

## SEEKING A SPACE IN THE POLITICS: MUSLIM EFFORTS TO JOIN THE POLITICAL PROCESS IN BRITISH GUIANA AND TRINIDAD IN THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Brinsley Samaroo

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Because of their relatively small numbers in Caribbean societies the Islamic minorities have not been given much attention. Despite this neglect, Muslims have played and continued to play a significant roll albeit without much fanfare and overt proclamation. For this reason they are an understudied group about whom the larger society knows little. On the other hand, Islamic influence has been very present in the region since the days of slavery when Muslims first introduced the faith from West Africa. That early Islamic presence was strong in Guyana and in Trinidad and was continued with the arrival of Indian Muslims from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Because of their presence in viable numbers in Guyana and Trinidad, the Indian Muslims have been able to carve out a space for themselves in these two nations.

This paper deals with one aspect of the Indian Muslims' effort to re-constitute themselves in the 'New World' from the time of their arrival in the then colonies of British Guiana and Trinidad and Tobago up to the Independence of these two states in 1966 and 1962 respectively. The latter part of the paper relies heavily on recently opened records in the British National Archives, London, United Kingdom.

Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? (Qu'ran 87:9)

This essay seeks to critically narrate the various initiatives adopted by East Indian Muslims in Trinidad and Guyana to find a space in the political firmament. It will concentrate on these two Caribbean places of settlement because these were two former colonies to which substantial numbers of Muslims and Hindus migrated. Some 239,000 went to the mainland colony and about 147,000 to Trinidad, providing the necessary mass to enable the development of an Indo-Caribbean identity. Because of the inconsistent manner of recording Indian arrivals to the colonies, it is virtually impossible to calculate precise members of Hindus, Muslims, Buddhist of Christians who came from pre-Independent India. However, there is general agreement that about 14% of the Indian arrivals were Muslims, meaning that about 20,000 came to Trinidad and about 33,000 went to Guyana. In these places of settlement, Muslims faced serious challenges to their efforts at maintaining an Islamic identity. They were always a small minority of a large Indian minority in both colonies. Table 1 gives a percentage breakdown of the East Indian population in both colonies in 1946.

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*Address for communication:* **Brinsley Samaroo**, Senior Research Fellow, Academy of the University of Trinidad and Tobago (U. T. T.) for Arts, Letters, Culture and Public Affairs, *E-mail:* [samar@tstt.net.tt](mailto:samar@tstt.net.tt)

<i>Colony</i>	<i>Hindu</i>	<i>Muslim</i>	<i>Other</i>
British Guiana	70.7	18.00	11.3
Trinidad	64.5	16.07	18.8

*Source:* British National Archives (B.N.A) London.Co 1031/899

The majority of these Muslims were Sunnis of the Hanafi School of thought, with a sprinkling of Shias and Ahmadiyahs who were driven into bonded labour by economic hardship in Northern India.

We must at the outset remind ourselves that unlike Christianity, Islam does not separate the secular from the religious. In Islam, St Augustine's doctrine of the two swords (the state and the church) does not count for much. Every action performed by a Muslim is done with the intention of doing good and thereby pleasing Allah. In this way, for example, the acquisition of knowledge is invested with a divine purpose to which all Muslims are enjoined. "And who is given knowledge is given indeed abundant wealth." (Qu'ran 12: 209). All Muslims believe in the sayings of the Prophet (u w b p) that knowledge lights up the way to heaven, will be your friend in the desert, your society in solitude, your companion in loneliness, the ornament among your friends and the armour against your enemies. Among the most precious of the few personal items which Muslims brought in their *Jahajbandals* (ships' belongings) was the Holy Qu'ran, packed alongside the seeds of herbs and spices, fruits and vegetables and a few assorted items of clothes. The Qu'ran to the Muslim was vital as the Ramayana to the Hindus. For both groups, the philosophy was holistic, everything was intertwined.

These were three phases of Islamic re-construction after the cultural de-construction wrought by the de-stabilizing experience of leaving home, crossing the *kalapani* and compulsory labour on the plantations of Caroni or of Demerara.

- (a) Early efforts at the establishment of mosques, quickly followed by joining Hindus and Indian Christians to secure benefits for the entire East Indian community, during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- (b) Branching off to create separate Islamic organisations, dealing specifically with Muslim concerns, between the two Great Wars (1914-1945)
- (c) Post-1947 initiatives following the creation of Pakistan and the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, seeking international support for the creation of a political space for colonial Muslims.

The formation of separate communally-based bodies in colonial society was not restricted to the Muslim community. This was part of the effort of newly-arrived people to root themselves in the new homeland. In Guyana, there was the Portuguese Benevolent Association, the Chinese Club, and the Negro Progress Convention (NPC), the league of coloured People (LCP), the Christian Indian Society, The East Indian Ladies Guild and the American Aryan League. In Trinidad,

there were many similar organisations. The formation of these groups, however, did not indicate any separation from larger communal umbrella bodies. In the East Indian case both in Guyana and Trinidad, people belonged to Presbyterian, Anglican, Wesleyan, Hindu and Muslim groups but had simultaneous membership in the Trinidad or British Guiana East Indian Cricket Club or the British Guiana or Trinidad East Indian Association. They effectively functioned at two levels: their own communal boxes as well as in the large umbrella organisations. At the same time there is evidence of constant interaction between Guyanese and Trinidad East Indians from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This essay will concentrate on the Muslim connections. A major aspect of the initial re-construction of the Umma in the Caribbean was the building of mosques among the sugar-cane villages so that some collective relief could be obtained to assuage the grief for the loss of home and as a refuge against the aggressive proselytization by missionary groups in both colonies which looked gleefully at this new crop of “heathens” who had to be saved. In Guyana 29 mosques had been built by 1890 and this number had risen to 50 by 1920.<sup>1</sup> In Trinidad, the construction of masjids was equally rapid. Muslims in many villages organised their kinsfolk in the building of places of worship out of tapia walls and carat-leaved sheds where daily salaah could be performed. One Bengali *girmitya* (bonded labourer) Nazir Mohammed commemorated his year of freedom (1868) by building a mosque at Iere Village for the welfare of fellow Muslims. This initiative was well-timed for in that very year the Canadian missionary John Morton had started his work in the same village. Whilst Nazir was defending the faith in the south, Haji Ruknudeen Meah (1865-1963) was battling the missionaries in the north, having moved from the estate of his Indentureship (La Romaine) to Tunapuna. Ruknudeen’s house, built opposite to Morton Street in Tunapuna, still stands today in mute testimony of his efforts at spreading dawah.

Whilst these individual efforts served the purpose of mobilizing small communities, Muslim leaders soon realized that they had to join other larger, Indo-based bodies to seek remedies for the macro problems. In this cause, Muslim, Hindus and Christians banded together in Trinidad to form the Princes Town-based East Indian National Association (EINA) in 1896 whilst leaders in the Northern and Central areas created the Couva-based East Indian National Congress (EINC) in 1909. In Guyana, the same entities came together to form the British Guiana East Indian Association (BGEIA) in 1916 under the leadership of Joseph Ruhoman. Among the original aims of this group was the amendment of the constitution to enable East Indians to vote, notwithstanding their ignorance of the English language. The BGEIA pledged also to secure East Indian representation in the central legislature as well as local corporations and to require that all East Indian candidates for office “give a pledge beforehand, to protect and further the interests of the race.”<sup>2</sup> Both in Trinidad and in Guyana Muslim leaders took active part in the agitation of these umbrella organisations. For example, Ayube Mohammed Edun

and J. Ramlogan joined hands in moving a BGEIA resolution condemning the re-imposition of Crown Colony government in 1928. Edun and Ramlogan called for the scrapping of the 1928 constitution and asked for a new one with an elected majority and a wider franchise.<sup>3</sup> East Indians in both colonies fought for better educational facilities, the recognition of Hindu and Muslim marriages, better conditions in the barracks and the privilege of cremating their dead. These groups continued to be active until the end of the Second World War and they provided a valuable forum for the expansion of East Indian sentiment, particularly in those areas where a group effort was essential. In both colonies, Muslim groups separately and as part of umbrella organisations took full part in the deliberations of the Moyne Commission in 1938, a role fully endorsed by the British government which sent down a British-Indian official to assist in the preparation of memoranda. A number of post-Moyne reforms came out of the recommendations of these groups, both in Guyana and Trinidad.

Whilst gaining experience in group formation, in passing resolutions and in preparing petitions Muslims in both colonies embarked upon the formation of communal organisations which now sought the specific interests of their faith. In Guyana the initial Islamic initiative was the formation of the Queenstown Jama Masjid (QJM) in 1895 by Moulvi Gool Mohammed, an immigrant who had come from Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup> From that time to the present QJM has been a focal point for the development of a Muslim identity on the South American mainland. Out of the fellowship engendered at QJM, a number of Islamic groups have spawned along the East and West coasts. Prominent among these were the young Men's Muslim Literary Society (1926) and the United Sad'r Islamic Anjuman (1949).<sup>5</sup> In like manner Trinidad Muslims moved to form their kindred groups. In 1898, there was the birth of the Islamic Guardian Association and in 1926 the Tackveeyatul Islamic Association (Society for the strength of Islam) TIA was founded. In 1935, the Anjuman Sunaat al Jamaat (ASJA) was incorporated and in 1938 the Tabligh-ul-Islam followed. This group merged with the TIA in 1943 and in 1947, the Trinidad Muslim League (TML) was formed. If today Caribbean Islam is alive and well, it is because of the determined representation of these many organisations.

The period of the thirties was one of considerable unrest throughout the Caribbean. Working people were reeling under the effects of the Great Depressions whilst the oil and sugar barons were finding gold. In addition there was the return of veterans from the First World War who now moved to create a better (socialist) world for the Caribbean and there was the birth of new literature (like the Beacon group in Trinidad) which gave hope of a bright new day. As experienced Empire-builders, the British clearly saw the writing on the wall and therefore enlisted the support of groups who could be potential threats. Trinidad appeared to be more volatile than Guyana and so the first East Indian Advisory Board (EIAB) was created here in 1937. The successful operation of this board, comprised of prominent

Muslims, Hindus and Christians, prompted the creation of a duplicate, the Indian Advisory Committee (IAC) in Guyana in 1946. During the period 1937 to 1939, the Trinidad EIAB was made up of two Muslims, four Hindus and four Christians. Despite their small number, the Muslims acquitted themselves commendably. Al Haj Moulvi Ameer Ali (1898-1973) was born in Trinidad. At the age of twenty-five he was sent to Lahore and to Egypt where he studied Islamic theology. In 1931, he returned to Trinidad where he was appointed mufti (spiritual leader) of the recently formed TIA. On the EIAB as well as outside of it, he aggressively promoted the interests of the Muslim community, joining Hindus and Christians when he considered this strategically necessary. His agitation was instrumental in securing state recognition for Muslim marriages (1936) and in winning government assistance for the El Socorro Islamia, the first non-Christian school in Trinidad to be thus formally recognised (1948). The other notable member of the board was Syed Mohammed Hosein who was born in San-Fernando in 1888. He was one of the founders of ASJA and in 1934 he was part of a Muslim delegation sent to India to establish contact with Islamic leaders and institutions there. As a licensed Hindi interpreter and a Muslim divorce officer he was an informed advisor to the Board, so much so that he was selected by his colleagues to be one of the four EIAB delegates to appear before the Moyne Commission, in March 1939. The other Muslim chosen was Moulvi Ameer Ali. They both did well before Moyne.

In Guyana, the IAC worked well from its inception in 1946 up to 1951 when its harmony was threatened by a factional dispute within the Muslim community.<sup>6</sup> In 1951, the colonial government indicated its intention to put the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Bill out for public comment, starting with the IAC. At this time the membership within the IAC consisted of representatives from the Sanatan Dharma MahaSabha, the American Aryan League, the BGEIA as well as the Sad'rAnjuman and the Islamic Association. However, the Anjuman Mofidul Islam complained to the Colonial Secretary that although it represented ninety percent of the Guyanese Muslims, it had been left out of the IAC. The Colonial Secretary's assurance that members of the Mofidul would be co-opted when the bill was being discussed, gave no comfort. The Mofidul then petitioned the Secretary of State indicating that the Colonial Secretary's assurance was unacceptable. They now petitioned for a number of changes in the composition of the IAC. They objected to the fact that the Muslim representatives were nominated by the Governor and did not represent a cross-section of the Muslim community; these should be elected and not nominated. The current Muslims on the IAC were not good examples of Muslim living and were on the IAC because of their financial standing. The Mofidul wanted the Chair, Dr. J. B. Singh, a Hindu, to be removed and replaced by a European. In his covering letter, the Governor advised the Colonial Office that it was untrue to say that all the Muslim members of the IAC were wealthy "but I presume that the

person the writer has in mind is Mr. R. B. Gajraj. Mr Gajraj is the President of the Sad'rAnjuman-E-Islam and the Islamic Association and he has recently been re-elected Mayor of Georgetown for the year 1952." An officer in the Colonial Office minuted that the Mofidul claim of representing 90% of the Muslims was exaggerated. In any event, he added, such advisory committees would be abolished under the new constitution then being contemplated. The Mofidul's claim was therefore rejected but their keen interest in the matter was an indication of the vibrancy of the Islamic lobby. In Guyana, the IAC disappeared as debate on the new (1953) constitution progressed. In Trinidad, the EIAB was similarly swept away in the debate towards a new (1946) constitution. However, in both colonies these advisory boards enabled the further emergence of Muslims in negotiating for their own spaces in society. In both colonies, these committees became the eyes and ears of the colonial government which rewarded its members with titles and other paquotille. They fostered loyalty to the Crown and afforded leadership at the local level. This was important for people whose emancipation from indentureship was recent: January 1920.

#### **The Creation of Pakistan: 1947**

The creation of Pakistan followed by the Egyptian Revolution (1952) were events which gave great hope to colonial Muslims. In this regard, there appeared to be collaboration between Muslims in both colonies. Joint action in the post 1947 period came as a logical consequence of a long-standing relationship between East Indians of Guyana and Trinidad. The Guyana Presbyterian Church was launched by missionaries and catechists from Trinidad; from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century there were mutual visits by cricketers from both communities and prominent Trinidad and Guyanese families chose spouses for their children from the other shore. Ms Gladys Ramsaran, Trinidad's first female East Indian lawyer was in fact from Guyana. A few of the Muslim connections would be mentioned. The visit of the first Moulana to Guyana from February to September 1937 was facilitated from Trinidad where Moulana Shams-ud-din was temporarily based. This visit had an electrifying effect there, similar to what was happening in Trinidad. Under the Moulana's patronage the Sadr Anjuman-e-Islam of British Guyana was launched.<sup>7</sup> Because of the Trinidad/Guyana nexus Fateh Dad Khan, assistant secretary of the Sad'r came to Trinidad as Imam of the Haji Gokool Mosque in St. James and he was succeeded by Haji Hassan Karemullah who was also an active member of the Islamic Academy in Port of Spain. In 1938, Trinidad Muslims welcomed Guyana's premier leader HussainBakshGajraj, chair of the BGEIA, President of the British Guiana East Indian Cricket Club and re-builder of the Queenstown Jama Masjid. In 1956, Trinidad Ahamadiyas hosted Moulvi Ahmad Ishaq, a South Asian missionary to the Caribbean. Since those early days the Islamic connection has remained and is today as cordial as before.

Shortly after 1947, Muslims in the two colonies banded together to request a separate space in the colonies' legislatures. When this was refused the petitioners sought the assistance of MAH Ispahani who was Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK. As early as 1950, Ispahani was in regular contact with the Colonial Office pressing the case.<sup>8</sup> In December of 1951 a British Minister of State Henry Hopkinson had discussed the matter with him. In order to contextualize the Muslim case let us look at the numerical strength of the Muslim colonists in both places in 1950 these figures were provided by the Colonial Office, indicating numbers in thousands:

<i>Colony</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>East Indians</i>	<i>Hindus</i>	<i>Muslims</i>	<i>% Muslims</i>
Trinidad and Tobago	619	227	147	38	6.13
British Guiana	414	191	135	34	8.27

In refusing to accede to the demands of the Muslims the Colonial Office had a field day in devising "why not" arguments in 1952. Most of these arguments were regurgitated when the issue was again raised in 1954. What were the arguments in 1952? In the first place, Ispahani had no *locus standi* in pursuing constitutional matters on behalf of Muslims in colonial territories who were "citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies and permanent residents there." There was a growing tendency, the Office noted, for Indians in colonial territories to air their grievances with the governments of India and Pakistan, thereby seeking to bring pressure on Her Majesty's Government and the colonial government: Such persons must throw in their lot with the territory in which they have settled, and play their part locally in evolving political institutions.<sup>9</sup>

The same officer indicated that Caribbean Muslims wanted communal representations as in Kenya, but that India disliked that arrangement adding that the scattered nature of Muslim settlements in the colonies prevented the election of a Muslim representative. The advisory minutes indicated that in Trinidad nominations are made on personal merits and not as representatives of group interests. Finally the colonial office claimed that the Pakistan government was "under the strong influence of strict Muslim sects and there is probably a strong emotional feeling that the Pakistan government ought to look after the interests of their co-religionists." The officers in Whitehall reiterated that the Minister of State had seen Ispahani and they chafed at the fact that since there was no Pakistani ambassador in the West Indies, Muslims were now looking to Pakistan's ambassador in Washington "but this attitude should clearly be discouraged." It would be useful to point out that the Whitehall officials made no comments on the Governor's report that after the most recent (1950) election there was no Muslim among the ten elected and eight nominated members of the unicameral legislature. There were five Hindus and two Presbyterians in the legislature. The local Governor could see no Muslims when there were in fact, eminent, well qualified Muslims around. One

possible nominee was the brilliant barrister and community activist Noor Mohammed Hassanali who had in fact unsuccessfully stood for elections in the Naparima seat in the September 1950 elections. After that time Hassanali became a distinguished judge and President of the Republic for two terms from 1987. Instead of addressing this imbalance the Colonial Office preferred to dismiss the issue with Westminster arguments: election was by common roll, separate communal representation would be a retrograde step, the cosmopolitan nature of Trinidad was a guarantee against the oppression of a minority group such as the Muslims. "Any Muslim who fulfils the necessary requirement can put himself forward for election or be considered for nomination to the Legislative Council."

By the end of 1952, this debate, so far as the colonial office was concerned, was over. Ispahani apparently took the cue and desisted from further advocacy. But for a group of young Muslims in Trinidad and Guyana the matter was far from finished. This time the inspiration was the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 which ousted the British-backed Muhammad Ali dynasty and replaced it with a military government under Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser. IN June 1953, King Faruq was deposed and Egypt was declared a republic. One of Nasser's trusted lieutenants was Col. Anwar al Sadat who later became President of the Republic. Muslims in the Caribbean were closely following these events and a Muslim Committee of the West Indies was created under the leadership of Wahid Ali (1928-2008) a young Trinidad pharmacist with extensive international connections. In September 1954 Ali (referred to as Ally Wahid in the Egyptian correspondence) passed through Cairo en route to London from Pakistan where he had attended a conference of Muslim youths. In Cairo, Ali had discussed the absence of a Muslim in the Trinidad Legislature with Sadat, a Minister of State in the Egyptian government and Chair of the newly-created Islamic conference. Sadat endorsed Ali's request and recommended it to the British ambassador in Cairo, Sir Ralph Stephenson who wrote that serious concern should be given to this matter in view of the importance of Egypt in British foreign policy. He further indicated that Ali would be seeking an audience in London to present his case. By this time, the Colonial Office was even angrier than they had been in 1952. W. J. Wallace, Permanent Under-secretary of State noted that Anwar el Sadat "has been violently nationalistic and even more evidently anti-British". His close adviser W. A. Robertson re-hashed a 1949 directive from the Secretary of State which stated that nominated members of colonial legislatures "should not be nominated to represent interests but should be appointed to serve the broad and best interests of the Colony as a whole". He added that at the census of 1946 the percentage of Muslims in Trinidad was "only 5.8 compared with Christians 70.8, Hindus 22.7 and other non-Christians 7." Wallace then requested the views of the colony's governor Sir Hubert Rance and Rance's response bordered on the humorous: "I have the utmost difficulty in finding a representative

acceptable to all sects for social occasions. The Moslems' interests are, however, taken care of since Roy Joseph's wife is a Moslem.<sup>10</sup>

The Governor further sealed the case by adding that the Muslim population was less than 40,000 and that these were divided into three sects and that there should be no question of nominating a Muslim. There is no Colonial Office record of any audience given to Wahid Ali but the negative response was sent to Cairo and to the Governor in Port of Spain. Wahid Ali himself went on to qualify as a medical doctor in 1963 and like a number of urban Muslims supported Eric Williams' People's National Movement which made him President of the Senate from 1971 to 1987. In Guyana, Rahaman Bacchus Gajraj, eldest son of H. B. Gajraj became a government nominee in the Legislature from 1951 to 1961 and served as Speaker of the House during the mid - 1960s. In this case the British would have argued that Gajraj was not nominated because he was Muslim but because he represented the business interest.

The long period of continuous demand of the Muslims for a space in the politics, from the early days of the BGEIA through the IAC, through Pakistani ambassadors and finally with the facilitation of Anwar el Sadat in 1954, had the effect of rendering the Muslim votes in both nations, a floating element, to be courted by the major ethnically-based political parties. As Ralph Premdas points out, in Guyana the People's Progressive Party (PPP) kept in close touch with the Anjuman-E- Islam, always including Muslim names on its lists for general elections and Muslim activists on its payroll. "The main symbolic conversation between the Anjuman and the PPP was the co-optation of the President of the Anjuman to serve as a PPP parliamentarian."<sup>11</sup>

The People's National Congress (PNC) followed the same trajectory but was not as successful as the PPP. At Easter time in April 2011, the major Muslim groups in Guyana publicly applauded out-going President Bharat Jagdeo as the creator of a new Guyana. In Trinidad the astute politician Eric Williams did better than Guyana's PNC in harvesting the Muslim vote for the Afro-based People's National Movement (PNM). Dr. Winston Mahabir, a former student of Eric Williams and a co-founder of the PNM, revealed in 1975, Williams' approach: "He always seemed anxious to interpose someone between himself and direct contact with the Indian masses and their problems. I was for him, a small window in the Trinidad Indian Christian world and Kamaluddin Mohammed has been for him a larger window in the Trinidad Indian Muslim world."<sup>12</sup>

Mahabir also spoke of the jubilation of the Muslim community when Mohammed was given a ministerial position in Williams' first Cabinet. They even organized a banquet which failed to materialize.<sup>13</sup> More recently, V. S. Naipaul, who was in Trinidad in 1956 recalled Williams' cleverness in targeting the Muslim vote. "Eric Williams also had the clever idea of detaching the Muslims from the bulk of the Indian population. And to some extent that is still there."<sup>14</sup>

In both societies the general pattern of political support has been that the majority of rural-based Muslims have in Guyana, voted for the PPP or in Trinbago, the various incarnations of the “Indian party” (PDP, DLP, ULF, UNC). In Trinbago a minority of urban-based, professional Muslims have supported the PNM. In the latter nation, the overwhelming triumph of the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) in 1986 and of the Peoples’ Partnership (PP) in 2010, with heavy Muslim support indicates the continuing Muslim (and national) desire for an end to the politics of communalism and of the crippling divisiveness which comes in its wake. All of this does not mean an end to the long Caribbean Islamic search for their own space in the politics. One of the ways of accommodating Caribbean communal diversity is through constitutional reforms which include the incorporation of the philosophical values of Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Baptists, Orisha and the other faiths in the process of governance. Our present constitutions are reflective of very Christian values, meaning that at the time of their creation the framers were mainly of Christian persuasion and those non-Christian participants were all products of Western, Christian socialization. The Westminster hybrid which we created out of this model lent itself to the evolution of two parties, Government and Opposition, a situation tailor-made for fostering a two party race-based society. As the creators of the two-party Westminster system are now finding, that fossil is now being abandoned as the United Kingdom moves to a three-party system. Even their methods of dealing with the Muslim minority are foundering, as in France, Germany and Australia. Looking outside for solutions to our communal problems is therefore no longer viable.

Constitutional reform which becomes deliberately all-inclusive can end separate group assertion of identity and will lead to a society where all entities feel comfortable and therefore proud of belonging to their nation. In such a society, the happiness index will rise, greater productivity can be achieved, there will be less hoarding of resources abroad and we will move away from the theory of relativity (i.e. helping our relatives) which now prevails. All of this represents a tall order but it is perhaps the only viable way ahead.

### Notes

1. BasdeoMangru, *Indenture and abolition*, TSAR: Toronto, 1993, p. 49.
2. B. Ramharack, *Centenary celebration of the arrival of Indians to British Guiana (1938)*, Chakra Publishing, Trinidad, 2001, p. 174.
3. *Ibid*, p. 168.
4. A. Hamid, *Muslims in Guyana*, MS, 2007, p. 3. The author is grateful to Prof. R. Izzarally for making this typescript available.
5. *Ibid* p. 3.
6. This account is derived from British National Archives (BNA) File CO 1031/1900, Representation of Muslim Community of British Guiana on Indian Advisory Committee., 8 January, 1952.

7. A. Hamid, p. 6.
8. N. A. CO 1031/899.
9. *Ibid.* Minute by W.A.M. 22 September 1952.
10. N. A. CO 1031/1297 Representation of Moslem population by a nominated member Rance to W. I. J. Wallace, 28 October 1954. The rest of this narration is taken from this file.
11. R. Premdas, *Ethnic conflict and development: The case of Guyana*, Avebury; Press. London, 1995, p. 91.
12. D. Mahabir, *In and out of politics*, Imprint Caribbean Limited, 1979, p. 207.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 73 For a comprehensive account of the career of Mohammed see Hamid Ghany. *Kamal, alifetime of politics, religion and culture*. Trinidad. 1996.
14. P. Marnham, "An interview with V. S. Naipaul", *Literary Review*, April 2011, p. 6.

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