

CHANGE NEWSLETTER



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Sheila Holder Memorial Prize Handed Over



Husband of the Late Sheila Holder and former Minister of Agriculture Noel Holder presents a state of the art tablet to Rohit Gulchand. Also present at the simple ceremony were former Ministers Raphael Trotman, Cathy Hughes, Valerie Garrido-Lowe and MP Ricky Ramsaroop.

Sheila Holder, the “mother” of the Alliance For Change, passed away, after a brief illness, on November 20, 2011. Nine years, later, the memory of her is still green and the pain of her loss still as poignant. Not a day goes by without someone saying, “What would Sheila have said or done in this situation” or another might remark, “Sheila would never have accepted this nonsense”.

She was a pragmatist and a woman of action who loved to quote the ancient philosopher Aristotle, in saying, “nature abhors a vacuum”. This was one of her famous calls to action when things were in a lull, or there was uncertainty about which direction to go. Those words we remember every day, and in every situation of difficulty or uncertainty.

This year, we are all about filling vacuums by ensuring that the AFC continues the tradition of youth

empowerment through gifting students electronic tablets to assist with their research and learning, and especially, in the midst of Covid-19 when virtual learning has become the new normal.

On Friday, November 20, 2020, the AFC, once again recognised Sheila's contribution to Guyana in general, and the party in particular, by having a simple handing-over ceremony to Ronit Gulchand, of a state of the art tablet. Ronit, an outstanding student from Cove & John on the East Coast of Demerara, is heading to the Bishop's High School, which coincidentally, is Sheila's Alma Mater.

Sheila would have been proud that this young man was chosen to follow in her sterling tradition, and happy that her spouse, Noel Holder, former Minister of Agriculture, was on hand to personally make the presentation.

**SATURDAY
12TH
DECEMBER**

**CAR WASH
and
BARBECUE**

CAR WASH \$800 **BARBECUE \$1000**

678-7581 OR 671-0288

CENTRE FOR CHANGE
Railway Embankment, Kitty, Georgetown

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IF NOT PLEASE CALL
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-EDITORIAL- STATUS ON PETITIONS

The team of lawyers representing the Petitioners in the two Elections Petitions, namely, 88 and 99 of 2020, are confident that these Petitions will be ordered to move into the hearing/trial phase on their merits at the next date, 18th January 2021. What presently are up for determination at the preliminary phase have to do with two issues raised by Chief Justice George.

Firstly, whether David Granger is a proper Respondent in the Petitions. When the Petitioners filed their respective cases, Granger was made the Second Respondent, he being the Representative of the List of APNU/AFC. This was out of an abundance of caution by the Petitioners' Attorneys who thought it wise that Granger be so made a Respondent.

The Learned CJ, however, raised an important point arising out of section 4 (2) of the Validity of Elections Law. This section provides for who should be Respondents in an Elections Petition. Only those List Representatives whose interests and contentions collide with the Petitioners' must be made Respondents. The Petitioners were electors who are contending that the March 2nd 2020 Elections were not lawfully nor constitutionally held, that very many irregularities occurred and that many violations of procedures took place which made it neither lawful nor credible. Quite rightly, these are the exact things which Granger want the Court to rule on. So exactly what the Petitioners are claiming and contending, are the same things Granger would claim and contend. That being so, his interests do not collide in any way with the Petitioners' interests in the Petitions.

For these reasons, the Petitioners' lawyers agreed (and submitted as such) that Granger was not a proper Respondent. That is, that he should not have been sued, nor served with the proceedings. David Granger also agreed with this

proposition; and, under another section of the same Act, notified the Court in writing that he will not oppose the Petitions but he will stand down as a Respondent. This is the proper thing to do and he has done so. Surprisingly, and rather paradoxically, the lawyers for Jagdeo and the intervenor, the AG, want Granger to remain a Respondent. The AG and Jagdeo are proper Respondents because they will have to claim contrary to what the Petitioners are claiming, they will have to disprove that the Elections did not have irregularities, or were unlawfully conducted. Their interests are in direct opposition to the Petitioners'; unlike that of Granger, whose interests coincide and are not in collision.

To simplify this point, in our adversarial legal order, whenever a party files suit against another there must be a clash of interests and claims and remedies between the two. So for example, when a Prosecutor charges someone for stealing say a lawbook, the Prosecutor's contentions and interests are going to be different from the defendant. The Prosecutor will prove that he stole the book; whereas the Defendant will have to show he did not.

The effect of all this means that Granger was misjoined when he was made a Respondent; and by him now notifying the Court that he will not be a participant, this preliminary matter ends there. The second issue was whether David Granger was served in time with the various documents in the Petition 99. There is no issue of service of a similar kind in Petition 88. So this one, Petition 88, will certainly go on to be heard on the merits.

Proof that a Respondent was served in time is normally done by an Affidavit of Service sworn to by those who actually did the service, whether a team or an individual. The Affidavit of Service concerning Granger did have a slip which indicated that he was served on the 25th September rather than 18th of September.



Hon. Khemraj Ramjattan, MP (Leader)

This was spotted by Chief Justice George. The Petitioners in Petition 99 did a supplemental Affidavit of Service to correct this. In the corrected Affidavit they stated the actual date of Service was 18th September, and there was an explanation as to how the slip up happened. Now this is what is generally done. However, lawyers for Jagdeo and AG Nandlall especially are making a mountain out of a molehill by arguing that Granger was served out of time. They have not brought any Affidavit to the contrary but are relying on the one which had the slip up. Lawyers for the Petitioners in Pet 99 have made it clear that since there was no evidence contradicting that it was the 18th September, then that should be the date of service to Granger. All the other Respondents were properly served on the 18th. Why would service to Granger be out of time? It was a simple mistake as to dates made by the Clerk in his first Affidavit.

But though much is being placed by Jagdeo's lawyers and the AG, lawyers for the Petitioners have indicated that this service issue is wholly unmeritorious, the carpet having been taken from their feet in view of Granger not being a proper Respondent as by the fact that his interest do not collide with the Petitioners, and the fact that he has now effectively withdrawn from the case by Notice that he will not oppose the Petition.

The decision of the Chief Justice is being awaited.

KNOW YOUR REPRESENTATIVE



Councillor Nobrega working for the people

Councillor Bryan Nobrega developed an avid interest in local democracy from being a young person not able to voice his opinions and often being misrepresented. The young father and husband now serves at the Region 4 Regional Democratic Council as a Regional Councillor. Bryan told CHANGE Newsletter, "As a Councillor, my role is to be a voice for the people of the Region and to lend support to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Region through the committees that I am a part of."

He serves on several committees, including: Public Health, Sanitization and Environment, Tourism, and Culture, Youth and Sport.

"There is a lot of work to be completed in very little time with limited resources," Councillor Nobrega stated. "My expectation would be to help in the development of the Region and at the end of it all, my overall expectation of my term serving would be to ensure citizens get the help they so desire, to the best of my ability." On the question of what accomplishments his sights are set on next, he said, "At this point in time, my goal is to serve the region to the best of my ability." CHANGE Newsletter takes this opportunity to wish Councillor Bryan Nobrega well as he continues to serve.

CHANGE NEWSLETTER TEAM



Valarie Garrido-Lowe



Sherod Duncan



Devin Sears

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Our Youth, Our Future



Natasha Wong, aspiring mathematician and politician.

My name is Natasha Wong. I am sixteen years old and I live in a small village called Bartensteyn. Bartensteyn is located three miles west of Parika on the East Bank of the Essequibo River. It has a population of forty people.

My childhood was quiet and simple. If you stand on the bridge at the front of my house you can see the vast Essequibo River directly opposite my house. This makes my home rather special because not many people can say when they look across the road, they can see the mighty Essequibo River flowing in all its glory! Growing up we spent a lot of time playing, bathing and enjoying its shores.

My father is a farmer and my mother a librarian. I spent most of my days in school but also visited the farm. Being the elder sister gives me some number of responsibilities because I am my younger sister's keeper.

I currently attend Zeeburg Secondary School and will sit the CXC examination in 2021, May/June. After I have completed my CXC level of education I intend on furthering my education at the University of Guyana (UG). At the end of all my studying my aim is to become a professional Mathematics teacher and in my older day, a successful politician.

Due to the COVID-19 all the schools had to be closed but work was being sent online. It is a struggle for me to adjust to this new learning technique. School work was sent on WhatsApp in groups that the teachers would have created for specific subject areas. These notes were accessed with a cellphone but documents and zoom classes are still a struggle.

Due to the small amount of storage, the cellphone is not able to read documents nor download a document reader. The zoom classes were not accessed because of storage as well. The phone does not have the storage to accommodate the zoom app, therefore, most of my zoom classes were missed. It was quite a struggle but since the reopening of school I am now finding it a bit easier. However, there are still struggles when it comes to typing and reading documents.

During my years at secondary school, the APNU+AFC Government has been very helpful to my family and my community. They have provided us with text books several times and had even provided us with free transportation to and from school. I strongly support the efforts that the APNU+AFC party had made to help us in our community and I am truly thankful as well.

FOR THE RECORDS



Hon. David Patterson, MP (General Secretary)

I note with sadness and despair that the tenure of Albert Gordon as CEO of Guyana Power and Light (GPL) has come to an end. I would personally like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Albert for his service to GPL and Guyana; the company as well as the country has benefitted from his experience, technical knowledge, and vision.

Thank you Albert!!

A couple of points are noteworthy: -

Albert Gordon was recruited after an extensive international process; advertisements were placed in every CARICOM country as well as international online job sites. The GPL Board serving at the time conducted several interviews before selecting Albert Gordon as the successful candidate. In accepting the job, he stated that he saw GPL as a challenge, that our electricity sector was where Jamaica was some 20 years ago, and having been part of the team that fixed Jamaica's issues, he was confident in doing the same, over time in Guyana.

I remained silent when the announcement was made that Albert was to be replaced as CEO, due to the fact that I did not want to make his final days at the company uncomfortable. However, now that he is on leave until the end of his contract in February 2021, I can no longer remain silent.

The claim made by the Junior Minister that "Albert had indicated to the previous government that after his contract was up, he did not wish to renew" is completely false and contrived to cover the continued hatchet job on productive, qualified and valuable professionals in Guyana.

The statement made by Minister Indar to Stabroek News yesterday when contacted, IS A COMPLETE FALSEHOOD. AS THE PREVIOUS SUBJECT MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR GPL, NO SUCH DISCUSSION EVER OCCURRED.

My discussions with Albert were the exact opposite to that statement. The CEO was eagerly looking forward to finishing the job which he started - increasing the redundancy and protection on the main grid, increasing the generation stock and transitioning GPL to receive renewable energies. Albert and his executive management team were the driving force behind the strategy, planning, and acquisition of the new 46MW generators that the PPP are now seeking to claim as their solution to end the blackout woes of the country.

With his forced departure, the government announced the appointment of Mr. Bharat Dindyal as the new CEO effective immediately, the same CEO, who on December 22, 2014, the then Chairman of GPL, Winton Brassington wrote to the then subject Minister (Samuel Hinds) stating, "The Board considered the matter and does not support a renewal of Mr. Dindyal's contract". In a detailed 29-page report, the Board explained the reasons for their non-support for Mr. Dindyal's continued tenure as GPL's CEO.

The Board's report on Mr. Dindyal's performance as CEO listed six main areas of serious concern...

- 1) Failure to respect the Board;
- 2) Poor management style;
- 3) Frequency of Blackouts;
- 4) Poor project management;
- 5) Poor assets management and maintenance, and
- 6) A lack of focus on customer service.

The report highlighted numerous examples under these six sections where the stewardship of Mr. Dindyal was found to be deficient, problematic and, unacceptable.

After five years and incalculable progress, GPL has reverted to its status quo, giving true meaning to the statement - "The more things change, the more they remain the same".



Pleasantly surprised by Luncheon's return

Dear Editor:

Something must be said for longevity in politics. In their book "We Shall Not Fail: The Inspiring Leadership of Winston Churchill", Celia Sandys and Jonathan Littman note that some leaders stay on far too long, outliving their usefulness.

Comments attributed to the venerable Vice President, Bharat Jagdeo, still reverberate when he spoke on the subject of choosing of PPP leaders, which includes identifying persons who are exhausted and replacing them with those who are vibrant and ready to move the party forward. He said, "If you're spent, there is a place for you but you shift down a bit and allow others to emerge and be new leaders."

Editor, the theory and practice of this principle seem remote one from the other. We were pleasantly surprised by the announcement that Dr. Roger Luncheon would be returning to the Office of the President. Dr. Luncheon's response in 2011 to the court when asked about qualified African Guyanese who could serve at the time as ambassadors, was a callous, "they were none".

Perhaps, we should not have been surprised, but it is disappointing. As from all indications the Ali Administration, in actions and attitudes, is bent on returning the country to pre-2015. We see former Dr. Bheri Ramsarran and Dr. Leslie Ramsammy are back at the Ministry of Health with Dr. Frank Anthony. The nation can judge whether their return has been consequential. We are spellbound by the latest iterations of Pauline Sukai, Jennifer Westford, Ashni Singh, Robeson Benn, Juan Edghill, Kwame McCoy and many others.

There is also Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance, Government Chief Whip Gail Teixeira. Editor, when the Honorable Minister entered Parliament in 1992 I was thirteen. Now a Member of Parliament myself I look to the MP as a senior elder. The Minister's government came to the helm of state promising 'a heavy agenda for the 12th Parliament'. The absence of any agenda, period thus far, begs the question if the Honorable Member, like her other returning colleagues, still has the stamina needed and up to the job.

With longevity comes experience; we value institutional knowledge, no doubt. Yet, a recent Harvard Business Review article is instructive, "Executives are doers; they execute. Knowledge is useless to executives until it has been translated into deeds." We watch on, fingers crossed.

Sherod Avery Duncan, MP.

WE WILL LOOSE A GENERATION IF OUR CHILDREN CANNOT CONTINUE TO LEARN!

- Hon. Cathy Hughes, MP -



Covid-19 has brought the stark divisions between those who “have” and the “Have nots” in Guyana, into the light for all to see.

A few days ago former Minister of Public Telecommunications, Cathy Hughes, spent the morning in Better Hope meeting and encouraging a few families there. She highlighted that in today's Guyana those with access to the internet and a device will be able to continue their children's education. Anyone that doesn't have the money to provide these, knows for sure their child will be part of a lost generation. These children have now missed more that ten months of formal education and this will make it impossible for them to catch up and keep up in later years!



She said “I'm disappointed that after providing government funded internet free to more than 100 high schools, primary schools, at more than 170 ICT hubs in communities, no effort has been made by this Government to utilize this important infrastructure which is vital for learning today. This must not be about politics, there must be no politicking when it comes to our children and learning!”. After making a small donation of a device to a large family she had some words of advice.

To the parents and guardian she admonished them to ensure that their children get up, get dressed and into

a routine ready to spend the morning learning. This is possible with books, government supplied workbooks, past papers in newspapers, tables on the back of a simple exercise book, on TV through the learning channel to name a few - just get them learning!

Special praise was given to retired Teacher Ann who is tutoring a few of the children of Better Hope and Ulita Moore who is the only person in the street with internet and who allows children to come and access for on line learning!



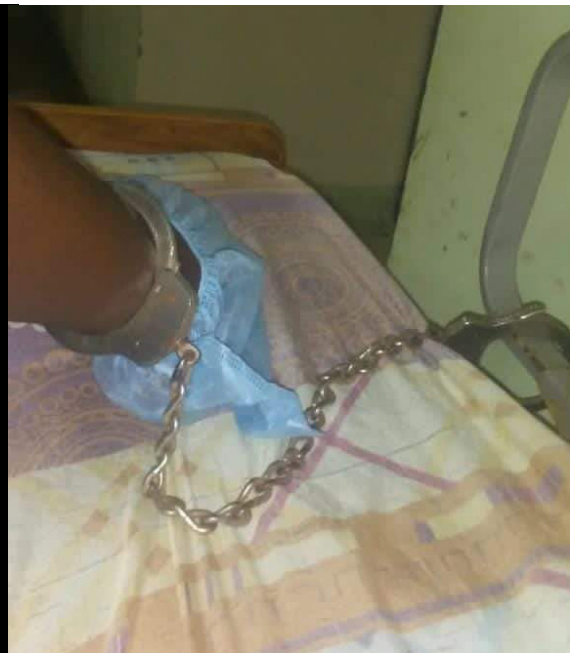
Cathy Hughes promises to approach telecommunication companies and the private sector to assist in providing connectivity and devices to as many of the children across Guyana. Anyone interested in assisting please contact her on WhatsApp 592-623-3057.

COVID-19 (the disease caused by the novel coronavirus)

What you can do



The PPP anti-black agenda destroying Guyana



The controversial PPP administration is fast destroying Guyana's image at home and abroad with its anti-black agenda. Since its installation on August 2, 2020, mere months ago, there has been a clear demonstration of ethno-discrimination against persons of African ancestry ranging from the dismissal of public servants to the unconscionable detention of Haitian nationals, including children.

Where Guyana once held pride of place as being one of the more hospitable nations of the world, we have seen under the PPP administration, attempts to deport 26 Haitians who were recently allowed legal entry into Guyana and permitted six months stay. These attempts by the controversial administration smacks in the face of regional integration and goes against the intent and principles of the Revised Treaty that established the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, (CSME).

The Alliance For Change (AFC) notes the serpentine position of the Attorney General in the matter and wishes to remind the holder of that esteemed office that the CSME was designed to accommodate the aspirations of all the peoples of the region for hassle-free intra-regional travel.

It is the unconquerable Caribbean people, including many Guyanese, who were undaunted by unwelcoming officials, that forced governments of the region to adopt hassle free travel and non-discrimination as principles of the CSME.

The AFC notes the sub-human conditions under which our Haitian brothers and sisters are being held; without running water, more than one person to a bed, forced to provide their own meals in many instances, with no medical attention or counselling. This is especially distressing during the current Covid 19 pandemic. This is unacceptable and an embarrassment

to all Guyanese as we pride ourselves in being exceptional hosts.. it is reminiscent of an era when shackles were enforced.

The Alliance For Change further notes the deafening silence by many, who but a few short months ago, presented themselves as bastions of democracy. We challenge the Heads of Mission of the ABCE countries, the recently installed Chairman of CARICOM and last outgoing Chair and local leaders, to speak out against the injustices being perpetrated on the Haitian nationals whose detention can only be linked to their ethnicity.

The AFC recalls that thousands of documented and undocumented Venezuelans who fled the humanitarian crisis in their country were welcomed into Guyana by the coalition government and every effort made to provide for their well-being. The Alliance For Change calls on the PPP administration to release our Haitian brothers and sisters and stop the persecution of people of African descent.

OUTREACH TO YARROWKABRA AND CIRCUIT VILLE



On Sunday last former Ministers David Patterson and Cathy Hughes along with former MP, Michael Carrington, and executive member, Neilson McKenzie, visited Yarrowkabra and Circuit Ville Communities on the Soesdyke Linden Highway. They met with the NDC councillors, spoke with members of the wider community and inspected the area designated for the establishment of a Farmers Market. These outreaches are all part of the AFC's rebuilding and rebranding efforts which will continue across