conquer Cancer. This part of the club’s pledge to Princess Margaret in the amount of \$25,000.

For this Rotary year the club has already given \$5,000 in funds to the William Osler Foundation. Also, the Scholarship Fund received \$4,000; Regeneration, \$2,000; Advocates for Etobicoke Youth, \$1,000; and Guyana Dialysis Centre, \$1,000, among many other worthy causes.

President of the club, prominent lawyer and philanthropist, Dhaman Kissoon, thanked all the guests for their continued support, and for allowing this small but growing club to make a difference in the community.

SHIPPING WEEKLY TO:
ANTIGUA, ARUBA,
BARBADOS, DOMINICA,
GRENADA, GUYANA, JAMAICA,
ST. LUCIA, ST. VINCENT,
AND TRINIDAD

R&S Cargo Express Inc.
Air Land Or Sea We Deliver For Less
2715 Rena Road, Mississauga, Ontario, L4T 3K1

WESTERN UNION
MONEY TRANSFER

JUMBO BARRELS NOW AVAILABLE!

SPECIALS TO GUYANA
SHIP EARLY FOR SUMMER
PLEASE CALL FOR PRICES & SPECIAL RATES
WE SHIP FOR LESS
CHECK THE OTHERS AND COMPARE

Shipping all personal and household items to your destination in 6 weeks or less!

905-677-6400
rscargoexpress.ca rscargoexpressinc@yahoo.ca

VISITING GUYANA SOON?
FOR AN ENJOYABLE STAY
FURNISHED 2-BEDROOM SUITE
ALL AMENITIES INCLUDED
LOT 128 NEW ROAD, VREED-EN-HOOP
WEST COAST DEMERARA GUYANA
CONTACT:
416-738-8078



Dr Doobay (left to right), Kissoon, and Rangila Sengupta



A section of the audience at the conference



Anjali Ranjan (l-r), Rangila Sengupta, and Christeena Lucknauth



Dr Doobay and Kissoon flanked by great power and expertise

The Law & You

Richmond Hill – Community outreach and humanitarianism were at its best on May 4 when Vishnu Mandir and a cadre of law professionals held their second conference, *The Law and You: Protecting Our Elders (Elder Abuse and Legal Education)* at the mandir's Richmond Hill location.

The focus of the conference this year was again based on a two-part agenda. The first section zeroed in on elder abuse in our community, with part two then seeing the law practitioners dipping into their years of exposure and experience in the profession and sharing this knowledge with individuals planning to enter the field of justice.

The conference opened with introductory remarks from VM's leader, Dr Budhendraauth Doobay. This was followed by moderator Dhaman Kissoon, who cited a troubling case of elder abuse within a family that was a typical one within our community.

Members of the panel then contributed their expertise to the case, entering the discussion with commentaries, observations, and possible outcomes that leveraged their areas of their speciality.

Among the fields of expertise were the positions of a Crown prosecutor, a defence lawyer, a family law professional, and an expert in civil litigation.

An elucidating and informative Q&A with members of the audience was then followed by the legal education segment of the conference.



'The King of the Jungle'

Mani Singh
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Tej Singh
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

647-274-4172

★ Residential & Commercial Real Estate Specialists

- ★ It's the Experience that Counts!
- ★ Members of RE/MAX Hall of Fame!
- ★ Winner of RE/MAX Lifetime Achievement Award!
- ★ Father & Son Professional Real Estate Team
- ★ When Experience & Professionalism Matter to You



www.manisinghhomes.com

RE/MAX
West Realty Inc., Brokerage

Bus: 416-745-2300 • ReMax West Realty • 96 Rexdale Blvd. Toronto, ON M9W 1N7

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY FOR OVER 34 YEARS!



Fans having a grand time at a Caribbean cricket tournament

Caricom, security agencies put on alert for potential cricket threats

Caricom has been put on alert and security agencies are working to combat any terrorist threat that could potentially affect the 2024 ICC Men's T20 World Cup, Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley stated last week.

The tournament event is scheduled to take place from June 1 to June 29.

On May 3 the *Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation* in Barbados reported that regional security officials were monitoring potential threats to T20 World Cup.

According to the news agency, the threats surfaced publicly following circulation of a document on social media.

The *CBC* indicated that the Caricom IMPACS agency had received information of a potential security threat to the games from the Pro-Islamic State. Following this revelation, Caribbean news outlets reported IMPACS stating it had received intelligence of a potential threat to the World Cup from the Pro-Islamic State (Daesh) through the media group "Nashir Pakistan".

Nashir-e Pakistan is an Islamic State group-affiliated propaganda channel.

Rowley is the chair of Trinidad and Tobago's National Security Council, and chair of the Caricom Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on Cricket.

He spoke to the media in Trinidad and Tobago last week following the report by the *CBC*.

"Unfortunately, the threat of terrorism in its many and varied expressions is an ever-present danger in the world of the 21st century. It is against this backdrop that all nations, like our region, when hosting large or vulnerable gatherings, make an extra effort in national security preparations and response readiness to take seriously, all threats, expressed or implied," he stated.

He added, "Given the fact that bad actors can choose to misbehave in any way possible, it makes it virtually impossible to completely seal off all opportunities. However, in order to ameliorate these dangers, we at the local and regional levels have remained alert to many threats, and singularly or together, have our intelligence and other security agencies working to protect the population in countries and at venues throughout the tournament."

Earlier, the Caricom Regional Cricket Conference was held in Port-of-Spain, and among the items discussed was the state of affairs of West Indies cricket. The conference was attended by a number of Caribbean dignitaries and cricket stakeholders.

The World Cup will be co-hosted by the West Indies with venues in Antigua and

Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and at US venues in Florida, New York, and Texas.

Thousands of cricket fans are expected to visit to the region for the matches. This year's tournament will be contested by 20 teams, an expansion from 16 teams at the 2022 tournament.

Last week the *Barbados Nation* reported that the IMPACS alert had reached out to member states and partners to continue sharing information and intelligence about potential threats and suspicious activities with Caricom IMPACS in the run-up to the tournament and throughout.

It further noted: "Increased vigilance and additional security precautions are critical to mitigating the threat of terrorism and ensuring a safe and secure Caribbean region."

The alert stated that Pro-Islamic State media sources have launched campaigns inciting violence against sporting events, which included video messages from the Afghanistan and Pakistan branch ISKhorasan, which highlighted assaults in numerous countries and urged supporters to join the battlefield in their countries.

IMPACS stated: "Given the terror group's demonstrated capacity and intent to incite violence, vigilance and robust security measures must be employed to mitigate terrorism threats towards sporting events."

The *Barbados Nation* also reported that Caricom authorities are tracking potential threats to the T20 World Cup 2024.

Speaking with the media in Barbados, Lieutenant Colonel Michael Jones, executive director of IMPACS, revealed that several meetings were being held with high-level regional security officials with the aim to increase security, and to continue monitoring any possible situations that could disrupt the games.

Jones said they were monitoring that threat, among others, and gave the assurance there was nothing to cause panic or disrupt the much-anticipated matches.

He confirmed the notification was sent out by Caricom IMPACS, but had been done so "prematurely".

"We want to reassure that we are working with all of our international partners to monitor any such activity, not only in terms of people's movement within the region, but what's also happening in the cyberspace, because that is where it was, that is where the chatter was picked up," he said.



Keith Rowley



Ask Jay...

Please send your questions to
TheBrij@TheBrij.com or call: 416-418-2745

BUDGET 2024: A CRUCIAL STEP TOWARDS REALISING THE ELUSIVE CANADIAN DREAM OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Canadian dream is to afford a home, but today's reality is that this goal is unattainable. Currently, an average Canadian spends nearly two-thirds of their income on shelter. If this trend continues, the Canadian dream of homeownership will be unattainable, especially for the Millennials and Gen Z. The 2024 federal budget is an aspiring plan to bring down the cost of shelter to 30 percent. The government plans to build 3.87 million new homes across Canada by 2031 to reach the demand. Here are some insights on how the budget proposes to achieve this.

Cutting red tape and streamlining the building process:

The federal government works with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to improve zoning and regulatory stumbling blocks. The Housing Accelerator Fund, worth \$4 billion, is given to Province and Territory as an incentive to facilitate the process and build more homes. The funds will help cut red tape that delays new construction.

Unlocking the Potential of Government Lands:

In major cities across Canada, land scarcity and high costs pose significant challenges to building new homes. However, the government has a solution – its surplus of idle and unoccupied lands. Rather than selling these lands, the government plans to lease them to builders, ensuring property prices remain affordable. This strategic move encourages investors to build homes, increasing the housing supply.

Building more apartments and reducing rent:

It is challenging to build affordable flats today, but budget 2024 will put aside \$15 billion in new low-cost loans, bringing the total to \$55 billion. This stimulus will allow investors to build apartments above shopping plazas and malls in dense neighbourhoods. By providing low-cost financing and extending the loan term, the government hopes to boost the quantity of affordable homes to Canadians.

Invest in prefabricated housing factories:

This budget allocates \$50 million over 2024-2025 for Next Generation Manufacturing Canada (NGen) to build fabricated housing factories. Since all this is done in a factory, conducting inspections and speeding up the system is more manageable.

Build a secondary suite to Family Homes:

Scores of homeowners have extra space, such as a basement or a laneway garage, to transform into a secondary suite. In the past, building a secondary suite was challenging and costly because of municipal red tape and expensive construction. This budget will bring \$409.6 million over four years, opening in 2025 to unveil the Canadian Secondary Suite Loan Program, assisting homeowners to gain \$40,000 in low-interest loans to build a secondary suite. A secondary suite will provide safe, affordable accommodation for tenants and extra income for landlords.

Training and recruiting skilled tradespeople:

Canada lacks qualified workers, causing a problem in building homes quickly. Budget 2024 will provide \$100 million over 2024-2025 to Employment and Social Development Canada to recruit and train skilled workers for the next generation. In addition, the government is making it easier for skilled workers from other countries to get certified and enter the workforce.

Trudeau's budget outlines a plan for federal spending of \$52.9 billion this year, resulting in a deficit of \$39.8 billion. The goal is to gradually shrink this deficit to \$20 billion by 2028-2029, focusing on making housing more affordable for Canadians.

However, this deficit presents a growing concern given Canada's mounting debt, which has risen from \$1.18 trillion to \$2.18 trillion since 2007-2008. Canadians are now spending approximately \$70 billion annually on interest payments, exceeding the allocation in the 2024 budget by \$19 billion. Instead of helping the younger generation, we are giving them our debts to carry, and it is no wonder they are having a tough time because they have to pay more taxes to cover Trudeau's nine-year spending spree.

LAW OFFICE

GENERAL PRACTICE

Chet Sharma

B.A., B.S.W. (Hons), LL.B

Barrister, Solicitor & Notary Public

• Immigration Law

• Criminal Law

• Divorce & Family Law

• Notarisations, Affidavits

• Power of Attorney, Wills

OFFICE

416-285-1550

Emergency:

416-284-9191

By Appointment Only

150 Lawson Road, Toronto, ON M1C 2J4





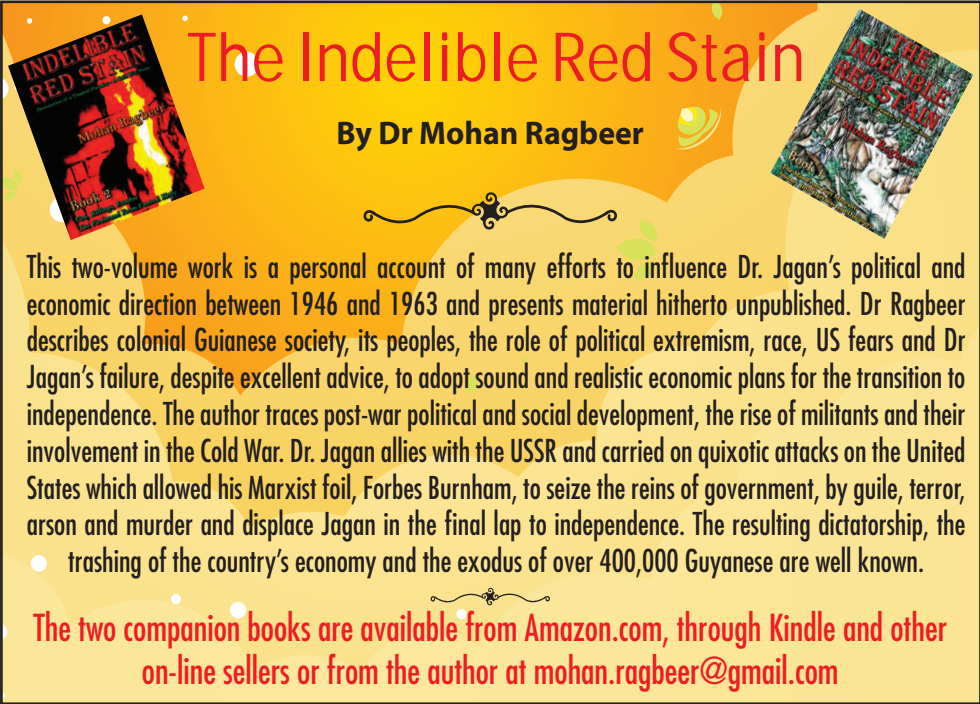
MUNGOL SINGH
BARRISTER SOLICITOR & NOTARY PUBLIC

ROMA S. MUNGOL (SINGH)
LL.B. - LONDON ENGLAND
(SOLICITOR OF THE SUPREME COURT
OF ENGLAND AND WALES)

SPECIALTY: FAMILY LAW
OTHER: CRIMINAL LAW | REAL ESTATE LAW | WILLS & ESTATES LAW

40 WESTMORE DRIVE, SUITE 202
ETOBICOKE, ON M9V 4C2


(416) 745-SING (7464)
FAX: (416) 745-1464
ROMA@MUNGOLSINGH.CA



The Indelible Red Stain
By Dr Mohan Ragbeer

This two-volume work is a personal account of many efforts to influence Dr. Jagan's political and economic direction between 1946 and 1963 and presents material hitherto unpublished. Dr Ragbeer describes colonial Guianese society, its peoples, the role of political extremism, race, US fears and Dr Jagan's failure, despite excellent advice, to adopt sound and realistic economic plans for the transition to independence. The author traces post-war political and social development, the rise of militants and their involvement in the Cold War. Dr. Jagan allies with the USSR and carried on quixotic attacks on the United States which allowed his Marxist foil, Forbes Burnham, to seize the reins of government, by guile, terror, arson and murder and displace Jagan in the final lap to independence. The resulting dictatorship, the trashing of the country's economy and the exodus of over 400,000 Guyanese are well known.

The two companion books are available from Amazon.com, through Kindle and other on-line sellers or from the author at mohan.ragbeer@gmail.com



Play more. Stress less.

Switch your home and auto insurance today to enjoy one-on-one personalized service and coverage uniquely tailored to you.

Get in touch today.



Sherry A. Harrikissoon
Insurance Agency Inc.
Sherry Harrikissoon, Agent
13311 Yonge St Unit 103
Richmond Hill ON
905-773-9782



Desjardins
Insurance

Desjardins, Desjardins Insurance and related trademarks are trademarks of the Fédération des caisses Desjardins du Québec, used under licence.



LOTUS
Funeral and Cremation Centre Inc.

Seating capacity for 500. Adaptable rooms for smaller funerals. Can accommodate larger gatherings.

121 City View Drive, Toronto, Ontario M9W 5A8

Conveniently located to serve Toronto and areas west of the City including Etobicoke, Brampton, Bramalea and Mississauga. Cremations are done on the premises without leaving the building. Large gatherings can view start of cremations. Media available to broadcast proceedings.

YOUR COMMUNITY FACILITY OWNED AND OPERATED BY KAMAL BHARDWAJ, ONTARIO LICENCED SOUTH ASIAN FUNERAL DIRECTOR. WE ARE PROFESSIONAL, RESPECTFUL AND CARING.

Tel: 647-547-8188
info@lotusfuneralandcremation.com
www.lotusfuneralandcremation.com




Pre-arrangement plans available. Free executor support for Canada Pension Plan and Survivor Benefits. In-home services offered if desired.



Mark Persaud photo



Indian Arrival Day

The Vedic Cultural Centre hosted its 26th Annual South Asian Heritage Month celebration on May 4 in observance of the 186th Anniversary of the Arrival of Indians in Guyana.

The well-attended event took place at the Vedic Cultural Centre in Markham.

Theme of this year's program was *A Fractal Journey of Indians in the Diaspora*. The event featured an interactive exhibition of artifacts and memorabilia, a dance drama *Ghar Se Dur Ghar Ki Kahanee – A Home Away From Home*, which was presented by Panwar Music and Dance Academy, and launch of the commemorative magazine.

Among the guests in attendance were MP Paul Chiang; Trinidad and Tobago's Acting Consul General Tracey Ramsubagh-Mannette; Markham's Mayor Frank Scarpitti; and our own Chef Dev was also on hand promoting and autographing his book, *Mad Love*.

The well-coordinated event was organised by the dedicated Ajit Kumar, with the VCC's committed team of hard-working volunteers working together to assemble and present yet another highly successful celebratory event.



Mark Persaud photo





Happy Victoria Day

Wishing you a joyous Victoria Day filled with laughter, good company, and cherished moments. May this day be a reminder of our shared history, resilience, and the beauty of our diverse nation!





Shafqat Ali, MP

Brampton Centre

(905) 790-9211 | shafqat.ali@parl.gc.ca
225A-350 Rutherford Road South - Plaza 2,
Brampton, ON L6W 4N6



@shafqatalimp

Aligned across oceans, our ships become vessels of connection

By Nalini Mohabir

This year marks the 186th anniversary of the arrival in British Guiana of Indentured labourers from India; it is the 179th anniversary in Trinidad as well as Jamaica; and the 167th anniversary in Grenada.

In the “antipodean counterpart to the West Indies” – as historian Hugh Tinker called Mauritius and Reunion Island – it is the 190th anniversary and the 196th anniversary respectively. We are nearing 200 years on this odyssey, where millions were shipped from India to plantation colonies across the empire (the exact number remains unknown).

Aside from us, the direct descendants, how many have heard of this systematic movement of labour? Yet the imperial processes that forged a world economy were built on the backs of our ancestors. Indentureship began, in the case of Reunion Island, even before slavery ended. However, in the Caribbean, Indentureship started on the heels of Emancipation when planters required a new source of labour, and a new system of labour that would maintain a tightly controlled and dependent work force, but also get pass the scrutiny of the Anti-Slavery Society.

For a long time, Indentureship – the importation of labour under contract, bound for up to ten years if they wanted to return to India, often longer – was understood as a voluntary migration scheme because they were not physically coerced during “recruitment” in India. Yet stringent control by plantation managers and overseers kept many in conditions of subsistence. Indentureship can be perplexing to some. Were they Indentured servants? Immigrants? Labourers? Free? Half-free? Subjected? Post-slave? Coolie? Scholars have struggled to describe Indentureship because it was uncompromisingly harsh, yet after years of poverty, it produced thriving communities, to the point that we now have Arrival Day celebrations around the world.

Several writers have made forceful arguments against the commemoration of Arrival Day as an official holiday, notably poet Rajiv Mohabir, who bluntly asked, “Why the hell should I celebrate colonisation?”

He continues: “To celebrate Indian Arrival Day is to celebrate the beginning of our slavery sentences. To celebrate Indian Arrival Day is to celebrate the damage wreaked upon brown bodies by white systems of colonial violence. To celebrate Indian Arrival Day is to celebrate the cause of each ill: diabetes, racism, alcoholism, homophobia, and domestic violence. To celebrate Indian Arrival Day is to celebrate death.”

I am in agreement with Mohabir. However, it is also helpful to understand why Arrival Day matters. For one, racial tensions and Afro-creole nationalisms in the decades following Independence renewed efforts to raise the visibility of Indo-Caribbean contributions, and to resist cultural marginalisation.

The Caribbean, being so close to North America, is often influenced by wider discourses, such as Black Power or multiculturalism. At a time when immigrants in North America, including those from the Caribbean, were asserting their rights as full citizens through multiculturalist avenues such as celebrations of ethnicity and cultural heritage, the call for Arrival Day resonated, fulfilling a need for the history of Indentureship to be recognised within the context of a multiracial Caribbean.

However, Arrival, as in the arrival of the first ship of Indentured labourers to set foot in a new land, suggests a commemoration of migration rather than centering the hardships on the plantation, or the hardships that followed. What does Arrival celebrate when some arrived on re-pur-



Guyana's Indian Immigration Monument is located in Merriman's Mall in Georgetown, and displays a bronze replica of the SS Whitby. Resting on a black granite pedestal, the Whitby arrived on May 5, 1838 with the first shipment of Indian Indentured immigrants to Guyana. It was unveiled on May 5, 1997.

posed slave ships?

Last year, I suggested Arrival Day might be understood through the ship, as a vessel for connections, even though a focus on Arrival might be a response to a trauma embedded in the collective psyche. A focus on Arrival does not necessarily mean contemplating the starting point of a “coolie odyssey”. V.S. Naipaul described his first trip to India in 1962 “vast tracts which will never become familiar, which will sadden, and the urge to escape will return... India as an ache, for which one has a great tenderness, but from which at length one always wishes to separate oneself”.

The Mauritian poet, Khal Torabully, quotes the Rig Veda, when describing his roots “in the waters of the ocean/From there I have spread through all beings.” For Torabully, his point of origin is “the only womb I could caress/In the vast harbour of Port Louis,/(after a deluge of black graves)”.

Arrival can point us to new beginnings, the start of a new collectivity and new relations in our respective countries of arrival.

The late Jamaican-British scholar, Stuart Hall (1992), described the condition of being diasporic as pivoting around two questions, the first is “cultural identity” understood as an unchanging experience, and the second, is “since history has intervened ... what we have become”.

Hall goes on to say, “Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of ‘becoming’... It belongs to the future as much as to the past”.

Clinging to an unchanging point of origin is not necessarily helpful in thinking through the realities of a heterogeneous society, or the imperatives of nation-building in a multi-ethnic context. Or as Hall stated, “diaspora does not refer us to ...some sacred homeland to which [one] must at all costs return”.

Diaspora, in the second sense, is shifting, hybrid, and diverse, responding to our new social formations as we migrate, and as we become “post-colonial,” even if the originary root remains the same.

Perhaps Arrival Day, in thinking beyond a national frame-

work, might help us reckon with the global importance, inter-relations, and interconnections of Indentureship.

Naipaul once described the similarities between Indian Ocean islands “far from anywhere” to the Caribbean, “colonised like those West Indian islands on the other side of the world, only for sugar, part of the great human engineering of recent empires”. The middle-men who recruited the first batch of Indentured labourers, or “hill coolies” to British Guiana, Gillanders and Arbuthnot and Company (by the way, a company that still exists in Kolkata, and are still involved with plantations commodities), first sent Indentured labourers to Mauritius, to Arbuthnot's brother's plantation, before they shipped “coolies” to the husband of Gillander's cousin, John Gladstone's Demerara plantations. These are imperially intimate histories, despite geographical distance.

It is also no coincidence that Gladstone initiated Indentureship in the Caribbean, as he was the largest slave-owner in the region, and wished to ensure his plantations, and thus his wealth, continued to produce, post-Emancipation. Our antipodean spaces are deeply connected.

Des Voeux, a magistrate in British Guiana in the 1860s, raised alarms about criminal penalties being used to punish Indentured labourers, and to keep “coolies at work, in hospital, or in gaol [jail]”. For this, he was transferred to St Lucia.

Some 50 years later, magistrate Bateson also spoke out against similar injustices of Indentureship in Mauritius, noting “there is absolutely no chance of the coolie being able to produce any evidence in his own favour”. The histories echo across space.

The right of return to India, embedded in the Indentureship contracts, differentiated Indentureship from slavery by recognising a place of origin. However, it also created a kind of limbo space for many who completed the terms of their Indentureship contracts, but who were unsure whether to return to India or stay.

It also cast a shadow over the vast majority who remained, suggesting in the mind of others that they were “temporary sojourners”. India itself severed ties with the Indentured diaspora after Partition and Independence. Jawaharlal Nehru encouraged formerly Indentured labourers to stay in their adopted lands and take part fully in those countries, rather than look to India as any salvation (the turn towards investment relations in the diaspora is relatively recent).

So, how might we think of ourselves, within an odyssey that began in a port's holding depot, and arrived at these multiple plantation ports? We are, as Torabully says, entitled to memory because that can bring us closer to a kind of truth. The truth is we are aligned, across oceans, “with those who invert the course of boats/In a cargo hold of stars”. Our staggered arrivals across oceans, and across dates dependent on trade winds, is more than an opportunity to celebrate a national holiday. It is an opportunity for a potentially new diasporic formation, a multi-spatial way of belonging, replacing displacements of affection (or disaffection) for origins with transnational solidarities across our islands, solidarities that might help us learn from each other's unique formations of multi-ethnic nation building, as well as heal horizontally.

Nalini Mohabir is an associate professor in the department of Geography, Planning, and Environment at Concordia University.



Indian Arrival Day celebrations were held at Belmont Estate, Grenada, on May 1. The event marked the arrival of the SS Maidstone to Grenada on May 1, 1857. The Maidstone set sail from Calcutta on January 27, 1857, with 375 Indentured workers, out of which 86 died at sea. In photo at left are Belmont Estate's Shadel Nyack Compton (second, left) with Grenada's Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell (second, right). Photos courtesy Belmont Estate's FB page.

Arrival to rootedness with ancestral focus on hard work, thrift

By Dhanpaul Narine

If you took a plane from JFK Airport to Calcutta, the chances are you will be exhausted by the time you get there.

On May 5, 1838, the history of the Caribbean changed dramatically as 396 East Indians landed on the shores of British Guiana. This was no joyride, and there was no time for niceties.

The journey from Calcutta to British Guiana was fraught with hardships, and like the slave ships of an earlier era, there were deaths on the way.

The two ships that landed in British Guiana were the SS *Whitby* and the SS *Hesperus*. Their ‘cargo’ was to usher in a new form of slavery that changed the complexion of the colony.

Why were East Indians brought to British Guiana? The answer is not a complicated one.

Slavery was abolished in 1834 by an Act in the British Parliament. Emancipation was then followed with the ex-slaves not wanting to work in the plantations. However, the planter class still believed in the supremacy of sugar, which had filled their coffers. They refused to accept the fact that the estates would become abandoned. Money and extravagance had to be kept up at all costs.

If sugar were to be enthroned again, then it must be done with new labour. Indentureship then is the revival, or the second coming of the sugar industry, in the Caribbean.

The task was to find a suitable labour supply that would replace the slaves, but without the severity of the conditions of the plantations. India was already sending workers to Mauritius, and the system appeared to be working. The argument was that a similar policy could perhaps be employed for British Guiana.

It was left to John Gladstone to articulate this policy. He was the owner of Plantation Vreed-en-Hoop. In 1836, while recuperating from an injury, he sent off a letter to the British East India Company. Gladstone requested that consideration be given to sending indentured labourers to Demerara, in British Guiana.

His request was approved, and the floodgates were opened for East Indians to be transported to the Caribbean.

What was the journey like? According to many accounts, the journey from India to the colonies was long, harsh, and brutal.

Dr Leila Sarup points out that in the first four years of Indentureship to Mauritius, people in Calcutta and London had begun to criticise the East India Company “for the callous way the emigrants were treated on board ships and in the Mauritius”.

The voyage to British Guiana, and the Caribbean, was a longer journey, and the cruelty was no less. In an effort to deaden the senses, a plentiful supply of opium was on board.

During the years 1838 to 1917, our ancestral footprints were imprinted in many countries.

The records show that Indians went to British Guiana in 1838, and to other countries as follows: Trinidad (1845); Martinique (1853); French Guiana (1854); Guadeloupe (1854); Grenada (1857); Belize (1859); St Lucia (1859); St Vincent (1861); St Croix (1863); and Suriname (1873).

According to the statistics, British Guiana had the biggest number of emigrants. From 1838-1917, British Guiana received 238,909 East Indians.

The other countries received as follows: Trinidad – 143,939; Jamaica – 37,027; St Vincent – 2,472; Grenada – 3,200; Belize – 3,000; St Lucia – 4,354; Suriname – 34,304; St Croix – 3221; Martinique – 25,509; Guadeloupe – 42,326; and French Guiana – 8,500.

What were the terms and conditions of settlement? The period of service was for five years for male emigrants, and three years for females. The work that had to be done was in “connection with the cultivation of the soil or the manufacture of the produce in any plantation”.

The labourers were required to work every day, except Sundays, and authorised holidays, while the allotted time was nine hours per day “inclusive of half an hour for rest and refreshment”.

The payment given was hardly in keeping with the prevailing rate. They were paid one shilling and a half penny “that was equivalent to twelve annas and six pie for each day’s work”.

One of the conditions of Indentureship was repatriation. This means that the figures cited would be decreased by about 25 percent, as a result of Indians returning to India, after their period of Indentureship.

Once they arrived, labourers were distributed to various plantations, and they included Wakenaam, Albion, Schoonard, Vergenoegen, Leonora, and others.

The planters did everything within their power to separate Blacks from East Indians, and carved out settlements for both groups. The signs of this separation are evident today, as certain villages in Guyana are populated predominantly by certain ethnic groups.



Charles Gladstone apologises for his family’s role in slavery and Indentureship

In August 2023 descendants of the former British Prime Minister William Gladstone apologised for the family’s past as enslavers in Guyana; an apology was also issued for the family’s role in Indentureship.

The issuer of the apologies, Charles Gladstone, also urged the UK to discuss reparations in the Caribbean, *The Guardian* reported in 2023. The father of the former UK PM Gladstone was one of the largest enslavers in the parts of the Caribbean colonised by Britain.

It is believed that John Gladstone was also the owner of two ships that transported thousands of East Indians from India and elsewhere to work as Indentured labourers after the abolition of slavery in 1834.

Speaking at the launch for the University of Guyana’s International Centre for Migration and Diaspora Studies in August 2023, William Gladstone’s great-great-grandson, Charles said: “Slavery was a crime against humanity and its damaging impact continues to be felt across the world today.”

He added, “It is with deep shame and regret that we acknowledge our ancestor’s involvement in this crime, and with heartfelt sincerity that we apologise to the descendants of the enslaved in Guyana. We also urge other descendants of those who benefited from slavery to open conversations about their ancestors’ crimes, and what they might be able to do to build a better future.”

Life on the plantations was regimented. There were numerous reports of cruelty that were carried out by the overseers, managers, and others.

The regimented lifestyle, and the cruelty of the planters, led to resentment among Indians. This resulted in strikes, revolts, riots and rebellions, and they were put down with brutal efficiency.

In fact, conditions on the estates were so poor that Commissions of Enquiry were set up to find out how the

quality of life could be improved. The De Voeux Commission found that conditions were woefully inadequate, and that more could be done to improve life on the estates.

By 1900, it was clear to some advocates that Indentureship had to go. There were calls in India as well for the system to be abolished, and Mahatma Gandhi was among those making these calls.

The system officially came to an end in 1917. The end of Indentureship saw a highly stratified society in British Guiana. Over 50,000 Indians had taken up the offer of the planters and had returned to India. But the majority stayed and had to compete in a society in which the odds were stacked against them.

It was found that while they owned small plots of land, East Indians could not move up in the society for a number of reasons. They were not Christians, and as a result could not hold jobs in the government sector.

In addition, in the 1920s, East Indians had little access to education, and their daughters were married at an early age. There were not many schools that were established to teach Indian children. East Indians lived in the estates, and were not exposed to an urban lifestyle, and the ideas of change that this may have brought about.

On the other hand, Africans had a head start in the economy. They were Christians, had worked as security personnel on the plantations, and held jobs in the civil service. Their levels of educational attainment were much higher than East Indians’.

In the two decades after Indentureship, the economic and social status of Indians were in a state of limbo. But perhaps the greatest setback was how East Indians perceived themselves.

In the 1930s, the Moyne Commission visited British Guiana and concluded that East Indians did not regard themselves as full-fledged citizens of the country. They hoped that one day they would be repatriated to India.

It was not until the 1940s that East Indians began to seriously realise that British Guiana was home, and that education, and property ownership, were avenues to social mobility. In 1947, East Indians, Blacks, and other groups began to agitate for political change.

The formation of political parties and the emergence of Dr Cheddi Jagan as a trade unionist, and political leader, set the stage for change.

The ensuing years would see East Indians becoming part a tumultuous struggle in Guyana. This would include access to political power, the struggle to hold on to power, the prevalence of racial politics, racial disturbances, and a psychological assault that would last for years.

But throughout it all East Indians have been resilient. They have fed the Caribbean, have celebrated the achievements of education and learning, and have contributed immensely to the economy. There is no doubt our ancestral footprints have worn well, and we will continue to leave an impact wherever hard work, thrift, and initiative are prized.

HAPPY ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH

Let us recognize and celebrate the rich and diverse culture of Asian Canadians!

Shafqat Ali, MP
Brampton Centre
(905) 790-9211 | shafqat.ali@parl.gc.ca
225A-350 Rutherford Road South - Plaza 2,
Brampton, ON L6W 4N6

@shafqatalimp

Bocas winner Safiya Sinclair calls for end to worldwide colonial violence

Jamaican author Safiya Sinclair took the overall top prize at the recently concluded 2024 OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature with her book *How to Say Babylon: A Memoir*. The award came with a first prize cash award of (US) \$10,000, which is sponsored by Trinidad and Tobago's *One Caribbean Media*.

The award ceremony was held on April 27 in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.

Addressing the gathering that evening, Sinclair revealed that she wrote *How to Say Babylon* for Caribbean women, and with that hope that her father would hear and understand her words.

"Everything I write and feel and dream is for the Caribbean. I wrote *How to Say Babylon* for all the Caribbean women whose work and deeds so often go unseen and unsung; women who are overlooked and forgotten in the margins of history. I wrote this book for all the Caribbean who gave us the wildfire of our dialects and our folklore," she told the audience.

She added, "In many ways too, I wrote this book for my father, and the rest of brethren like him who gave me the fire of my linguistic rebellion, to say what I mean, and mean what I say. I wrote this in hopes that my father may understand me a little bit better, that he might finally hear me."

The book was also written for her siblings, and in tribute to the place where she grew up, Sinclair revealed.

"I wrote this book for my siblings: my sisters Ife and Shari, and my brother Lij. I'm so thankful for their strength; their laughter; their hope; the sunlight we found somehow, some-

where, under the shadow of our circumstance." And furthermore, Sinclair also wrote *How To Say Babylon* "for Montego Bay, Jamaica; the red poinciana I was born under; the blue sound and music of my Caribbean sea".

Sinclair also congratulated her companions in the shortlist, Kevin Jared Hosein, who won the fiction category with his *Hungry Ghosts*, and Nicole Sealey, who won the poetry prize for *The Ferguson Report: An Erasure*.

And she said she was thankful for the inspiration from the writers that preceded her, among them Edwidge Danticat, Lorraine Goodison, Sylvia Wynter, Jamaica Kincaid, Dionne Brand, Canisia Lubrin, Nicole Sealey, and many others.

"With you – with all of you, we continue to create

this matriarchal language, and with you I'm leaving my small part of work," she stated.

She also had a message for her Caribbean writers. "I want to say, being born in someone else's idea of paradise, we're often encouraged not to dream too far; not to think too big. But I think the very essence of being Caribbean is that when we're told what's impossible, we still reach for the sun anyway," she noted.

Additionally, "I wrote this book for all of you; for home. I write in hope we continue to defy colonial powers, and continue to interrogate the violent history of the narratives that we were handed."

Sinclair also declared that she wanted an end to colonial violence worldwide.



NGC Bocas Lit winners Kevin Jared Hosein (left to right), Safiya Sinclair, and Nicole Sealey.

Condé remembered as chronicler of the struggles, triumphs of African slaves

Maryse Liliane Appoline Condé 1934-2024
Among the obituaries published in the international media that paid tribute to the French writer Maryse Condé, the news agency *AFP* described her as one of the greatest chroniclers of the struggles and triumphs of the descendants of Africans taken as slaves to the Caribbean.

Condé died on April 2 at the age of 90. She was the winner of the New Academy Prize, which emerged in 2018 following allegations of impropriety and a subsequent scandal that impacted the Nobel Literature Prize in Sweden.

In a response to the cancellation of the 2018 Nobel Prize for Literature, the New Academy Prize was created by a group of Swedish cultural figures as a temporary replacement. Condé was the first and last person to receive this award.

At the time she was in her 80s, and was confined to a wheelchair with a degenerative disease.

In conferring the award, the New Academy Prize judges praised her for describing "the ravages of colonialism and post-colonial chaos in a language which is both precise and overwhelming," *AFP* reported.

As was reported in 2018, Condé was delighted with the international award, and stated in a video message that her home-

land, Guadeloupe, historically a part of France, was typically "only mentioned when there are hurricanes or earthquakes".

She was also twice selected to the shortlist for the prestigious International Booker Prize, which is awarded to authors writing in languages other than English.

Born Maryse Boucolon in Guadeloupe on February 11, 1934, she grew up in a distinguished family in the town of Pointe-à-Pitre.



Maryse Condé

Details from her memoir *Tales from the Heart* (1999) indicate that her mother, Jeanne (née Quidal), was a schoolteacher, with father, Auguste Boucolon, an educator who moved into finance.

She married the Guinean actor Mamadou Condé in 1958. Then in 1982 she married the British translator, Richard Philcox, who also translated her works.

Condé wrote her first book when she was close to 40, *AFP* reported. It was a publication that triggered controversy that saw authorities in several countries ordering destruction of copies of the text.

And as the *New York Times* noted in its tribute, much of Condé's work was historical.

As the *NYT's* writer, Clay Risen noted, "Her breakout novel, *Segu* (1984), which sold more than 200,000 copies in France,

"I wish to see an end to the horrific genocide in Gaza. I dream to see a free Palestine in my lifetime; a free Congo; a free Sudan; a free Haiti," she declared.

And she touched on how colonial violence has shaped the Caribbean.

"When Columbus came to this archipelago, he mis-categorised the West Indies. He also mis-characterised the natives he found there as Caribs, cannibals, and perhaps there is some sense this is what we are as Caribbean, ferocious in our survival, because we fight for our land, our life, and our selfhood. Every freedom song is ours, forged in the wail of history," she stated.

And at the end of her evocation, Sinclair thanked her mother for shaping her, saying, "Thank you for igniting the fire of poetry in me; for paving the way to make all of this possible."

She added, "Thank you for showing me how to read the sea like a poem. It was you who first taught me that as long as I knew the memory of the waves, I could never be lost. As long as I listened to the voice of the seas, I would always find my way back home. And like [Derek] Walcott said, I write the sea because the sea is history."

This year, Haitian-American author Edwidge Danticat was chief judge, aided by St Lucian poet Canisia Lubrin, Trinidad-born novelist Rabindranath Maharaj, and Guyana-born academic D. Alissa Trotz.

In their formal citation, the judges remarked that *How to Say Babylon* "is a memoir that reminds us of the expansive possibilities of creative nonfiction, bringing to the fore, with unforgettable poetic verve, a voice that is fierce, courageous, deeply intelligent, and empathetic, its nerve endings vibrating out from a specific experience of Rastafarianism into the currents of the wider world."

They added, "Embodying the finest traditions within Caribbean writing, yet standing on its own as a unique and astonishing work of witness, this is a work of reparation attending to both uneasy colonial legacies and difficult contemporary departures."

traces the life of a royal adviser in the Bambara Empire of West Africa, which flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries but collapsed under pressure from European and Islamic forces."

Risen also wrote that among Condé's favourite books as a child was Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. In 1995 she offered a retelling of this classic narrative of obsession and revenge with her *Windward Heights*, which was set in Cuba and Guadeloupe.

Risen also noted that Condé explored a similar path of retelling with Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The Scarlet Letter*, and Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible*.

Therein she drew "on elements of both works to tell the story of an enslaved woman caught up in the Salem witch trials in *I, Tituba, Black Witch of Salem* (1986), which won the *Grand Prix Littéraire de la Femme*," Risen wrote.

And in her tribute in *The Guardian*, Louise Hardwick touched on Condé's intervention into academia, noting she earned her doctorate in comparative literature from the Sorbonne in 1975.

"Condé also enjoyed a distinguished academic career, publishing ground-breaking studies on *Négritude* (1978) and Francophone women's writing (1979). A Fulbright award led her to relocate to the US, and in 1995 she became a professor at Columbia University in New York," Hardwick noted.

She is survived by husband Richard, daughters, Sylvie, Aïcha and Leïla; five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Canada plugs into the future with latest \$B EV investment in Alliston

The recent announcement from Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau about Honda's largest investment in North America of \$15 billion at Alliston, Ontario, is a "good news day" for Trudeau, Alliston, and all of Canada. It will manufacture 200,000 new electrical vehicles per year by 2028 and produce 1,000 new direct jobs at the plant. There will be \$2.5 billion of Ontario, grant incentive, and \$2.5 billion of tax credit from the Federal Budget thrown in. Alliston had its first Honda Plant, a sleepy rural town, in the 1980's, and now has 4,000 workers.

There is no wonder that Trudeau and his Cabinet were all smiles and Doug Ford, with the Conservative Premier of Ontario, standing proudly beside him. The same cannot be said about the Federal Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre and his Cabinet, who together are trying to shoot down the deal, suggesting that this plan would only benefit "foreign workers" and not Canadians!

This Honda investment has given Trudeau a possible Deus ex machina moment, an escape from losing the federal elections next year. You cannot blame folks for changing direction and following the money!

The Federal Conservatives are not amused at this turn of events, and show where their loyalties lie!

Alliston will soon be very high in the global supply chain ranking. It shows Canada will be in the front ranks of electric vehicles and electric batteries production.



Bernard Heydorn

The critical minerals for the plant will come from within Canada. This gives a boost to all of Canada, and the independence of production.

Young workers and others across Canada will have a future going into decades as a result of the negotiations for this deal. It took several years by Trudeau and his Liberal ministers. The Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Chrystia Freeland, was most energetic in these negotiations. Trudeau, like his father before him, former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, has demonstrated that he is a "see far" man.

Canada can soon become a world leader in the electric vehicle market. Critics of electric vehicles will have to wake up and smell the roses. You don't want to be part of the group of folks who are critical of the electric vehicle revolution, and "wonder what happened"!

Honda will invest \$18 billion to start an EV supply chain

in Canada; no "small change". That the federal conservatives and their leadership will turn up their noses at this is beyond comprehension.

It is as much "beyond comprehension" as it is former US President Donald Trump, who is facing 88 criminal charges, winning the forthcoming presidential elections in the US!

Ontario EV investments will go from zero to 28 billion in three years.

Behind the scenes the Conservatives may be watching and waiting to see all this fall into their lap. This deal and others coming down the tube will give all Canadians, young and old, liberal or conservative, long standing or new, an assurance of prosperity for decades to come.

Canada will remain one of the top countries in the world to raise a family and prosper. Peace keepers, progressive, and multicultural, we are blessed by most leaders who sacrifice much for the "common good", and a vast array of natural resources, not unlike Guyana.

We hope the winds of dictatorships that are blowing in our neighbour to the south, and Russia and the Far East, will hopefully bypass us, so that I can rest in peace.

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

HDC evictions stir errant tenants into action

Port-of-Spain – Following the Housing Development Corporation resuming its revenue collection drive and its eviction of tenants in arrears, many errant residents have since been galvanised into action, and are now settling their outstanding balances.

According to an HDC release issued last week, tenants in arrears with their monthly payments are now visiting the corporation's administration offices. The visits are seeing outstanding balances being settled, as well as the establishing of payment plans, and some are even informing the HDC about their challenges in maintaining monthly instalments.

The release also stated that while some tenants were making the trip to the HDC's offices, others in default were yet to heed the call to come forward.

The release added, "While millions of dollars are still owed to the corporation, monies received will be used to construct houses across the country as the demand for government-subsidised housing increases. As a result, the HDC must continue to recoup funds to maintain the operations of the organisation."

The release also indicated that as of May 3, a total of 18 tenants were evicted. It added that in some cases, a number of evicted tenants have made payments towards their account, and have agreed to settle their arrears. The HDC said it is hopeful the tenants will honour their commitments to the corporation.

This month the evictions will continue in Chaconia Crescent Housing Development, Diego Martin; Cypress Hills Housing Development, Union Hall, San Fernando; Hilltop Villas Housing Development, Malick; Real Spring Housing Development, Valsayn; and Vieux Fort in St James, the HDC stated.

It added, "Other developments have been identified and evictions will begin at those locations soon."

Meanwhile, former Housing Minister Dr Roodal Moonilal stated late last month that the HDC's move to evictions was harsh, oppressive, and malicious. He is also the shadow minister of Housing and Urban Development.



HDC housing in east Trinidad

Moonilal accused the government of creating more homelessness and economic desperation. And he accused the HDC of encouraging criminal activity by demanding unreasonable payments from people who have been unemployed for years.

"HDC tenants in arrears want to pay their bills and mortgages. Many are without jobs and economic opportunities. TTEC is now cutting electricity from tenants in arrears," he said.

"As shadow minister, I have been meeting with HDC tenants who have been served with eviction notices. It is clear that if they can pay, they will pay. In these difficult financial times, the HDC must be reasonable and show compassion for homeowners who are unable to make timely rent and mortgage payments," he stated.

These evictions add further financial hardship to an already burdened society, he declared.

"The HDC and the Ministry of Housing should alter their hardline policy to blend empathy with enforcement of the law. The authorities must provide a valued helping hand, instead of callously throwing families on the streets."

Among those recently evicted was a 43-year-old tenant living in an apartment in San Fernando. She was in arrears of an estimated (TT) \$63,000.

A mother of two, Roxanne Garcia was unable to persuade HDC officials to let her family stay in the apartment. She is employed as a ward maid at the San Fernando General Hospital, and one of her two children has special needs.

Her partner Peter Burnett told the media that HDC officials served the notice on April 29, giving them until the morning of the next day to remove their belongings.

Burnett acknowledged Garcia had received letters about the arrears when the debt was around \$50,000. While Garcia's monthly payment was \$1,200, he revealed she was struggling to make ends meet.

She occupied the apartment since 2016, and made her last payment in 2020. They have since moved in with family following the eviction.



The price for a 'heap' of mangoes has gone up Complaints as prices for local fruits go up

Port-of-Spain – While nationals were complaining on the streets and via social media about the high prices for local fruits, vendors were defending their costs as criticism mounted over costly pomegranates, mangoes, and coconuts at roadside stalls.

As of last week, pomegranates were being sold at (TT) \$5 each; mangoes were going individually for \$4; and one water coconut was being sold for as much as \$15.

And while the figures were unavailable, it was reported that imported apples were being sold throughout the country at cheaper prices.

Defending their fruit pricing, vendors were maintaining that consumers remain unaware of the various expenses involved in bringing food to their stalls from the farm to the fork.

According to the vendors, among the main factors leading to their high prices were labour and transportation.

As the media reported last week, four mangoes were being sold for (TT) \$25, and four pomegranates for \$20 at two different roadside locations.

A fruit vendor in Debe in south Trinidad, Karlton Roberts, told the media that pricing for an item started even before the fruit was picked off the tree.

"It starts from the person who owns the tree. We do not normally pay between \$1 and \$3 for a mango. When we go to buy, we offer a dollar. Most people want two, some want \$3, but we try to pay \$1. Majority of time, we get in-between, so we pay \$2," he said.

Then there was the tree climber's fee of around \$300, Roberts said. Add to this overhead cost of at least \$200 for transport, and then there was supply and demand, which also had to be factored into the pricing.

Cumulatively, these costs all contributed to the overall tab for the consumer, he stated.

Commenting on the price of local fruit surpassing that of imported apples, for example, Roberts said it was more difficult to sell local fruits, since these were more expensive to grow and bring to the market. He added these fruits also had a shorter shelf life than the foreign ones.

Meanwhile, coconut vendors in Port-of-Spain were last week complaining that their increase in prices from \$10 to \$12 had met fallout from customers unwilling to pay the additional charge. The vendors claimed they were forced into the increase after wholesalers upped their prices.

According to media reports out of Trinidad, the vendors were complaining that their price increase was backfiring as some customers were unwilling to pay an extra \$2 for a coconut. Last week there were reports that the price for one coconut had increased to \$15 in some parts of Trinidad.

Also, the scarcity of coconuts this year was being blamed on the dry season. However, other vendors told the media the shortage was being caused by large businesses that had cornered the market, and which were making it difficult for smaller enterprises to access a reliable supply.

Also, one vendor noted that the present crop of coconuts had decreased in size and quality, even while prices were increasing.

Said the vendor, "It's the bigger heads buying it up, and small fish like we getting nothing. It's not that it's that scarce because it didn't have on the trees. It did, but they buying it up and mixing it with their additives, and when we go, we getting the smaller coconuts."

The dwindling supply was a wake-up call for nationals to plant their own coconut trees, the vendor stated.

"We need to follow what [Prime Minister Dr Keith Rowley] said to do. Start planting fruits and vegetables in our backyards. People should be planting coconut trees. People don't water coconut trees. We depend on water from the sky to do it for us, but if we plant our own during both rainy and dry seasons, that will be good," the coconut vendor advised.

Another senior vendor in Port-of-Spain for more than two decades told the media that coconuts started becoming scarce in February.

Govt knocked for missing World Cup boost

Port-of-Spain – Trinidad and Tobago did not receive any high-yielding teams that would generate lucrative revenues during playing of the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup tournament compared to its Caribbean partners, particularly Barbados.

In fact, the cricketing nations playing on local soil would not draw big crowds, or generate income for local businesses and nationals, UNC Senator Anil Roberts claimed late last month.

At the time, Roberts was contributing to the debate on the ICC Men's T20 Cricket World Cup 2024 Bill in the Senate, which took place in Port-of-Spain.

While Roberts agreed with the Attorney General there would be two billion people watching the event, he said: "But they will certainly not be watching Afghanistan play Papua New Guinea in the Brian Lara Stadium. That is what we have."

He added, "We have four matches, only one of those matches, other than the semi-finals, will cause traffic – the West Indies versus New Zealand. We have Papua New Guinea and then New Zealand versus Uganda."

While noting with all due respect that these were "these wonderful sovereign countries", Roberts added that these cricketing nations were "not cricketing powerhouses that are going to set the world on fire, causing people across the globe to turn on their TVs to see the brilliance... and skill of Papua New Guinea".

Said Roberts, "We don't know what is the benefit, the cost, because I see the Brian Lara Stadium, which is the most costly stadium on the planet at a whopping (US) \$135,000 per seat, \$1.3 billion, I see works going on there to renovate and refurbish a brand new, expensive, just-opened stadium where surrounding it you only have... mud and razor grass. But we are saying that we want to use this World Cup to generate revenue."

Roberts said main benefit of sport tourism and hosting an

event of the stature and eminence as the World Cup was in two billion people watching the games.

"But already, we missed the boat because Barbados has eight matches, including the final, and some of their group matches; they have three Super 8 matches while we have no Super 8," Roberts lamented.

He noted that Barbados had acquired the bigger players, including England, "and big teams that people will watch."



Brian Lara Stadium

Also, Antigua acquired four Super 8 matches, and the US will host Pakistan and India.

"When you have the Indian team playing, you already have 1.2 billion people watching, and if we had 1.2 billion people watching, we could show them Trinidad and Tobago, Maracas Beach, bake and shark, doubles, tassa, Pigeon Point, Englishman's Bay," Roberts stated.

He then asked the government of Trinidad and Tobago to explain

the choice to move away from the Queen's Park Oval, which is located in Port-of-Spain.

This cricket ground was a place of history and legacy, and is located in the middle of the busiest commercial area, with restaurants, food, and entertainment. Visitors patronising the area would see a multiplier effect, allowing business owners and nationals to benefit, he declared.

Instead, the government decided to locate the cricket matches where there was mud, no businesses, and no food.

Roberts also noted that while Barbados has been advertising "non-stop" on the Indian Premier League, he had not seen any advertisements from Trinidad and Tobago.

"I ain't see a pan, a moko jumbie, I ain't see anything yet about Trinidad and Tobago World Cup that we marketing to earn money. It is the best-kept secret," he said.

Foreign govts issue advisories after Tobago shark attack

Port-of-Spain – Canada and the UK last week issued advisories to its nationals about swimming in Trinidad and Tobago’s coastal waters. The advisories came following a shark attack on a British tourist in Tobago on April 26.

The attack took place at Turtle Beach/ Courland Bay in Tobago, and led to ten beaches being temporarily closed.

Also, in the wake of an increase in the killing of sharks following the attack, a Trinidad and Tobago marine biologist has issued a call to fishermen to stop the wanton slaughter.

Following the shark attack in Tobago, the Travel Canada website noted, “Coastal waters can be dangerous. In certain areas, sharks pose a risk to swimmers. Avoid unsupervised beaches. Follow the instructions and warnings of lifeguards. Respect the flag warning system, which provides notice of water conditions and safety risks on beaches.”

And the UK government travel advice website also noted that authorities in Tobago had temporarily closed the Buccoo Reef Marine Park following the attack.

“This closure is effective immediately and applies to all recreational activities, including snorkelling, diving, glass-bottom boat tours, and any other water-based activities within the park boundaries.”

It added, “The Tobago authorities strongly advise all beachgoers, fisherfolk and mariners to exercise extreme caution when operating in the coastal areas surrounding Plymouth, Courland Bay, Black Rock, Mt Irvine, Buccoo, Pigeon Point, Store Bay, and all areas in between. You should check and follow the advice of local authorities.”

The advisory was valid up to May 4. However, the ten beaches that were closed subsequently re-opened on May 3.



Marine biologist Zaheer Hosein

The tourist survived the attack and was later airlifted for further medical attention to Miami.

Meanwhile, attacks on sharks by humans climbed steeply in the days following the Tobago episode, leading to a stop-and-desist call by marine biologist Zaheer Hosein.

According to Hosein, there is no evidence to suggest that shark attacks are increasing in frequency. He added that in Trinidad and Tobago’s history there has been only one confirmed attack so far.

Hosein was referencing an incident where a fisherman was bitten by a blacktip reef shark in Trinidad last February.

It was the only reported incident of a shark attack in Trinidad and Tobago’s waters before the incident at Turtle Beach where British tourist Peter Smith, 64, was seriously injured.

Said Hosein: “Sharks are by nature very curious animals, coupled with the fact that they are apex predators, they are not afraid of anything in the water. So what we may have seen in Tobago with this bull shark attack [on Smith] is the animal simply being curious. But we’ve never seen bull sharks coming this close to our shores.”

Despite what appears to have been the random nature of the recent attack, a crusade against sharks then started, likely triggered after a (TT) \$10,000 bounty was issued by the Tobago House of Assembly for the shark’s capture.

The bounty was subsequently retracted. Meanwhile, fishermen have since hunted killed at least 18 sharks.

Hosein warned that such an excessive and draconian response against a vital part of Trinidad and Tobago’s marine ecosystem can endanger the nation’s fisheries.

He said bull sharks can grow up to 500 pounds, and up to ten feet in length, making them fearsome predators; however, their ecological contributions are too valuable to overlook, he stated.

As apex predators, sharks assist in regulating the populations of several species, including commercially viable fish. A widespread elimination of sharks could lead to fish populations increasing dramatically, and while this might be seen as a benefit, it leads to the survival of those that are older and sicker.

“[Sharks] help ensure not only the numbers of fish, but also the genetic quality of the prey species,” Hosein said.

He added, “In terms of fisheries, you’re going to have an immediate boom of fish being caught because you no longer have top predators. However, as time goes on you will see falls in prey populations. Those fish our fishermen catch will be under threat if this culling continues.”

THE WALNUT FOUNDATION

10th Anniversary
June 1, 2024

WALKATHON

Passion Compassion Action

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 2024
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

ETOBICOKE CREEK TRAIL
BRAMPTON
30 LOAFERS LAKE LANE,
SANDALWOOD PKWY/CONESTOGA DR.

Join us at Our Annual “Walk the Path” Walkathon to Take Steps for Prostate Cancer Awareness and Men’s Health.

Join our annual 10km charity walk or sponsor one of our participants in support of the Walnut Foundation. For 17 years, the Walnut Foundation has been providing men’s health advocacy, guy-to-guy support and community education.

Co-Chair: Sean Blake
Business Representative,
Carpenters and Allied Workers Local 27

For more information & to donate, visit: <https://bit.ly/TWFWalkathon2024>
416-568-7442 | 905-799-2759

Co-Chair: Ivan Dawns
Political Director,
International Union of Painters and Allied Trades

19 indocaribbeanworld.com | may 8, 2024

The Golden Years of Indian Cinema

Meena Kumari: India's and Bollywood's original Tragedy Queen

By Vidur Dindayal

Meena Kumari is regarded among the greatest actresses of Indian cinema. She is popularly known as The Tragedy Queen. In a career spanning 33 years, from child actress to adult, Meena Kumari starred in over 90 films.

Meena Kumari won numerous Filmfare Awards in the Best Actress category. She made history at the tenth Filmfare Awards (1963) by receiving all three of the Best Actress nominations, and won for her performance in *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam*.

This gifted actress was also a poet and a playback singer. She also designed costumes. Sadly, she died at a young age of 38 from cirrhosis of the liver.

Thanks to *Wikipedia* for the details, which I am happy to summarise here.

Meena Kumari was born Mahjabeen to Ali Bux and Iqbal Begum on August 1, 1933. She was the second of three sisters; the younger known as Madhu, a former child artist, was married to actor Mehmood. Her father could not afford to pay the doctor for her delivery, so he left her at an orphanage, but then changed his mind a few hours later and took her back home.

Meena Kumari's father, who migrated from Bhera (now in Pakistan), was a veteran of Parsi theatre, played the harmonium, wrote Urdu poetry, composed music, and did small roles in a few films.

Kumari's mother Iqbal Begum, her original name Prabhavati Devi, was a stage actress. Her mother was Hem Sundari Tagore, said to be either the daughter or widow of a distant cousin of Rabindranath Tagore. After her husband's death, Hem Sundari became a nurse, and married Pyare Lal Meeruti, a Christian. She had two daughters – one of whom was Prabhavati, who was Kumari's mother.

As a child, Mahjabeen was not keen on a film career, and would rather attend school. Despite this preference, her parents started taking her to film studios for work opportunities. Director Vijay Bhatt cast her in the film *Leather Face* in 1939. On her first day of work, she was paid 25 Rupees.

Mahjabeen became the breadwinner in the Bux family at a very young age, which she said gave her immense satisfaction. Although she was admitted into school, the demands of work resulted in her being unable to attend school on an ongoing basis. Thus her education was the result of private tuition and self-education.

In later years she is said to be an avid reader, not to mention her superb talent as an actress, gifts from both her parents who were themselves stage artistes.

She initially worked mostly in Vijay Bhatt productions: *Leather Face* and *Adhuri Kahani* (1939), *Pooja* and *Ek Hi Bhool* (1940). Bhatt named her Baby Meena during the filming of *Ek Hi Bhool*. She sang as a child artist in films like *Bahen* until 1945.

Meena Kumari worked very hard from day one, every year from 1946 through to 1972. Here is the breathtaking list of some of her films: *Nai Roshni*, *Bahen* and *Kasauti* (1941); *Vijay* and *Garib* (1942); *Pratiggya* (1943); *Lal Haveli* (1944); *Bachchon Ka Khel*, *Duniya Ek Sarai*, (1946); *Piya Ghar Aaja* (1948); and *Bichchade Balam* (1948). These shows were some of her early films in which she not only acted, but also sang.

Her mythology or fantasy films included: *Shri Ganesh Mahima*; *Laxmi Narayan*; *Hanuman Patal Vijay*; *Tamasha*; *Baiju Bawra*; *Aladdin Aur Jadui Chirag* with Mahipal; *Parineeta*; *Do Bigha Zamin*; *Foot Path*; *Daera*; *Naulakha Haar*; *Chandni Chowk*; *Azaad*, the 1955 hit comedy; *Mem Sahib*, a box office hit; *Ek Hi Raasta* – co-starring newcomer Sunil Dutt, a Jubilee hit; *Bandhan*, awarded a Certificate of Merit in the National Film Awards; and *Halaku* – an historical and Silver Jubilee hit.

Among other films were *Sharada* (1957); *Miss Mary* – a comedy, one of the biggest hits of that year; *Sahara*; *Yahudi*, about the persecution of Jews in the Roman Empire, a hit with the song *Yeh Mera Diwanapan Hai*; *Chirag Kahan Roshni Kahan*, a huge hit; *Shararat*, with the song *Hum Matwaley Naujawan*; *Chand*, with Balraj Sahni and newcomer Manoj Kumar; *Dil Apna Aur Preet Parai*, with music by Shankar Jaikishan, featuring the Hawaiian-themed *Ajeeb Dastan Hai Yeh*; *Zindagi Aur Khwab*, a hit; and *Pyaar Ka Saagar*.

The list continues with *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam*, noted for its songs *Na Jao Saiyaan Chhuda Ke Baiyan*, and *Piya Aiso Jiya Mein*, and which was nominated for the Golden Bear at the

13th Berlin International Film Festival, where Meena Kumari was selected as a delegate. It was chosen as India's official entry to the Oscars.

Main Chup Rahungi, one of the biggest hits of the year; *Dil Ek Mandir*, a hit; *Main Bhi Ladki Hoon*, with newcomer Dharmendra; *Kaajal*, listed in the Top 20 films of 1965; *Bheegi Raat*, one of the biggest hits of the year; *Phool Aur Patthar*, a Golden Jubilee hit; and the highest-grossing movie of the year, *Pinjre Ke Panchhi*, a film where she was also a playback singer.

Then there were *Majhli Didi* with Dharmendra, India's entry to the 41st Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film; *Bahu Begum*; *Noor Jehan*, dramatising the love story of Empress Nur Jehan and her husband, the Mughal Emperor Jehangir; *Chandan Ka Palna*; *Baharon Ki Manzil*, one of the major hits of the year; *Mere Apne*, written and directed by Gulzar – his first directorial venture; *Dushman*, a super-hit; *Gomti Ke Kinare*, released on November 22, 1972, after Kumari's death, and was a tribute to her.

There there was *Pakeezah*. The idea for *Pakeezah* came in 1954. Its *muhurat*, or its auspicious and ideal time, was in 1956.

Meena Kumari, aware of her limited time to live, was determined to complete the film, and wanted to complete it early. Despite deterioration of her health, she made the finishing touches to her performance.

Pakeezah had a grand premiere on February 3, 1972 at Maratha Mandir theatre in central Bombay. The film was finally released on February 4, 1972.

Pakeezah enjoyed a successful run of 33 weeks, and celebrated its Silver Jubilee. Meena Kumari posthumously received her 12th and last Filmfare nomination for *Pakeezah*. Bengal Film Journalists' Association Awards bestowed the Special Award to Meena Kumari for *Pakeezah* in 1973.

She also sang for *Pakeezah*; however, the song was not used in the film, and was later released in the album *Pakeezah-Rang Ba Rang* (1977).

Meena Kumari won the Filmfare Award for Best Actress for her roles in *Baiju Bawra* (1954); *Parineeta* (1955); *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam* (1963); and *Kaajal* (1966).

She was nominated for the award for her role in *Azaad* (1956); *Sahara* (1959); *Chirag Kahan Roshni Kahan* (1960); *Aarti* (1962); *Main Chup Rahungi* (1962); *Dil Ek Mandir* (1964); *Phool Aur Pathat* (1967); and *Pakeezah* (1973).

In 69 editions of the Filmfare Awards, Meena Kumari's unusual feat of getting all nominations in the Best Actress category remains unbeaten by any other actress. Her record for the highest number of Filmfare Awards for Best Actress remained unbroken for 13 years (1966-1979) until it was finally broken by Nutan in 1979. Meena Kumari's record for the highest number of nominations in the Best Actress category (12) was eventually broken after 35 years by Madhuri Dixit in 2008.

She is the only actress to be nominated posthumously – for *Pakeezah* at the 20th Filmfare Awards in 1973.

Meena Kumari was married to Kamal Amrohi, film director and screenwriter. On the sets of *Tamasha*, Kamal was introduced to Kumari. He was then married twice, and had three children from his marriages.

In 1951 Amrohi offered Meena Kumari a lead role in his film *Anarkali*. On May 21, 1951, she was involved in a car accident. *Anarkali* was shelved. She was admitted to hospital for an injury to her left hand. This left her with a bandaged left little finger, which she covered with a dupatta or her saree during shoots.

During her time in hospital Amrohi regularly visited her. They gradually fell in love, and Meena Kumari, at age 18, decided to marry Amrohi, who was 15 years older. They had a secret marriage in February 1952, attended by her younger

sister Madhu.

After months, when word of the marriage was leaked, Meena Kumari's father recommended a divorce. However, she disagreed, but stayed in her father's house. Amrohi decided to cast her, now his wife, in a film called *Daaera* in 1953. Her father disapproved, at which point Meena Kumari left her father's house, and went to live with Amrohi at his residence.

After their marriage, Amrohi allowed Kumari to continue her acting career on certain conditions. She agreed, but with passing time she kept breaking them.

She became one of the best actresses in Bollywood. Amrohi became possessive of Meena Kumari. There were rumours of domestic violence. Amrohi called them fake. However the couple were divorced in 1964.

The strict conditions of their marriage affected Meena Kumari's health. She had chronic insomnia. Upon her doctor's advice, she started taking a small peg of brandy as a sleeping pill alternative. That

turned into heavy drinking after separation from her husband in 1964. Her physical health also deteriorated. She consulted doctors in London and Switzerland.

In 1958 she was touched by the role she played as a blind woman in the film *Sahara*. She decided to start a trust for visually impaired people. Her friend Nargis and another person fulfilled her dream by starting the Meena Kumari Charitable Trust. In October 1973 the MK memorial for the Blind was established.

She appeared in TV commercials for various brands like Zaveri Jewellers and Lux soap.

She also wrote as a poet under the pen name Naaz. In 1971 her poems were released in an album named *I Write, I Recite* by the music label LP Vinyl Record. She recited the poems in the music album. The album was released in September 19, 2006.

Meera Kumari The Poet: A Life Beyond Cinema, a collection of her poetry translated by academician-writer Noorul Hasan and published by Roli Books, has poems in which the late actress talked about love, loneliness, wishes, illusion, a window of dreams, silence, and innocence.

Hasan says Meena Kumari had a way of her own with the pen as well. What struck the reader about the poems was their amazing immediacy, their power to take you in without any fuss and bother. Plain as conversation, Meena Kumari's poems strike an uncanny intimacy or rapport with the reader.

According to an article on the website *scroll.in*, the poems of India's original tragic queen Meena Kumari, the harsh light that Bollywood casts, and the troubles that dogged the great actress resulted in her haunting poetry.

Translated by Noorul Hasan in 2014, here is one of her poems:

Zindagi Yeh Hai.
Subh se sha'm talak.
Doosro'n ke liye kuch karna hai.
Jisme'n khud apna koi naksh nahin.
Rang us paikare-tasweer hi mein bharna hai.
Zindagi kya hai, kabhi sochne lagta hai yeh zehan.
Aur phir rooh pe cha jate hain
Dard ke saye, udasi ka dhuhan, dukh ki ghata.
Dil mein rah-rah ke khayal a'ta hai.
Zindagi yeh hai to phir maut kise kahte hain?
Pyar ik khwab tha, is khwab ki ta'bir na pooch.
Kya mili jurme-wafa ki hame'n ta'zir na pooch.

This is Life
From morning to night.
We must do things for others.
That living picture must be vivified.
In which there is no trace of one's self.
What is life, the mind sometimes wonders.
And then the soul is
Overcast by shadows of grief. The smoke of despondency.
Clouds of agony.
My heart wonders incessantly.
If this is life, what is it that they call death?
Love was a dream. Ask not about the fate of this dream.
Ask not about the punishment I received for the crime of loyalty.





Zeenat Aman's Instagram photo with herself and figurines of elephants

Zeenat Aman laments animals on set

Veteran actress Zeenat Aman last week reached out to Bollywood celebrities requesting that they not bring animals to filming locations. The message was delivered via her *Instagram* account.

In her post, she recalled being horrified to see an elephant suffering on a set. Also, in the post she shared her deep love for wildlife, and included a photo of herself holding figurines of elephants.

Another photo in the post showed a tear sheet from a 1974 newspaper with herself and Dev Anand attending an animal welfare event.

In the *Instagram* post, she lamented seeing the old elephant in pain during a movie shoot, and mused on the moral ramifications.

"I was brought to tears recently when I arrived on set to find an elderly, domestic elephant on the scene. She was standing on the burning asphalt, bejewelled and bedecked and she stayed there all day as the cameras rolled. I was bound by contract to do my job, but I am absolutely guilt-ridden that such a majestic animal suffered for my job and your entertainment," she stated.

Aman noted, "The plight of animals, both domestic and wild, has always distressed me. I do not believe that any wild animal belongs

in captivity, especially not an animal as perceptive, intelligent, and emotional as an elephant. From the little I have learnt about this species, I know that they are highly sentient, social animals. To keep them in captivity is to willingly support cruelty."

She also urged colleagues in the industry to refrain from bringing animals onto filming locations.

"It is my sincere and urgent appeal to my colleagues and compatriots in the film industry to avoid bringing wild animals onto set at all costs. We are so lucky that India hosts the majority of the Asian elephant population in the world, and that this species is our National Heritage Animal. We are also blessed to have numerous organisations in India that work toward the welfare and conservation of this incredible animal. I am sharing a few resources from such organisations on my stories. I will be elated if you peruse them," she wrote.

She added, "My concern for wildlife is an old story... but it is only now that I am in a position to make more concerted appeals on these matters."

On the work front, Zeenat Aman will be next seen in the film *Bun Tikki*, which also features Abhay Deol and Shabana Azmi.

A dance scene from *Jai Ho* in *Slumdog Millionaire*

Sukhwinder gets credit for composing *Jai Ho*

It was revealed recently that Oscar-winning composer A.R. Rahman had singer Sukhwinder compose *Jai Ho* from *Slumdog Millionaire*.

The revelation came last month from Rahman's former associate and filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma.

Rahman won a Grammy for *Jai Ho*, which was featured in Danny Boyle's 2008 British film *Slumdog Millionaire*.

In an interview with Film Companion, Ram Gopal Varma revealed how *Jai Ho* came to be. As he said, *Jai Ho* was initially composed for Subhash Ghai's 2008 film *Yuvvraaj*, starring Salman Khan and Katrina Kaif.

However, the veteran filmmaker decided the song did not fit into the film's soundscape. Rahman then used it for *Slumdog Millionaire*, which was released in the same year.

Ram Gopal Varma further revealed that Rahman actually had Sukhwinder compose the tune. Since Rahman was away in London, and Subhash Ghai was waiting for him to deliver

the album as he had already started filming, help was sought from long-time collaborator Sukhwinder, who then composed the track.

However, when Subhash Ghai found out that not Rahman, but Sukhwinder had composed the tune, he then confronted Rahman.

As Ram Gopal Varma reported, "Subhash Ghai blew up the thing. He told Rahman, 'I am paying you crores of rupees as my music director and you are making Sukhwinder make a tune for me. You have the guts to say that in front of me? If I want Sukhwinder, I'll sign him. Who are you to take my money and make Sukhwinder do the music for me?'"

And according to Ram Gopal Varma, Rahman responded saying *Jai Ho* was "the greatest I've heard in my life".

He added, "Rahman said, 'Sir, you are paying for my name, not my music. If I am endorsing it, it becomes mine. Now you happen to be here, how do you know where I took Taal music from? My driver could have done it, maybe someone else, whatever else.'"



Bachchan as Ashwatthama motivates Team India ahead of the T20 World Cup

Big B motivates troops ahead of T20 World Cup

Amitabh Bachchan recently stirred excitement among fans and cricket fans by appearing in his role as the immortal Ashwatthama from the upcoming film *Kalki 2898 AD* to announce the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024.

Star Sports recently unveiled a video featuring Amitabh Bachchan embodying his character. In the video, Big B delivers a motivational speech to the Indian cricket team as they prepare for the tournament, which gets underway in the Caribbean and the US next month.

The video opens with Amitabh Bachchan saying, "Yeh mahayudh hai, ab hoja tu taiyaar. [This is a great battle, now prepare yourself]". Amitabh Bachchan's character is seen with long hair and a bearded look; he is also wearing dishevelled clothes, and his face is covered with bandages.

The video features players such as Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, and Jasprit Bumrah gearing up for the challenge ahead. It also shows glimpses of the Indian cricket team in action.

Bachchan then empowers the team with these words, "Ab ban ja veer, buland kar le apni taqdeer, dikha dum, laga dum. [Now, become brave, shape your destiny, show your strength, put in the effort]".

He adds, "Maan mat tu jeet se kam, garv se uthe har matha, ye mahadwand hai, mahayudh, virodhi se tu nazrein mila, ab hoja tu taiyaar. (Do not consider yourself less than victory, let every head rise with pride, this is a great struggle, a great battle, face the opponent eye to eye, now be prepared)."

The video also offers glimpses of iconic cricketing moments featuring former players as Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Harbhajan Singh during India's historic T20 World Cup final victory over Pakistan in 2007.

Kalki 2898 AD features a star-studded cast including Kamal Haasan, Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, and Disha Patani.

The mythology-inspired sci-fi film is directed by Nag Ashwin. Backed by Aswini Dutt, *Kalki 2898 AD* will be released in Tamil, Telugu, and Hindi on June 27.

Jean-Marc Sere-Charlet (left) with Roshan on the set of *War 2*

Roshan welcomes special visitor to set of *War 2*

Hrithik Roshan recently welcomed a special visitor on the set where he is currently shooting *War 2* in Mumbai. The visitor was Jean-Marc Sere-Charlet, Consul General of France.

Photos of the visit appeared on social media, where Roshan was seen with Jean-Marc Sere-Charlet and young visitors from France.

Posting on X, formerly *Twitter*, Jean-Marc Sere-Charlet expressed his admiration for Roshan, and revealed it was his second time visiting the actor's sets.

In the post he said, "I am a great fan of @iHrithik! Twice the pleasure to witness firsthand his dedication & talent, the first time being on the sets of *Vikram Vedha*. I thank him for his hospitality & wish him luck for the new project. Both (France) & (India) share a passion for #cinema #HrithikRoshan."

The photo was shared by Rraj Anand on his *Instagram* account, which read, "Always a

pleasure to meet @hrithikroshan on the sets of his new movies. Looking forward to *War 2* directed by @ayan_mukerji. The Consul General of France @franceinbombay visited the set. We have some very young friends from France who enjoyed the experience too."

Directed by Ayan Mukerji, *War 2* is scheduled to hit theatres on India's Independence Day next year.

The movie is a sequel to the 2019 action thriller film *War*, which starred Hrithik Roshan, Tiger Shroff, and Vani Kapoor.

Discussing the much-anticipated sequel, earlier actor Ashutosh Rana, who also appeared in *War*, and in Shah Rukh Khan's *Pathaan*, told ANI, "We are going to start soon. I hope the way everyone loved *War* and *Pathaan* they will also like *War 2*. This is a spy universe, and in it the missions themselves are thrilling, so the audience will enjoy it."

War was directed by Siddharth Anand,

IPL 2024 POINTS TABLE
(AS OF MAY 7-2024)

TEAM ABBREVIATIONS
RR (Rajasthan Royals); KKR (Kolkata Knight Riders); LSG (Lucknow Super Giants); SRH (Sunrisers Hyderabad); CSK (Chennai Super Kings); DC (Delhi Capitals); RCB (Royal Challengers Bengaluru); PK (Punjab Kings); GT (Gujarat Titans); MI (Mumbai Indians).

TEAM	M	W	L	T	N/R	PT	NRR
KKR	11	8	3	0	0	16	1.453
RR	11	8	3	0	0	16	0.476
CSK	11	6	5	0	0	12	0.700
SRH	11	6	5	0	0	12	-0.065
DC	12	6	6	0	0	12	-0.316
LSG	11	6	5	0	0	12	-0.371
RCB	11	4	7	0	0	8	-0.049
PK	11	4	7	0	0	8	-0.187
MI	12	4	8	0	0	8	-0.212
GT	11	4	7	0	0	8	-1.320

IPL 2024
SCHEDULE OF MATCHES REMAINING
(ALL TIMES - GMT)

57th Match (N) played at Hyderabad
Wed, 08 May 2024: SRH vs LSG (2:00 pm)

58th Match (N) played at Dharamsala
Thu, 09 May 2024: PK vs RCB (2:00 pm)

59th Match (N) played at Ahmedabad
Fri, 10 May 2024: GT vs CSK (2:00 pm)

60th Match (N) played at Eden Gardens
Sat, 11 May 2024 KKR vs MI (2:00 pm)

61st Match (D/N) played at Chennai
Sun, 12 May 2024; CSK vs RR (10:00 am)

62nd Match (N) played at Bengaluru
Sun, 12 May 2024; RCB vs DC (2:00 pm)

63rd Match (N) played at Ahmedabad
Mon, 13 May 2024: GT vs KKR (2:00 pm)

64th Match (N) played at Delhi
Tue, 14 May 2024; DC vs LSG (2:00 pm)

65th Match (N) played at Guwahati
Wed, 15 May 2024; RR vs PK (2:00 pm)

66th Match (N) played at Hyderabad
Thu, 16 May 2024; SRH vs GT (2:00 pm)

67th Match (N) played at Wankhede
Fri, 17 May 2024; MI vs LSG (2:00 pm)

68th Match (N) played at Bengaluru
Sat, 18 May 2024; RCB vs CSK (2:00 pm)

69th Match (D/N) played at Hyderabad
Sun, 19 May 2024; SRH vs PK (10:00 am)

70th Match (N) played at Guwahati
Sun, 19 May 2024; RR vs KKR (2:00 pm)

Qualifier 1 (N) played at Ahmedabad
Tue, 21 May 2024; TBA vs TBA (2:00 pm)

Eliminator (N) played at Ahmedabad
Wed, 22 May 2024; TBA vs TBA (2:00 pm)

Qualifier 2 (N) played at Chennai
Fri, 24 May 2024; TBA vs TBA (2:00 pm)

Final (N) played at Chennai
Sun, 26 May 2024; TBA vs TBA

Sharma looks to spin for T20, keeps firm grip on why

India's selectors have paid attention to a request by Rohit Sharma and picked four spinners in the 15-man line-up for the 2024 T20 World Cup, which is being played in the Caribbean and the US next month.

The selections were made on the call by Sharma, who has since indicated he would rather keep a firm grip on the ball and not reveal his reasons for his choice.

"I don't want to go too much into detail on it. I'm sure opposition captains are listening," Rohit told the media in Mumbai last week.

The conversation was also reported online on cricket websites, among them *ESPNcricinfo*.

However, Rohit asserted that he "definitely wanted four spinners".

As he stated, "We've played a lot of cricket [in the Caribbean]. We know what the conditions are like. With morning starts at 10:00-10.30 a.m., there is a little bit of technical aspect involved in this."

For the tournament, India have picked left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav, leg spinner Yuzvendra Chahal, and left-arm spin all-rounders Ravindra Jadeja and Axar Patel in their provisional 15.

These choices mean there is only room left on the team for three specialist fast bowlers, with no seat on the aircraft for Rinku Singh.



Rohit Sharma

Chahal was not a part of India's T20I squads for their two most recent series – in South Africa in December, and against Afghanistan at home in January, and was selected after his impressive form in IPL 2024.

"Maybe when I do the first press conference [upon landing in the Caribbean], I'll give more details," Rohit said about his call for four spinners.

"The reason for four spinners is this, which I'm not going to say in public. But I wanted four spinners for sure. With two of the spinners being all-rounders who can bat, Axar and

Jadeja, and two attacking spinners, Kuldeep and Chahal, it gives you the balance in the spin department. Based on the team composition of the opposition we can decide what we want to play with."

Meanwhile, chief selector Ajit Agarkar has said Singh's exclusion was the "toughest" decision India's selectors had to make while picking the T20 World Cup squad.

"[Singh] has done nothing wrong, nor has Shubman Gill. It's just the combinations. We're not sure of the conditions we'll get [in US], and we wanted to have enough [bowling] options," Agarkar stated.

He added, "We had a couple of wrist spinners to give Rohit more options. I don't think it's anything to do with Rinku. It's not his fault that he missed out; it's more the 15 we felt we needed, with two keepers who are both terrific batters, we will have an extra batter sitting out."

Also, "We got to have another bowling option, but he is still one of the traveling substitutes. That's how close he was, but we can only take 15."

Singh has played 15 T20Is for India, scoring 356 runs at a strike rate of 176.23.

However, he had a quiet IPL 2024, scoring only 123 runs off 82 balls in eight innings at a strike rate of 150.

West Indies selectors pick 5 Guyana players for T20

Five top Guyanese cricketers are in the West Indies squad for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup. The tournament will be played from June 1 to June 29 in the Caribbean and in the US.

The players are Shimron Hetmyer, Shamar Joseph, Romario Shepherd, Gudakesh Motie, and Sherfane Rutherford.

Announcement of the line-up was made by Chairman of Selectors Desmond Haynes, and Head Coach Daren Sammy in Barbados late last week.

At the press conference, Haynes expressed confidence with their choices, stating that the team would reign supreme at the World Cup.

"I am very excited! This is a very good time in West Indies Cricket, and I believe that you know we've got a team that could win this World Cup. I feel damn good about this! I feel that we can win this World Cup. I am making it very clear to everybody that whatever team that you hear us put out today, that team we feel is going to win the World Cup," Haynes said.

And speaking to reporters, Sammy said, "Every country that plays... would enjoy play-

ing at home. I wouldn't say it is an advantage, but it is always good to see a full house of fans coming out to support you, operating as a 12th man on that pitch."

He added, "You know, in this age with all the data collection, I don't think there is so much of an advantage in playing at home. But what we know is that we understand our conditions, and playing in front of a crowd that brings that energy should motivate and inspire my players some more."

West Indies are in Group C, along with Papua New Guinea, Uganda, New Zealand, and Afghanistan. Their first two games will

be contested at the Guyana National Stadium at Providence, East Bank Demerara against PNG on June 2, and against Uganda on June 8. They then play New Zealand at the Brian Lara Stadium in Trinidad on June 12, before their last group game against Afghanistan on June 17 in St Lucia.

The line-up: Rovman Powell (captain); Alzarri Joseph (vice captain); Brandon King; Johnson Charles; Shai Hope; Nicholas Pooran; Sherfane Rutherford; Shimron Hetmyer; Andre Russell; Romario Shepherd; Jason Holder; Gudakesh Motie; Akeal Hosein; Roston Chase; and Shamar Joseph.

Bangladesh's T20 preparation not ideal

Preparations by Bangladesh for the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup are far from "ideal", with the team are not practicing against alpha nations, all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan told the media in Dhaka last week.

His statement was reported by the international media and cricketing websites, among them *Cricbuzz* and *ESPNcricinfo*.

Right now Bangladesh are preparing for the global event with an ongoing five-match T20I series against Zimbabwe. Afterwards, the team is scheduled to take on the US in a three-match series following conclusion of the home series.

In the previous edition of the T20 World Cup in 2022, Bangladesh played a tri-nation series involving New Zealand and Pakistan as part of their preparation. And despite being unable to win any games in the series, the team remained dogged and put up an admirable fight, *Cricbuzz* reported.

As a likely result of the top-notch exposure, Bangladesh earned their first win in the main phase of the tournament after beating

Netherlands by nine runs in their opening game of the campaign.

Bangladesh then beat Zimbabwe by three runs to earn their second win in the main phase, and were on course to reach the semi-final, but were eventually scuttled by Pakistan.



Shakib Al Hasan

"It will be wrong if we think about the World Cup by considering our performance against Zimbabwe and US. World Cup will be played in a different place, and the more we can handle pressure, chances will be higher of doing well," Shakib said.

He added, "In the last World Cup we performed reasonably, and though we did not do extremely well, no one will say we did bad."

He also admitted that one "big reason behind playing against US" was to become adapted to their conditions.

"Very few have the experience of playing... in Florida [in 2018], and we will get accustomed with the conditions by playing this series, but at the same time I would say this is not ideal (preparation-wise)," he maintained.

Toronto Police Cricket Club

Proudly Hosts

Guyana Consulate Cricket Team

In celebration of Guyana Independence Day

Event Details

Date: Saturday, May 25, 2024

Time: 12pm

Venue: The Percy Cummins Cricket Ground located at 117 White Heather Blvd, Scarborough (Major Intersection: McNicoll Ave and White Heather Blvd)

Itinerary

12pm: Flag raising ceremony

12:30pm: 20 Overs Cricket Match

Contact

Raj Singh
President, TPCC
Cell: 647-268-1107
Email: raj4054singh@gmail.com

Shiv Persaud
Guyana Consulate - Cricket
Cell: 647-291-4792
Email: shiv_persaud@hotmail.com



India's women team celebrates a well-earned victory

India women to host SA in June-July

India will host South Africa for a multi-format women's tour come June and July, the cricket website ESPNcricinfo reported earlier this week.

According to the website, Bengaluru will host the white-ball leg, beginning with three ODIs from June 16, while Chennai will host the one-off Test, which will start on June 28.

The three T20Is will be played after the Test, with a view to ensuring continuity in formats ahead of the T20 World Cup.

This tournament will be played in Bangladesh in September-October. The ODIs will be played on June 16, June 19, and on June 23, while the T20Is will take place on July 5, July 7, and on July 9.

The six white-ball games were part of the ICC's women's Future Tours Programme. Both series, along with a visit from New Zealand, were supposed to be played between July and September last year, but were postponed due to the men's ODI World Cup and other logistics.

The one-off Test was not part of the FTP. It was a late addition, as part of Cricket South Africa the Board of Control for Cricket in India seeking to promote women's Tests.

This will be the third Test India to be played in seven months, having met England and Australia in December. Those two Tests came on the back of a significant development aimed at taking the "first step towards tackling discrimination", with the BCCI announcing equal match fees for centrally contracted male and female cricketers.

Meanwhile, South Africa last played a four-day game in February in Perth, where they lost to Australia by an innings and 284 runs. The team had previously broken an eight-year hiatus from the format when they played in England in June 2022.

The tour is also a significant step in the BCCI's aim to take women's cricket to newer centres. For the past few years, the BCCI has preferred to host teams across multiple venues in Mumbai citing logistical reasons. They broke away from that norm with the WPL earlier this year, with games held in Bengaluru and Delhi.

The three ODIs are part of the ICC Women's Championship, which will give direct qualifications to the top four teams, apart from the hosts, for the 2025 ODI World Cup, to be held in India. As ESPNcricinfo reported, South Africa are currently second on that table.

Afghanistan women remain in limbo

It remains a challenge for the Afghanistan Cricket Board to develop women's cricket, and unless there is some change to the situation, the status quo will remain, ICC Chief Geoff Allardice said earlier this week.

Allardice's statement was reported in the cricket website Cricbuzz. He spoke to the media earlier this week in Dhaka, with his statements reported by international media outlets. The media event was held to discuss the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup tournament.

"I think at the moment, the Afghanistan Cricket Board, who is our member, is unable to fill the team," Allardice stated.

He added, "Until something changes, that will remain the situation. It isn't that the [ACB] wasn't developing women's cricket previously; it is just that they are not able to at the moment."

Afghanistan is currently the only full member nation without a women's team. As a result of this lack, the ACB could not field a team for the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

For the tournament, the teams are divided into two groups of five each, with Group A including Australia, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Qualifier 1. Group B has South Africa, England, West Indies, Bangladesh, and Qualifier 2.

In March 2024, Cricket Australia postponed their scheduled T20I series against Afghanistan citing no improvements in the Taliban's

position on women. The three-match series was scheduled to be held in August 2024 in the UAE.

Previously, Australia had cancelled an historic one-off Test against Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover, and had also withdrawn from the ODI series last year.

Allardice added that the ICC is eyeing to expand women's cricket by increasing the number of teams in the global tournaments, starting with the next ICC Women's World Cup, which is being played by ten teams.

"Expanding the opportunities in a tournament, so I know the event that is coming up here in October is a ten-team event. The next version of the women's T20 World Cup will be a 12-team event, and there will be discussions on whether that will expand further," he stated.

He added, "Even the ICC Women's Championship is now being expanded to a ten-team event, so the two teams in Bangladesh and Ireland who are participating for the first time are getting better exposure to better opponents, and getting comfortable with some of the best players in the world."

Allardice stated these moves will take time, as the ICC creates a structure through which teams can compete.

"If you look at the associate member cricket over the last few years, there have been as many women's T20 internationals played amongst associate members as there have been for men. So the framework to compete is there," he said.



Geoff Allardice

Cricket Schedule

(Matches ALL TIMES LOCAL)

Wednesday May 8, 2024
Mongolia tour of Japan, 2024
Japan vs Mongolia, 2nd T20I, Sano International Cricket Ground, Sano, Kanto, 10:00 AM

Thursday May 9, 2024
Mongolia tour of Japan, 2024
Japan vs Mongolia, 3rd T20I, Sano International Cricket Ground, Sano, Kanto, 10:00 AM

Friday May 10, 2024
Zimbabwe tour of Bangladesh, 2024
Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe, 4th T20I, Shere Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka, 6:00 PM

Pakistan tour of Ireland, 2024
Ireland vs Pakistan, 1st T20I, Clontarf Cricket Club Ground, Dublin, 3:00 PM

Saturday May 11, 2024
Mongolia tour of Japan, 2024
Japan vs Mongolia, 4th T20I, Sano International Cricket Ground, Sano, Kanto, 10:00 AM

Sunday May 12, 2024
Zimbabwe tour of Bangladesh, 2024
Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe, 5th T20I, Shere Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka, 10:00 AM

Pakistan tour of Ireland, 2024
Ireland vs Pakistan, 2nd T20I, Clontarf Cricket Club Ground, Dublin, 3:00 PM

Mongolia tour of Japan, 2024
Japan vs Mongolia, 5th T20I, Sano International Cricket Ground, Sano, Kanto, 10:00 AM

Tuesday May 14, 2024
Pakistan tour of Ireland, 2024
Ireland vs Pakistan, 3rd T20I, Clontarf Cricket Club Ground, Dublin, 3:00 PM

Saturday May 18, 2024
Netherlands T20I Tri-Series, 2024
Netherlands vs Scot., 1st T20I, VRA Cricket Ground, Amstelveen, 1:30 PM

Sunday May 19, 2024
Netherlands T20I Tri-Series, 2024
Ireland vs Neth., 2nd T20I, VRA Cricket Ground, Amstelveen, 12:30 PM

Monday May 20, 2024
Netherlands T20I Tri-Series, 2024
Ireland vs Scotland, 3rd T20I, VRA Cricket Ground, Amstelveen, 1:30 PM

Tuesday May 21, 2024
Bangladesh tour of the US, 2024
US vs Ban., 1st T20I, Prairie View Cricket Complex, Houston, 7:30 PM

Wednesday May 22, 2024
Pakistan tour of England, 2024
England vs Pakistan, 1st T20I, Headingley, Leeds, 6:30 PM

Netherlands T20I Tri-Series, 2024
Scotland vs Netherlands, 4th T20I, VRA Cricket Ground, Amstelveen, 1:30 PM

Thursday May 23, 2024
Bangladesh tour of the US, 2024
US vs Ban., 2nd T20I, Prairie View Cricket Complex, Houston, 7:30 PM

Netherlands T20I Tri-Series, 2024
Ireland vs Scotland, 5th T20I, VRA Cricket Ground, Amstelveen, 7:30 AM.

THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO INVITES YOU TO:

TRINFEST INDEPENDENCE CRICKET MATCH
CELEBRATING 62 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

TRINBAGO EAST XI VS TRINBAGO WEST XI

SATURDAY, AUGUST 24TH, 2024
ANDREW MCCANDLESS PARK, BRAMPTON
11:00 A.M. TO 10:00 P.M.

LIVE DJ
TASSA BAND
RIDDIM SECTION
STEELPAN
CURRY DUCK COMPETITION
ALL FOURS COMPETITION
BEST DRESSED TRINI (MALE AND FEMALE)

450 ELBERN MARKELL DR, BRAMPTON, ON L6X 5L3

Special thanks to our sponsors:

Caribbean Airlines, TOTO, MOTO COURIER SERVICES, Drupatis, VISHNU'S DOUBLES & ROTI SHOP



GTA LEADERS REALTY INC., BROKERAGE

4300 Steeles Avenue West, Suite 26
Vaughan ON, L4L 4C2

Tel: 416-241-3337 Fax: 416-987-0056

www.teamgtahomes.com
gtaleaders@gmail.com

~ RESIDENTIAL · COMMERCIAL · INDUSTRIAL · INVESTMENT ~



Abdool Saif Saheed
Sales Representative
647-894-0764



Abdool Saheed
Broker of Record/Owner
416-731-7527



Ralford Chatrie
Sales Representative
416-806-1803



Shawn Ambedkar
Broker
416-580-9189

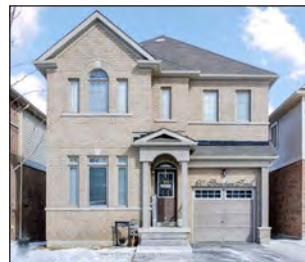
Mississauga For Sale \$740,000

Location! Location!
Location! Welcome to this beautifully well-kept 3 bedroom townhouse in the highly sought after neighbourhood of Malton. Home features large living and good-sized dining room. Large kitchen with stainless steel appliances & granite countertops. Walkout to your fully-fenced private backyard. Upstairs features 3 good-sized bedrooms and updated bathroom. Lower level features recreation room with additional storage area and walkout to your private garage. Close proximity to highways, public transit, Go, Westwood Mall, schools, library, airport, park, and community centre.



Beeton For Sale \$1,139,000

Location! Location!
Location! Welcome to this lovely 4 bedroom, full brick home. This premium lot boasts a beautiful walk-out with patio, brand new glass façade deck above, both outdoor spaces providing an unobstructed view of the Beeton Creek. Hardwood throughout, freshly upgraded oak stairs with iron pickets, new light fixtures, open-concept kitchen with custom backsplash, quartz counters & breakfast bar, rough-in for central vac as well as three piece basement rough-in & an extended driveway.



Pickering Condo For Rent \$2,800

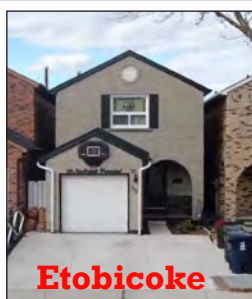
Location! Location! Location! Step into the world of modern elegance with this exquisite 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom home for lease in one of Pickering's new vibrant neighbourhoods. This unit boasts an updated, open-concept living space, perfect for entertaining and relaxation. The kitchen shines with stainless steel appliances and sleek design. Unit features beautiful wraparound balcony with extravagant views. Nestled in a desirable neighbourhood, this home provides unparalleled access to local schools, shopping, and entertainment options. The proximity to Pickering GO Station makes commuting a breeze, while Farm Boy and Pickering Town Centre are just a short walk away. Highway 401 access further enhances your connectivity to the greater Toronto area. Seize the opportunity to be part of this vibrant community. This brand-new unit is more than just a home; it's a gateway to a lifestyle of convenience, luxury, and charm! Don't miss out!!



For Sale \$999,900

Family Friendly
Neighbourhood,
Walking
Distance
To Schools
& Parks.

**SOLD
\$350,100
OVER
ASKING
PRICE**



Etobicoke

Ajax For Sale \$949,000

Location! Location! Location!
Welcome to this BRAND NEW, NEVER LIVED IN modern 3 story 3 bedroom 3 bathroom townhouse in a highly sought-after neighbourhood in Ajax. The main floor beckons with its open-concept design, guiding you to a spacious second floor featuring a generous kitchen and breakfast area that overlooks the combined living and dining room. This seamlessly flows to a walk-out balcony, the third floor features 2 adequately-sized bedrooms with a large primary bedroom with 4 piece ensuite.



Richmond & Jarvis Downtown Toronto Condo For Sale \$598,990

Location! Location! Location!
Bright & spacious 1 bed 1 bath corner suite located in the rarely available prestigious French quarters. The residence features a functional open concept layout boasting 9' ceilings. The spacious living room seamlessly transitions to a breathtaking private balcony overlooking quiet courtyard. Building features world class amenities; spectacular roof top garden with BBQ, gym, party room, lounge/library suites. Steps from the St Lawrence Market, distillery, and financial district.




Omni Insurance
& Investment Solutions Inc.

**FOR ALL YOUR
INSURANCE NEEDS**

- LIFE • MORTGAGE
- DISABILITY
- TRAVEL • VISITOR
- CRITICAL ILLNESS
- SUPER VISA
- RESP & RRSP
- INVESTMENT

**If you fail to plan, then
you're planning to fail.**

Abdool Saheed
Financial Advisor
Cell: 416-731-7527

CityPointe Heights starting @ High 400s

Located at The Gore Road and Queen St E., CityPointe Heights is a new condominium community connected to three of the GTA's most beloved cities. Your favourite - and soon-to-be favourite - Brampton, Toronto, and Vaughan locations are very close to home. Discover two of the fastest growing cities in the Greater Toronto Area, and why with each passing year, they have more to offer.



Essa For Lease \$2,995

Beautiful 4 bedrooms, 4 washrooms, 2 storey home located in the quiet neighbourhood of Angus. Minutes to Barrie. Open concept main floor w/ walkout to fenced backyard. Finished basement with rec room, full washroom & laundry area. Large driveway w/ 4 parking spots. Walking distance to trails & parks. Stainless steel apps, recently upgraded w/ pot-lights & led lighting & much more. All light fixtures, fridge, stove, dishwasher, washer & dryer, central air-conditioning, hot water tank, furnace, & garage door opener.



LEASED

**SOLD FOR \$160K
OVER ASKING!**

\$949,000

A Beautiful Open Concept Renovation - 3 bedroom, 4 washrooms, Detached Home in York. Huge Backyard. Conveniently Located Within Walking Distance To amenities and schools. Extremely Close Proximity to Public Transit! A Great Place to Call Home.

Narrative Condos

**STARTING
FROM LOW \$300s**

It all begins at 7437 Kingston Road - a unique project set against the backdrop of both nature and the city. Located on Kingston Road, adjacent to Rouge and Port Union, The Narrative offers the perfect balance of nearby green space, a diverse and welcoming community, nearby amenities, and easy access to the heart of Toronto via the 401.


TAB
ACCOUNTING
& FINANCIAL
SERVICES INC.

647-852-7243
**MORTGAGE
1st, 2nd, & Refinance
PROPOSAL/
BANKRUPTCY**

Make One Small Monthly
Payment For All Your Debts
INCOME TAX SERVICES
Personal • Business
Business Registration
HST • Payroll • WSIB

Abdool Saheed
C: 416-731-7527
Jason Saheed
C: 647-293-8397