



CARICOM TURNS 30

Editor's review

Thirty years after the signing of the Treaty of Chagaramas the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is still going strong.

February 12th 2002 marked the beginning of CARICOM's 30th anniversary celebrations. Ala Kondre Dron from Suriname drummed their way into the entrance of the auditorium to begin the festivities at the UWI's Learning Resource Centre in Trinidad. With hands moving at what may be over 100miles a minute they had the audience at the edge of their seats waiting to jump to their feet and dance. The Suriname ensemble, comprising 14 talented drummers and percussionists, must have offered a sneak preview of the wonders in store at Carifesta VIII, to be hosted by their homeland in August this year.

In the true spirit of CARICOM's calendar of activities which seek to centre on youth and culture, 14year old T&T pannist Mia Gormandy accompanied by her farther on keyboard wooed the crowd receiving praises from the St. Lucian hosts " Fish and Boots", who described them as a true example of the ideal Caribbean family.

Comedian Owen "Blacka" Ellis of Jamaica proved that we have our own "Sinbads" right here in the Caribbean. Bajan Carl Dacosta Padmore, performing the skit "Carrie," amused the audience too.

Guyana was represented by its National Dance Company, who showed their versatility in using modern and ethnic techniques, classical ballet, Kathak and Caribbean dance forms.

David Bereaux and Friends reminded the audience of origins of calypso with their renditions of vintage calypsos in between performances.

By the time Stalin came on stage, the black man was really feeling to party, along with everyone else, and rightly so.



CARIFESTA VIII

**"MANY CULTURES
THE ESSENCE OF TOGETHERNESS
THE SPIRIT OF THE CARIBBEAN"**

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Happenings in BELIZE- by Rafael Castillo (Belize)

A retreat for the implementation and reviewing of the bill for the National Youth council was held on October 25th- 27th 2002 at the San Ignacio Hotel, Cayo District, Belize. All the youth councils from the six districts in Belize gathered at the retreat to review the bill for the implementation of a National Youth council in Belize.

This idea was made public to the youths along with the reason for the establishment of a National Youth council in the country of Belize. All the councils saw the necessity and importance of such a council for the betterment of youth participation and accreditation as the leaders of tomorrow. Many concerns were brought up such as to the political mastermind behind the sudden implementation of this council, because as we are all aware the mandate to the heads of Government for the implementation of a National youth council had been passed for quite some time now and persons were sketchy as to the sudden willingness of the government to pass this bill. Many criticized the validity and sincerity of the government's notion because of the up coming elections right around the corner.

Because as all persons from the Caribbean are aware, elections is the time for pretending to do so as to gets as many votes as possible and it is easy to say who to targets for easy votes but the youths. And because of the elections many are still skeptics to the rational behind the NYC's implementation. However, despite skepticism all agree that the NYC is exactly what we need to make our voices heard. The aims of the workshop were successfully achieved as many suggestions for the bills amendments have been made by the youths to ensure that they can participate and not just represent. And also the workshop allowed for the integration of youths from all corners of the country to come together and share ideas, view, opinions, and suggestions to various issues affecting youths nationally.

As Mr. Nuri Mohammad, Coordinator for the youth for the future initiative stated, "the door of opportunity is open a little way and it is our duty to cease that small opportunity to squeeze or way in before the chance is not longer there" and that is exactly what we the youths of Belize intend to do. The youths of Belize have solemnly vowed to say committed to the fight for youth leadership and Young person's inclusion in our countries development and we see that the way to achieve our dreams is though the develop of your NYC which we plan to run to the best of our ability.

Participating groups included the acting youth director Ms. Dianne Hall, Coordinator of the youth for the future initiative Mr. Nuri Mohammed, and youth development officers from all six districts, and representatives from the British High Commission.

Iwokrama - A Place Of Refuge- by Afira Approo(GUYANA)

The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development is an autonomous, international and multidisciplinary programme comprising of approximately 3,600 sq. km of pristine rain forest. The reserve is located in the heart of Guyana, some 384 km south of the capital city of Georgetown, and sits on the Amazonian Basin and Guiana Shield. In 1989 the area was made available to the world by the then President Mr. H.D. Hoyte, at a Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as a model of how rain forests can be conserved yet utilized in a sustainable manner, for lasting ecological, economic and social benefits to the people of Guyana and the world in general. The Iwokrama International Centre became a legal entity in 1996.



CARICOM Youth Ambassador Programme Delegation getting ready to head out to the IWOKRAMA forest

Iwokrama is governed by an international board of trustees and is built on a the concept of pluralistic partnership approaches among local communities, national agencies and international organisations. The programme focuses on the identification and sustainable utilization of all forest resources, through direct management of the forest.

The forest supports an extremely high level of biological diversity. Surveys have so far identified 1125 species of higher plants, 450 species of birds, 127 species of mammals, 114 species of amphibians and reptiles, and 420 species of fish. The reserve is also home to healthy populations of a number of globally endangered species including jaguars, giant otters, black caimans, harpy eagles, scarlet macaws, jabiroos and arapaimas (reputedly the largest freshwater fish in the world).

The global problems facing tropical rain forest ecosystems are well known. The work of the Centre reflects the growing concern of local, national, regional international communities with regard to the effects of the rapid degradation and fragmentation of the world's tropical forest resources.

The Centre is seeking long-term solutions to the consequences of past conflicts between economic and environmental needs of diverse stakeholders, by demonstrating that tropical forests can provide economic benefits without destroying biodiversity.



CARICOM Youth Ambassador Programme delegation meeting formally with staff of Iwokrama International Centre **bottom right. Ms. Valerie Lalji –Dean CYAP**

The major lines of work incorporated in the centre's management plan includes zoning of the reserve, eco-tourism, timber and NTFP research and harvesting, wildlife surveys, bio-prospecting, ranger training, capacity building for local communities, internship and volunteer programmes, outreach and public awareness campaigns and the mentoring of thirteen community-based wildlife clubs.

The innovative Iwokrama Act protects all traditional activities undertaken by indigenous peoples living in and near the Iwokrama Forest. The Centre recognizes the pivotal role that such communities have played, and will continue to play, in the protection of tropical forest resources, and therefore works closely and in partnership with the 13 Makushi communities associated with the Iwokrama Forest, all of whom are primary stakeholders of the programme.

For more information about the Iwokrama Programme send email to iwokrama@iwokrama.org, wmcallister@iwokrama.org or aapproo@iwokrama.org or check out our website at www.iwokrama.org

BULLETIN BOARD

- ST. Kitts and Nevis youth ambassador increases participation of secondary school students in process of regional integration.
 - “ UNOCD hosted CYAP training programme a huge success” says Dean CYA Corp.
 - Greater technical support pledged by agencies towards the CYAP for establishment of Regional Youth Network.-----Inter-agency meetings Barbados.
 - NO problem working with CYA's says Surinamese National Youth Council Vice-President
 - Trinidad Youth Council says no to a possible War in Iraq.
 - Jamaican CYAP initiatives bearing fruit for underprivileged youth.
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Bitter plant

Sweet Fruit- by Michael Alexander (TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)

Can you think of any plant that is bitter, but which produces sweet fruit? Well, have you ever considered the patient wait for full regional integration as such a plant? Oh dear! Hard to swallow, huh?

But that's what the task of integrating the Caribbean region is all about. It sometimes feels like this wait is not nice at all; especially when you are not sure about the outcome. One dictionary describes patience as "the capacity for calm, self-possessed waiting". Hmm.

I like that definition, though. Note the word "calm". "Integration is an inevitability...". Can we honestly say that we are calm as we wait for regional integration? We get anxious. We want the answers now, so we try to live in the future by worrying today. As we wait, do we have the capacity to be self-possessed? Can we keep our wits together through the delays? Can we relax, let go and let God? Do we dare to wait patiently?

Over the many years, we may have been praying as a region for things to occur more rapidly, and we may have also expected it to be an overnight experience. We cannot get to the top of the mountain by effortlessly vaulting ourselves all the way up. This takes time. Time to take note of our progress. Time to look up, instead of checking and lamenting on the many times we faltered as we climb. The process of integrating our Caribbean requires us to wipe our eyes and keep on climbing. The tears may be bitter now, ah, but the fruit is at the top of the mountain, and you can bet it's going to be sweet.

If things do not work out exactly how, when and where we want them to, it does not mean that we quit climbing. Yes, we may have to rest, but as we rest we are strengthened.

Some wonderful lessons have been learnt, and others will be learnt as we progress towards our goal – when to move, when not to move. Our patience shall endure to the end. It tells us to hold on, hold on, hold on.

We must not quit, give up, or throw up our hands in despair. At the end of the rope, there's going to be the long, coveted prize. We must learn to get out of our own way as we strive. The last thing we want to do is trip over our own two feet.

Always remember the reward our work has to offer. It may be met with disgruntled responses, and like little children we are sometimes rebellious. We may try to speed things up, fall on our behinds, and end up having to do what we resisted in the first place - have patience.

So the plant may be bitter, but let the tears you shed be the water it will strive on. Let those tears be tears of love and joy and tranquillity, so that at the end of the day you would have reaped the sweet fruit of the patient wait for regional integration.

Prosper.



“SER’s” Corner

THE YOUTH IS NOT YET TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY WORLD LEADERS

—by Sergio Belfor (SURINAME)

The youth is not taken seriously by World Leaders. This was proven during the Conference on Sustainable Development, which was held from 2nd to 4th September 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa. There were hardly any young people in the delegates. Also, almost nothing has been done with the intentions of the last ten years. According to Catherine Kamping of the Philippines, Youth Secretary General of the meeting for Sustainable Development, the message of the youth in 1992 was controversial that the broadcast had to be stopped.

The Youth statement clearly denotes how she regards the results World Leaders have reached, so far. "Honestly said, we are rich and tired of the empty promises and political duels of the last ten years. We are tired about the commas which be placed in the Action plan. The irony and hierocracy as far as the location is concerned thoroughly describes the fewer and the disappointing progresses which were made by our present World Leaders. In the Declaration the youth also mentioned that there is still discrimination among people Just as the Leaders, however in advance the youth also discussed the same hopes during the conference. They have come to the conclusion that many Head of States have neglected their responsibility in achieving a sustainable world. They, the youth however, don't want to make the same mistake because they want to reach the goals set in Agenda 21. Key positions are mentioned, under which the instruction to developing countries to immediately stop the spending of their national income and now use it to fight against poverty.

International Financial Institutions are asked to end their economic and political interventions. Global markets have to provide the same opportunities on all trade areas for developed and developing countries. In this way also the members of the Caricom can survive Globalisation and the Free Trade Zone. The Caricom single market and economy can also be developed in this way.

The Youth urges free trade and pleads with Governments to end their subsidies to export and the agrarian sector in such countries, which directly have a negative impact on the production within Third World farmers.

The Rights of the Indigenous people on their land, resources and self-providence was also mentioned. "Here in Johannesburg, you have disappointed us". Signatures do not fill our empty stomachs. Where are the mechanisms, the time schedules and the agreements?

We are working towards and we shall see to it that you, World leaders, will work towards what binds us together, namely a better global community with as a result sustainable development "says the statement of the Youth Ambassador Sergio Belfor advocates this statement." It was very disappointing to him that only three young people were a part of the Official Delegates. The Caribbean will only be represented by Suriname, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.

CYAP

There's a fresh force in the region
Determined to succeed
United as one
Helping young people in need
Knowing the value of their future.

There's new hope in the region
With an increasing bond
Combined different voices
Making one pleasing sound
Ignoring the pad of failure.

They are called the CYA's
And they're born to be strong
Sharing experience and knowledge
And on top of all that
They're bounded by faith and love.

LYROY (Suriname)