



# Richmond Hill to Host 'Reflections' on Guyana's 50th Independence

A number of community-based community organizations in the Greater Richmond Hill area, have come together under the aegis of Y50IndGroup, to organize an important event in recognition of Guyana's 50th anniversary. Organizers have made it quite clear that this is not a celebration, but rather a serious reflection into the struggles and challenges that lie ahead. "There is nothing to celebrate," says the group's PRO. Also, Y50IndGroup is a non-political, non-partisan, non-religious organization committed to a free and independent Guyana, the rule of law, the upholding of democratic values, equity and justice, and economic empowerment of all Guyanese.

In keeping with the above values, Y50IndGroup says that it could not, in all conscience, even think of celebration when thousands of workers were fired by the present government; when it (government) is also closing Wales and LBI sugar estates (where over 28,000 lives would be adversely affected); when public safety is endangered by a spiraling crime wave; when investors' confidence is low; when the country is more divided than ever, among other things.

Whatever major success the country had accomplished was during the period 1992 to 2015. We acknowledge that this success belongs to all Guyanese. It seems now that this is being eroded. Instead of building upon this foundation of success, the administration seems to be taking a detour.

Y50IndGroup feels that in view of this development, it's essential that "its event focuses instead on struggles and challenges ahead. There is urgent need to re-direct focus onto a vision for a better Guyana. At the same time, it is important to preserve the country's independence and democratic values, especially in light of the seeming progression to militarization and party paramountcy."

As part of the reflection proceedings, Y50IndGroup will be honoring two categories of Guyanese who have struggled for the attainment of Independence and the

restoration of Democracy in Guyana. These honorees were the unsung heroes of the Independence and the Return to Democracy movements. Y50IndGroup would honor those whom, it believes, were never recognized before for their work and sacrifice in these areas. And Y50IndGroup can only honor those that possess the minimum standards set out (at least 10 years of activism in these two categories) and who have been recommended by members of the Greater Richmond Hill community.

Y50IndGroup cannot or pretend to operate at the national level. It is also aware that other organizations are identifying and would be making awards to those whom they deem, worthy. We cannot speak for them.

Y50IndGroup has established a third category of award for Exemplary Service. Again the standard for this award is community, cultural, and humanitarian service of a high standard performed for a period of not less than 15 years. There are individuals and groups that promote cultural events, as part of a business activity. They would not be considered for an award. The basis of all three categories of award is volunteerism.

The occasion of the 50th independence anniversary would never return. This is an historic event in which the community's unsung heroes must be given due recognition. However honorees must be present to receive their awards. Awards in absentia would not be considered, except in extra-ordinary circumstances.

The Reflections event takes place at the elegant Liberty Palace, 130-11 Liberty Avenue, Richmond Hill, New York 11419, on Friday May 13, 2016 7.30pm. The program consists of a review of Guyana's struggles and challenges, the grant of awards, singing, dancing and free buffet dinner. Because of space limitation, we regret to say that attendance would be by invitation only.

**For info, please contact:**

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