







Prime Minister LFS Burnham's Speech in Parliament on the Presentation of The Instruments of Independence (From Colonial Rule 26th May, 1966)

By Staff Reporter - May 27, 2018



"YOUR ROYAL Highness, Mr. Speaker: May I, on behalf of the Parliament of Independent Guyana, and the people of this new nation, express gratitude first of all for your Royal Highness undertaking the duty – we hope with pleasure, of representing Her Gracious Majesty, the Queen of Guyana on the opening of this first and significant session of the National Assembly of Guyana.

Today is historic, primarily because we are indulging in an exercise which is the first of its kind by the Parliament of Guyana.

We have come to the end of the road of Colonial Rule and not without significance, to our minds is the fact that her Gracious Majesty, Queen of the United Kingdom, is Queen of Guyana.

Our associations with the Crown, our membership to the Commonwealth, are matte s of free and untrammelled choice by the representatives of the people of Guyana.

After some 150 years of British Rule and in some cases, misrule, we are now independent, but we harbour no bitterness. Bitterness we feel is for children and the intellectually underdeveloped.

It is difficult, nay- impossible, to change the facts of past history and, in the circumstances, though we welcome with enthusiasm our new status, we are prepared not to spend the time ahead of us abusing those who once dictated to us, but rather to, seek means of cooperation with them – to our mutual advantage, or should we say self-interest?

I desire, on this occasion to request you, Your Royal Highness to convey to her Gracious Majesty, the Queen, the kind feelings we hold towards her as Head of the Commonwealth, and a person whom we have met, seen and admired, and in some cases loved.

I shall ask your Royal Highness to convey to Her Majesty, the Queen of Guyana, the loyalty of the people of the independent nation of Guyana, who are happy to have her as their Queen.

The days ahead are going to be difficult and, in the circumstances, we are heartened and encouraged by Her Majesty's kind wishes, and also by the asseverations of friendship and willingness to assist coming from other Governments in the Commonwealth, more particularly in the present circumstances, from the Government of the United Kingdom.

Tomorrow, no doubt, we as Guyanese will indulge in our usual political conflicts and ideological differences, but today, to my mind, is above such relatively petty matters, for today Guyana is history.

Today we say goodbye to the British as masters, and we shake hands with them as friends and colleagues.

It is difficult to say more, a descendant of those who were brought here against their will, one who has known the embarrassment of being a Colonial subject, I am moved and all I can say now is "Thank You Sincerely, your Royal Highness, and please be good enough to convey to the Queen our thanks, our gratitude and our undertaking to make Guyana an outstanding member of the Commonwealth – we hope surpassing those who have been independent members for years before us. Thank you."

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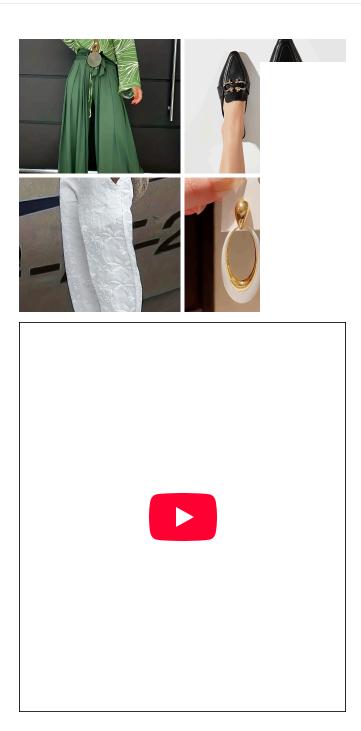
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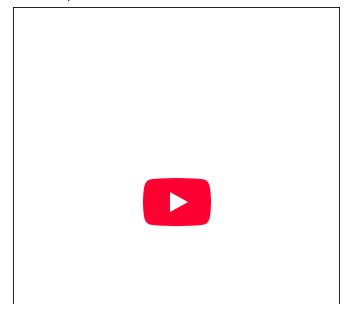
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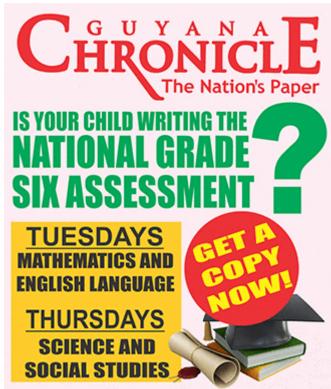


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