



ANNUAL REPORT
2018

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INTRODUCTION

In keeping with its mandate, the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) would have aimed to **promote harmony and good relations** through various activities.

The Commissioners were sworn in on February 22, 2018 and commenced working on April 24, 2018. There were thirteen (13) employees on a month to month basis in the Commission's Secretariat at that time and the Commissioners sought to give them a sense of security by granting everyone a one (1) year contract.

The Commission had a number of consultations with the ten (10) Constituents and there were engagements with the Diplomatic Community and other stakeholders. Integral aspects of the Commission's work which commenced in 2018 will be continued in 2019, since a comprehensive Work Plan was generated for two (2) years. The projects within the Work Plan were fashioned to foster tolerance and respect for each other and to promote an environment that would be free from ethnic tensions and discrimination countrywide.

It should be noted, that the Commission held capacity building sessions to familiarize themselves with the various pieces of legislations that governs the ERC. It was envisaged, that sessions will be held to build capacities in the areas of Conflict Resolution, Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution for them to efficiently and effectively deal with matters surrounding the Commission's mandate.

Along with the projects created, the Commissioners engaged in Regional visits during 2018 to six (6) Regional Democratic Councils and that outreach continued in 2019.

Despite the minor challenges of insufficient funds and being unable to recruit staff in the earlier part of 2018, the Commission was able to achieve its goals with the support of the existing Staff who worked efficiently and many times beyond the call of duty.

Forward planning for a major media launch of harmony materials, harmony song and reintroducing the ERC to the public was scheduled for Friday, January 11, 2019 and a harmony stage play for the first quarter of 2019 at the National Cultural Centre.

THE ETHNIC RELATIONS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2018

GENERAL

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) being a constitutional body with its twenty-four (24) functions continues to promote ethnic harmony and good relations amongst all people in Guyana.

From 2011 to 2018, the Commission was in a hiatus position, after the Commissioners numbers dwindled but the secretariat continued to function as best as it could.

The National Assembly on February 10, 2014 passed resolution No. 68 to increase the number of members on the Ethnic Relations Commission from seven (7) to ten (10) as was proposed by the Committee on Appointments with Amended first and second schedules. (*Please see copy at Annex A*)

The original members were:

<i>Groups of Entities</i>		<i>Number of Members</i>
1. Christian Religion	-	One Member
2. Hindu Religion	-	One Member
3. Muslim Religion	-	One Member
4. Labour Movement	-	One Member
5. Private Sector Organisations	-	One Member
6. Youth Organisations	-	One Member
7. Women Organisations	-	One Member

The inclusion of a new category was '*Cultural/Ethnic Organisations*' with the right to have three (3) members, one representative each of the three largest ethnic groups namely:

1. Indo-Guyanese	-	One Member
2. Afro-Guyanese	-	One Member
3. Indigenous/Amerindian	-	One Member

Following the process of nominations, the National Assembly passed resolution No. 84 on July 10, 2014 with the following persons as members of the ERC and same was signified to the President:

Categories		Nominees
Christian Religion	-	Dr. John O. Smith
Hindu Religion	-	Ms. Rajkumarie Singh
Muslim Religion	-	Shaykh Moeenul Hack
Labour Movement	-	Mr. Norris Emanuel Witter

Private Sector Organisations	-	Mr. Ravinda Dev
Youth Organisations	-	Ms. Gomattie Kalicharran
Women Organisations	-	Ms. Ruth Howard
<i>Cultural/Ethnic Organisations</i>		
Afro-Guyanese	-	Mr. Barrington Braithwaite
Indo-Guyanese	-	Mr. Neaz Subhan
Indigenous/Amerindian	-	Mr. Peter Persaud
<i>(Please see copy at Annex B)</i>		

The resolution was not operationalized to its finality and thus it was incapable of implementation with the dissolution of parliament to facilitate the holding of May 2015 General and Regional Elections. On January 19, 2018, the 11th parliament having convened considered the matter which led to a formation of the current ten (10) members Commission as follow:

Categories		Nominees
Christian Religion	-	Dr. John O. Smith
Hindu Religion	-	Ms. Rajkumarie Singh
Muslim Religion	-	Mr. Roshan Khan
Labour Movement	-	Mr. Norris Emanuel Witter
Private Sector Organisations	-	Major-General (Ret'd) Norman McLean
Youth Organisations	-	Mr. Deodat Persaud
Women Organisations	-	Ms. Ruth Howard
<i>Cultural/Ethnic Organisations</i>		
Afro-Guyanese	-	Mr. Barrington Braithwaite
Indo-Guyanese	-	Mr. Neaz Subhan
Indigenous/Amerindian	-	Mr. Ashton Simon
<i>(Please see copy at Annex C)</i>		

These Nominees were duly sworn in by His Excellency President David Granger on February 22, 2018 as Commissioners to the Ethnic Relations Commission and were presented with their Instruments of Appointment. During the President's remarks, he indicated that the Constitution provides for the establishment of the ERC and is guarded against influence and interference by the Executive. His Excellency also stated that the work of the Commission was critical to ensuring ethnic harmony and social cohesion in Guyana.

The Clerk of the National Assembly summoned a meeting with the Commissioners on April 22, 2018 at parliament building which was presided over by the Speaker. Emanating from that meeting, Dr. John Oswald Smith was elected Chairman and Major-General (Ret'd) Norman McLean was elected Deputy Chairman.

The Commission commenced its work on April 24, 2018 when their second meeting was held in the ERC's Boardroom. At that meeting the employees were introduced and there was a familiarising process.

A request was made to the Attorney General to assist the Commission with sensitizing themselves with the various pieces of the legislations that govern the ERC. That request was granted and on May 24, 2018 Ms. Cheyenne Lall, Parliamentary Counsel attached to the Attorney General Chambers, had an interactive session with the Commissioners.

The Commissioners were very appreciative for the knowledge and insight they received during the session.

Various courtesy calls were held with the President, Leader of the Opposition, Diplomatic Community etc. while meetings were held with various Stakeholders to garner feedbacks/ suggestions which were taken into consideration for the drafting of the Commission's Work Plan for 2018/2019. *(Please see a copy of the Work Plan at Annex D)*

ADMINISTRATION

The Commission initially agreed by consensus for every second and fourth Thursdays of the month to be the statutory day for meetings. This was further revised to once a month every fourth Thursday and there were eleven (11) Statutory Meetings for the period April to December 2018. The Commission also held a number of Special Meetings to ensure that its mandate was fulfilled.

Four (4) Sub-committees were formed to accelerate the work and submit recommendations for decisions/ratification to the Commission as under:

- Media & Public Education & Relations
- Complaints
- Human Resources
- Finance

PUBLIC EDUCATION & AWARENESS UNIT

The Public Education and Awareness Unit (PE&AU) could be considered the proactive arm of the Commission in achieving its constitutional mandate to promote harmony and good relations among all Guyanese through education and awareness which is extremely crucial in the process.

The ERC is of the firm belief that with effective mechanisms to enhance public awareness on the various aspects of this most challenging process, education brings understanding which aids better appreciation and which, in the end, creates an environment for the removal of ambiguities,

with the potential to remove suspicion, with the hope that it would reduce tension, thereby, allowing for harmony and good relations to flourish.

Despite the initial financial challenges and limited resources that existed for the period under review, the Commission was able to implement some of its programmes through its PE&AU. Other programmes were able to later be completed with the approval of supplementary provisions by the National Assembly in October 2018. Among some of the engagements for 2018, were meetings with Guyana Defence Force, Guyana Police Force, Guyana Fire Service, Guyana Prison Service, stakeholders, various outreaches to regions - 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10 including Regional Democratic Councils and workplace meetings.

In addition, one of the harmony-themed initiatives was a stage play entitled 'I AM US' written and directed by Commissioner Subhan. The script for the play was reviewed by the Commissioners and found to be appropriate to be used by the Commission to foster harmony and good relations through entertainment. The play is expected to be staged at the National Cultural Centre during the first quarter of 2019 at no cost to the viewers.

The employees of the PE&AU were involved in 'Conflict Analysis' training hosted by Mr. Srdan Deric, Peace and Development Advisor, UNDP, who supported the work of the Commission after he was introduced by his superior. The decision for this collaboration was birthed during a meeting with the UN Resident Coordinator in Guyana, Ms. Mikiko Tanaka, and the Commissioners.

The Commission started the process to create billboards with messages, posters, Public Service announcements, feather banners, pull-up banners etc. to be used in the branding initiative to cultivate a new thinking about the ERC.

It was projected that for 2019, the Commission would partner with media entities for free provision of television & radio airtime and newspaper space for the PSAs etc. The ERC would also endeavor to build partnership with corporate Guyana and other funding agencies for specific projects to realize its mandate of promoting harmony and good relations.

(Please see the attached PE&AU report at Annex D)

LEGAL AND INVESTIGATIVE

The Legal and Investigative arm of the ERC played an integral part in the work of the Commission. It is tasked with receiving and investigating complaints of racial discrimination from members of the public as well as organisations /agencies and is responsible for research as a matter of public interest and which the Commission deems necessary in keeping with ERC's mandate. During the reporting period, the Unit had no staff and the vacant positions were expected to be filled during the month of January 2019, since the recruitment process was initiated.

However complaints were being received by the secretariat and were being addressed by the Chairman and Commissioners through the Complaints Sub-committee. A complaint against GECOM was received by the Commission and a 'special investigative' sub-committee was created to investigate same. That sub-committee comprised of an Attorney-at-Law, a Human Resources Specialist, Special Investigator

(former Assistant Commissioner) and two (2) ERC's Commissioners. On the conclusion of the investigations, the report would be submitted to the National Assembly as well as to the media because the matter was of a public interest.

MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

This Unit was originally called the Media and Campaign Monitoring Unit and it was a temporary unit to monitor political meetings/rallies, print and electronic media during elections campaigning. After reviewing the structure and role of the Unit, the Commissioners felt there was a need to have the media monitoring aspect operating on a permanent basis while the campaign/rallies aspect would be temporal and same would be activated to coincide with the country's electoral cycles. Thus the Unit was renamed Media Monitoring Unit (MMU).

In this regard, the role of the MMU would be to scrutinize local media content (disseminated through television, radio and newspaper, online news entities, social media etc.) and the content of political speeches made at campaign rallies/meetings during the pre and post-elections periods in Guyana, for infractions of the *Racial Hostility Act (1964)*, *Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (2001)*, and anything against harmony and good relations. Matters of these natures would be brought to the attention of the Commission.

The MMU was expected to boost the ERC's capacity to fulfill its constitutional responsibility to mitigate/prevent the spread of ethnic intolerance/racism in all its forms, insofar as it relates to the communication of racist messages in the media to the general public, or the public advocacy of ethnic strife/discrimination as a platform for achieving political office by any political party/group or candidate contesting elections or generally to disrupt the peace.

The information garnered, further enhanced the ability and capacity of the ERC to make informed interventions at the national level to lessen instances of the media being used as a conduit by citizens, politicians and media operatives to foment racism and/or ethnic strife in the country.

The MMU monitored before, during and after the Local Government Elections which was held on November 12, 2018. *(Attached, please see a copy of the full report at ANNEX F.)*

PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONS

Personnel

The Organisational Chart was reviewed by the Human Resources Sub-committee. It was recommended that the Commission make the temporary 'Media & Campaign Monitoring Unit' a permanent part of the structure and have it renamed the 'Media Monitoring Unit' and same was approved.

The Commission had thirteen staff members remaining in its employ at the time and the first priority of the HR Sub-committee was to conduct interviews and recruit employees. Seven (7)

persons were employed to fill the following positions with the limited funds that were available at that time:

➤ Head, Public Education & Awareness Unit	1
➤ Public Relations Officer	1
➤ Programme Officers	3
➤ Accounts Clerk	1
➤ Driver	1

As at December 2018 the Commission had Sixteen (16) vacant positions as listed below:

➤ Head, Legal & Investigative	1
➤ Dispute Resolution Officer	1
➤ Finance Officer (ag)	1
➤ Senior Investigative Officer	1
➤ Investigative Officers	2
➤ Research Assistant	1
➤ Senior Programme Officer	1
➤ Programme Officer	1
➤ Videographer	1
➤ Administrative Assistant to the CEO/Personnel	1
➤ Media Monitors	3
➤ Driver	1
➤ Office Assistant	1

The second phase of the sub-committee work was to review staff salaries to correct any disparities that may have existed. The report was presented to the Commission and same was accepted and approved.

The Commission's aim for 2019 would be to recruit staff to fill the vacant senior positions that are critical to the effective functioning of the Commission. In addition, space factor was of concern to house the staff comfortably enough to perform their duties. Staff continued to work above and beyond the call of duty to realize the Commission's mandate.

Staff members were issued four (4) sets of uniforms to wear from Monday to Thursday and the ERC T-Shirts to be worn on Friday. Additionally, staff also received a uniform allowance to assist with the sewing.

Despite these constraints, the Commission had successfully carried out its mandate working and maximizing on opportunities and utilizing innovative methods of working.

Operations

The ERC continued to be responsible for the maintenance of the building and payments of the utility bills which included the Rights Commissions (Women and Gender Equality Commission, Rights of the Child Commission, Indigenous Peoples Commission, Human Rights secretariat and (Human Rights Commission - not in operation)

During the hiatus period of the Commission, parts of its work space were utilised by the Human Rights Commission and Integrity Commission thus causing greater strain for space. Efforts were made to

reclaim the space but to date only the Integrity Commission was relocated from the building. Staff continued to work in cramped spaces with storage being an issue.

The Commission has three vehicles, one (1) Nissan Frontier (PMM 5053) and one (1) Nissan Navara (PRR 1131) which are in perfect working condition and one RZ 16-seater mini bus (PNN 1641) is not in working condition.

The Generator continues to function well and service the entire building.

The security of the premises continued at an acceptable level. There were no reports made from any of the other Commissions on the premises and it is hoped that there will be a continuance of this level of performance.

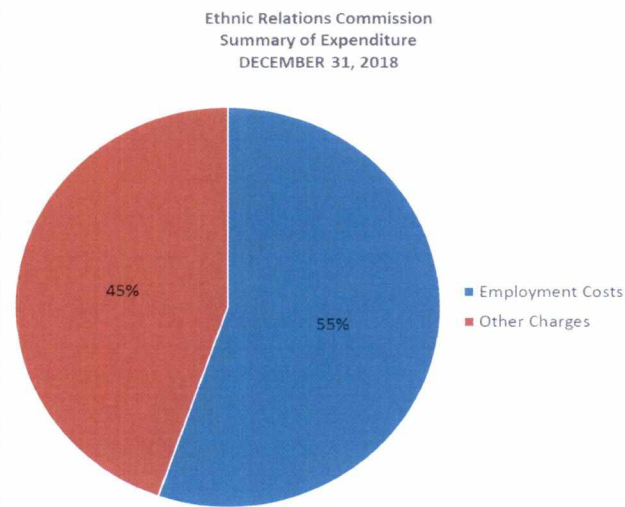
FINANCE

The National Assembly approved the sum of eighty-six million, five hundred and thirty-four thousand dollars (\$86,534,000) as 2018 current expenditure for the Commission. No capital expenditure was initially requested by the Commission.

On the appointment of the Commissioners and recruitment of essential staff to execute the Commission's mandate, a request for a supplementary provision of twenty-nine million, two hundred and fifty-one thousand, three hundred and sixty-five dollars (\$29,251,365) was sent in June, 2018. The said amount was approved by the National Assembly and became available in November 2018.

The Commission expended its entire allocation for 2018 of which sixty-four million and forty-five thousand, nine hundred and two dollars (\$64,045,902) for Employment Cost and fifty-one million seven hundred and thirty-nine thousand, four hundred and sixty-three dollars (\$51,739,463) for Other Charges.

Please see pie chart below:



RECOMMENDATIONS

- a.** That a consensual mechanism be tabled for the reconstitution of the appointment of members to the ERC for continuity of the programmes implemented to avoid retrogression of the Commission's efforts to promote ethnic harmony.
- b.** The constitution and activation of the Ethnic Relations Commission Tribunal.
- c.** That the Ethnic Relations Commission to be empowered to subpoena witnesses and documents.
- d.** Sitting members of the National Assembly having received annual and other special reports will table motions for debate and specific action to enhance ethnic relations in Guyana.

CONCLUSION

The re-constituted Commission commenced their work of promoting ethnic harmony and good relations in Guyana even though most of them were new in this field of work.

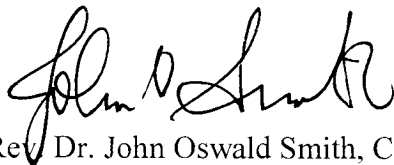
The feedbacks from representatives of the various constituencies saw the need for the Commission to work assiduously with the various groups, organisations and individuals to bring a positive change.

This led the Commission to focus extensively on the Public Relations and Education aspect for 2018 in an effort to bring about that required change among the Guyanese people. This saw a lot of public relations preparation during the month of December for the 'Harmony Launch' that was scheduled for January 2019 which it felt was necessary.

The Commission would like to record its thanks to everyone who participated in their programme of activities and by extension the Guyanese people for their inputs in achieving its mandate of promoting harmony and good relations. Also, the appreciation for all those who put their trust in the Commission, its for the high level of commitment and discipline demonstrated and look forward to all persons recommitting themselves to serve the people of Guyana.

Your Honour,

In accordance with Article 212E (1) of the Constitution of Guyana, the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) hereby submit its 2018 Annual Report for your further action.



General Bishop, Rev. Dr. John Oswald Smith, C.C.H.
Chairman

RESOLUTION NO. 68

WHEREAS Article 212A of the Constitution provides for the establishment of an Ethnic Relations Commission;

AND WHEREAS in accordance with Article 212 B (1) of the Constitution, the Ethnic Relations Commission shall consist of –

- (a) *“not less than five nor more than fifteen members, nominated by entities, by a consensual mechanism determined by the National Assembly, including entities, representative of religious bodies, the labour movement, the private business sector, youth and women, after the entities are determined by the votes not less than two-thirds of all elected members of the National Assembly;*
- (b) *a member who shall be a nominee, without the right to vote, chosen by and from each of the following commissions to be established under this Constitution, Indigenous Peoples' Commission, Women and Gender Equality Commission, Commission for the Rights of the Child and Human Rights Commission.”*

AND WHEREAS the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Appointments (COA) examined the list of entities to nominate members to the Ethnic Relations Commission in accordance with article 212 B (1)(a) of the Constitution, and Resolution No. 62 of 2000 with regard to the number of members on the said Commission;

/...2

AND WHEREAS the Parliamentary Committee on Appointments recommends that the number of members on the Ethnic Relations Commission be increased to ten (10) and the categories or groups include the representatives of the Christian, Hindu, and Muslim bodies, the labour movement, the private business sector, youth and women and a new category "Cultural/Ethnic" with one nominee each from the three (3) largest ethnic groups: Indo-Guyanese, Afro-Guyanese and Indigenous/Amerindian.

RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly approves the increase in the number of members on the Ethnic Relations Commission from seven (7) to ten (10) as proposed by the Committee on Appointments;

FURTHER RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly approves of the inclusion of a new category "Cultural/Ethnic" with the right to have three (3) members, one representative each of the three largest ethnic groups;

FURTHER RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly approves the list of entities on the attached First Schedule in accordance with Article 212 (B)(1)(a);

FURTHER RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly approves that the number of nominees for each group of entities be as follows:-

Groups of Entities	Number of Members
Christian Religion	One Member
Hindu Religion	One Member

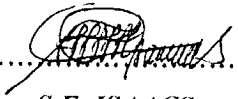
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Muslim Religion	One Member
Labour Movement	One Member
Private Sector Organisations	One Member
Youth Organisations	One Member
Women Organisations	One Member
Cultural/Ethnic Organisations	
- Indo-Guyanese	One Member
- Afro-Guyanese	One Member
- Indigenous/Amerindian	One Member

FURTHER RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly approves the consensual mechanism for the nomination of the members by the entities as set out in the Second Schedule attached.

Passed by the National Assembly on Monday, 10th February, 2014.


.....
S.E. ISAACS
Clerk of the National Assembly

**CLERK OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

Amended

FIRST SCHEDULE

**Groups and Entities within each Group to Nominate Members of the Ethnic
Relations Commission**

RELIGIOUS BODIES:-

Islamic Bodies

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat
Anjuman Ilifazutal Islam
Bakja Health Movement
Essequibo Ahmadiyya Organisation Lahore
Guyana Islamic Forum
Guyana Islamic Trust
Guyana United Sadr Islamic Anjuman
Hijatul Ulamaa
The Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana

Hindu Bodies

Brahma Khumaris
Conrnelia Ida Hindu Temple
Cove and John Ashram
Guyana Central Arya Samaj
Guyana Harijan Sansad
Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha
Guyana Maha Kali All Religions
Guyana Maha Kali Madrasies
Guyana Pandits Council
Guyana Sanatan Dhanna Maha Sabha
Hare Krishna Movement
Maha Kaapline Shakti Davi Mandir
Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organisation of Guyana

Christian Bodies

African Methodist Episcopalian
African Methodist Episcopalian (Zion)
Ambassadors for Christ

Assemblies of God in Guyana
Christian Brethren Church
Church of Christ
District of the Nazarene Church of Guyana
Elim Pentecostal Church
Ethiopian Orthodox Church
Family Federation for World Peace
From the Heart Church Ministries
Full Gospel Fellowship
Georgetown Ministers Fellowship
Guyana Conference of Seventh-Day Adventist
Guyana Congregational Union
Guyana Missionary Baptists
Guyana Presbyterian Church
Lifespring Ministries
Lodge Truth Church
Love and Faith Ministry
New Amsterdam/Canjie Christian Fellowship
New Testament Church of God
Outreach Ministries International
Presbytery of Guyana
Roman Catholic Church
The Wesleyan Church
The Anglican Church of Guyana
The Christian Mission Faith Miracle Ministries
The Church of God
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
The Guyana United Apostolic Mystical Council
The Hareyuya Church aka The Alleluias Church
The Lutheran Church of Guyana
The Methodist Church in Guyana
The Moravian Church
The Salvation Army

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT BODIES

Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union (AT&GWU)
Clerical & Commercial Workers Union (CCWU)
General Workers Union (GWU)
Guyana Agricultural & General Workers' Union (GAWU)
Guyana Bauxite and General Workers Union (GBSU)

Guyana Labour Union (GLU)
 Guyana Local Government Officers' Union (GLGOU)
 Guyana Mining, Metal and General Workers Union (GMMGWU)
 Guyana Postal and Telecommunications Workers Union (GP&TWU)
 Guyana Public Service Senior Staff Association (GPSSA)
 Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU)
 Guyana Taxis Service Association
 Guyana Teachers Union (GTU)
 National Association of Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE)
 National Union of Public Service Employees (NUPSE)
 Printing Industry Allied Workers Union (PIAWU)
 Union of Agricultural & Allied Workers (UAAW)
 United Minibus Union
 University of Guyana Senior Staff Association (UGSSA)
 University of Guyana Workers Union (UGWU)

PRIVATE SECTOR BODIES

Association of Non-Traditional Exporters
 Bankers' Association of Guyana
 Bartica Chamber of Commerce
 Berbice Chamber of Commerce and Development Association (BCCDA)
 Central Corentyne Chamber of Commerce (CCCC)
 Consultative Association of Guyanese Industry (CAGI)
 Essequibo Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ECCI)
 Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI)
 Guyana Arts & Craft Association
 Guyana Forest Products Association
 Guyana Gold & Diamond Miners Association
 Guyana Manufacturers and Services Association
 Guyana Private Sector Commission
 Guyana Rice Millers and Exporters Development Association
 Guyana Rice Producers Association
 Guyana Trawlers and Seafood Processors Association
 Linden Chamber of Industry, Commerce and Development (LCICD)
 Mahaica Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI)
 National Association of Regional Chambers of Commerce of Guyana (ARCC)
 Private Aircraft Owners Association of Guyana
 Rupununi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI)
 Shipping Association of Guyana

The Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana
Upper Corentyne Chamber of Commerce (UCCI)
West Berbice Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WBCCI)
West Demerara/East Bank Essequibo & Islands Chamber of Commerce
and Industry (WD/EBE)/I)

YOUTH BODIES

AFC Youth Arm
Arya Samaj Youth Organisation
Central Baptist Youth Fellowship
Church of Christ Youth Group
Cove & John Ashram Youth Organisation
Dharma Golden Om Youth Organisation
Dharmic Naujawan (Dharmic Youth)
Full Gospel Youth Fellowship
Gandhi Youth Organisation
Girl Guides Association
Guyana Congregational Young People's Union
Guyana Junior Chamber (Jaycees)
Guyana Network of Schools Health Clubs
Guyana Scouts Association
Guyana Youth and Student Movement
Guyana Youth Development Association
Indian Arrival Committee Youth Group
Joshua Youth Generation
Leo Association of Guyana
Methodist Youth Club
Moravian Youth Club
Muslim Youth League
Muslim Youth Organisation
National Youth Commission
Outreach Youth Ministries International, Youth Ministry
Presbyterian Church of Guyana Youth Arm
Progressive Youth Organisation
Rights of the Child
Roman Catholic Youth Office
Rotaract Clubs of Guyana
St. Francis Community Developers (SFCD)
The Guyana Anglican Association Youth Arm
The President Youth Award Republic of Guyana Youth Programme

The Youth Ministries Department of the Guyana Conference of Seven-Day Adventist
University of Guyana Student Society
Volunteer Youth Corps
Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)
Youth Achievers
Youth Advocacy Movement (YAM)
Youth Coalition for Transformation
Youth Ministries Department of the Assembly of God

WOMEN'S BODIES

Guyana Association of Women's Artists
Guyana Association of Women's Lawyers
Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha's Mahalia Mandale
Guyana Nurses Association
Guyana Women's Miners Association
Guyanese Women in Development (GUY WID)
Lutheran Church Women
National Congress of Women
National Women's Organisation Guyana Presbyterian Church
Outreach Ministries International Women's Group
Police Wives' Association
Red Thread Women's Development Project
Rural Women's Development Network
Salvation Army Home League
The Diocesan Mother's Union
The District Women's Work Commission
The National Committee of Sisters Affairs (NACOSA)
The Women's Ministries Department of the Guyana Conference of Seventh-Day Adventist
TUC Women's Advisory Council
Women Across Differences
Women's Progressive Organisation
Young Women's Christian Association of Guyana (YWCA)

CULTURAL /ETHNIC

Amerindian Bodies

Amerindian People's Association
Guyanese Organisation of Indigenous Peoples'
National Amerindian Development Fund
National Toshias Council
The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana

African Bodies

African Cultural and Development Association
African Heritage Foundation
All African Guyanese Council
Forum for the Liberation of African Guyanese
Guyana Rastafarian Council
National Emancipation Trust
Pan African Movement
The African Welfare Convention

Indian Bodies

Guyana Indian Heritage Association
Indian Arrival Committee
Indian Commemoration Trust

AMENDED

SECOND SCHEDULE

Consensual Mechanism for the Nomination by Entities for members of the Ethnic Relations Commission

All the Entities in each Group, immediately on the passage of this motion, should be written to by the Clerk of the National Assembly inviting them to meet as a group, to select their nominees and to send a representative/s on an appointed day/date, time to appear before the Parliamentary Standing Committee to Appoint Members of the Commissions, at the Parliament Buildings to present the name/s of their nominee/s for Membership on the Ethnic Relations Commission.

A deadline shall be set by the Clerk of the National Assembly on advice by the Standing Committee, by which time it would be formally notified of the names and other requested particulars of the Nominee/s, the process used for the selection of the Nominee/s by the entity, and a statement to the effect that the Nominee/s is/are supported and accepted by that entity.

The Nominee/s chosen to represent the Group must be a person/s who is competent to contribute positively to the work of the Commission and who is/are committed to ensuring that it discharges all of its functions. They should have earned public respect and be of unquestionable honesty and integrity.

The process used must be demonstrated to be unbiased and transparent. It is important that the Nominee/s obtain the unquestioned support and acceptance of the Entity nominating them as well as the Entities within the Group.

Where there is a recognized "*umbrella organization*" in the list of entities for that Group, the Clerk shall write to that organization and copy his letter to each of the "*constituent entities*" within the Group.

TENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA
FIRST SESSION (2012 - 2014)
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

RESOLUTION NO. 84

WHEREAS the Standing Committee on Appointments to Commissions in keeping with Resolution No. 68 of 2014, consulted the approved lists of entities for nomination to the Ethnic Relations Commission;

AND WHEREAS the entities met and made submissions of their nominations between April 30, 2014 and June 6, 2014;

RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly approves the following persons from the following categories as Members of the Ethnic Relations Commission established under the Constitution, and signify to the President that:

Christian Religion

Dr. John O. Smith

Hindu Religion

Ms. Rajkumarie Singh

Muslim Religion

Shaykh Moeenul Hack

/...2

Labour Movement

Mr. Norris Emanuel Witter

Private Sector Organisations

Mr. Ravindra Dev

Youth Organisations

Ms. Gomattie Kalicharran

Women Organisations

Ms. Ruth Howard

Cultural/Ethnic Organisations

Afro-Guyanese

Mr. Barrington Braithwaite

Indo-Guyanese

Mr. Neaz Subhan

Indigenous/Amerindian

Mr. Peter Persaud

have been nominated in accordance with Resolution No. 68 of 2014, and Article 212 B (1)(a) of the Constitution to be appointed Members of the Ethnic Relations Commission; and

/...3

3.

FURTHER RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly adopts the Fifth Report of the Standing Committee to address matters relating to the nomination and appointment of Members to the Ethnic Relations Commission.

Passed by the National Assembly on Thursday, 10th July, 2014.

..........

S.E. ISAACS

Clerk of the National Assembly

**CLERK OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**



ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA
FIRST SESSION (2015-2018)
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

RESOLUTION NO. 71

WHEREAS the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Appointments agreed to uphold Resolution No 68 of 2014, which approved the list of entities to be consulted for nomination to the Ethnic Relations Commission;

AND WHEREAS the entities met and made submissions of their nominations between April 27, 2016 and January 25, 2017;

RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly approves the following persons from the following categories as members of the Ethnic Relations Commission established under the Constitution, and signify to the President that:

Christian Bodies
Dr. John O. Smith

Hindu Bodies
Sister Rajkumarie Singh

Muslim Bodies
Mr. Roshan Khan

Labour Movement Bodies
Mr. Norris Emanuel Witter

/...2

2.

Private Sector Organisations
Major-General (Ret'd) Norman McLean

Youth Organisations
Mr. Deodat Persaud

Women Organisations
Ms. Ruth Howard

Cultural/Ethnic Bodies
Afro-Guyanese
Mr. Barrington Braithwaite

Indo-Guyanese
Mr. Neaz Subhan

Indigenous/Amerindian Bodies
Mr. Ashton Simon

have been nominated in accordance with Resolution No 17 of 2003, and Article 212 B (1) (a) of the Constitution to be appointed members of the Ethnic Relations Commission; and

FURTHER RESOLVED,

That this National Assembly adopts the Third Report of the Standing Committee to address matters relating to the nomination and appointment of Members to the Ethnic Relations Commission.

Passed by the National Assembly on 19th January, 2018.

.....
S.E. ISAACS, A.A.,
Clerk of the National Assembly

Ethnic Relations Commission



WORK PLAN – 2018/19

May 2018

EXECUTIVE

With a constitutional mandate to promote harmony and good relations among Guyanese across the country, the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), having been reconstituted on February 22, 2018, and its official tenure commenced on April 24, 2018, has derived a comprehensive program of works for the second half of 2018 and 2019 in its entirety.

Cognizant of the daunting mandate as enshrined in Guyana's constitution, the Commission deliberated extensively to construct a work program that it believes is encompassing and reflective of its directive and which possesses effective mechanisms to generate interest with immense potential to engender togetherness.

Cognizant of the many related challenges, the Commission has realized and agreed that integral to the entire process is the critical need for education at all levels in society. As such, one of the first tasks it undertook was to rebuild the capacity of the important Public Education and Awareness Unit underscoring the recognition of the crucial role learning plays in the process. To ensure that the work plan reflects the wishes and expectations of the Guyanese public, the Commission embarked and engaged national stakeholders and interested individuals representative of the various constituencies. Many valuable suggestions were received and incorporated.

The ERC is firm in its belief that with effective mechanisms to enhance public awareness on the various aspects of this most challenging process, education brings understanding which aids better appreciation and which in the end creates an environment for the removal of ambiguities with the potential to remove suspicion and hopefully reduce tension allowing for harmony and good relations to flourish.

Therefore it is not by coincidence that ERC has made Public Education & Awareness efforts a priority in its work plan.

Much of the projects proposed will be ongoing necessitating renewal with time.

- 1. Engagement with national stakeholders.**
- 2. Production of Public Service Announcements (PSA).**
- 3. Quarterly Magazine and Newsletters.**
- 4. Production of brochures.**
- 5. Monthly television and radio programs.**
- 6. National Drama competition.**
- 7. National essay competition.**
- 8. National Short Film Competition.**
- 9. Training for Commissioners and Staff**
- 10. Harmony-themed initiatives such as “I AM US” & “TEAM Guyana”.**
- 11. Radio Serial.**
- 12. National Cultural Exposition and Unity Concert.**
- 13. Production of short films & documentaries.**
- 14. Initiate the creation of a national history text.**
- 15. Initiate harmony studies in the schools’ curriculum.**
- 16. Promotion of community-based harmony projects.**
- 17. Public lectures, exhibitions & workshops.**
- 18. Conducting pertinent research.**
- 19. “Race Free Zone” initiative.**
- 20. Awards for the promotion of harmony.**
- 21. Support harmony-based community projects.**
- 22. Initiate establishment of National Harmony Centre/Park.**

23. Build alliances and national data base.

24. Establish a National Harmony Volunteer Team (NHVT).

25. National Glossary.

26. Ethnic/National Days Observances.

1. Engagement with National Stakeholders

- President of the Cooperative Republic
- Leader of the Opposition
- The Media (A Media Brunch was held)
- The Diplomatic Corp
- The Private Sector Commission
- The Religious Communities
- The Inter-Religious Organization
- Ethnic Groups (Indigenous, African & Indian)
- Women
- Youth
- The Labour Movement
- The National Commission for Differently Able Persons
- Others that are deemed necessary.

This has begun and will be continuous for specific outcomes in some cases.

2. Production of Harmony-themed Public Service Announcement (PSAs)

With education a priority, this will be an ongoing process targeting the following: -

- Television
- Radio
- Newspapers
- Social Media
- Online News entities.

This is expected to realize 30-60 seconds harmony-based advertisements (not confined to this duration; determined by need) for the electronic media and posters for print and social media.

To be simple, catering for all levels of society, including translation into the nine different Indigenous languages or created specifically for that constituent and parenting programs. A component to educate the nation of the functions and authority of the Commission.

The development of partnership with relevant donor agencies would be pursued to mitigate any challenges pertaining to funding for sustainability.

The Public Education & Awareness Unit under guidance of the Commission's Media & Public Relations Sub-Committee, will lead this and all other projects designed for national sensitization.

The Unit would need to build its internal capacity through the acquisition of both the human and technical resources (Videographer & Editing facilities).

For more information on the Commission's work, please visit our website at www.kenyaadvisorycommission.org

3. **Quarterly Magazine & Newsletters**

This is expected to further the Commission's awareness efforts by capturing its work throughout the country with distribution targeting:

- Learning Institutions
- Government Ministries and Entities
- Private Sector Corporations and Businesses
- Recreational Facilities (Community Clubs, etc)
- Stakeholders Network, etc

It is also designed to: -

- Incorporate feature articles on the promotion of harmony and good relations.
- Capture feedback from members of the public.
- Feature community projects for the promotion of harmony and good relations.
- Inspire for the promotion of harmony and good relations.

For more information on the Commission's work, please visit our website at www.kenyaadvisorycommission.org

4. Production of Harmony-themed Brochures

This is to augment the awareness efforts with distribution primarily targeting community outreaches, exhibitions and national events in which the Commission will participate. These are expected to be simple but informative with messages regarding the Commission, what is expected of all and what can the public do to help in the promotion of harmony and good relations.

General renewal of what currently exists and to determine what would be specifically needed depending upon circumstances.

Implementation is expected to be completed by 2017.

5. Monthly Television & Radio Programs

This is with the expectation of allowing the Commission an opportunity to articulate on the promotion of harmony and good relations while informing on projects undertaken or to be embarked upon.

Commissioners as well as agreed resource persons can be featured depending on the need.

- Feedback/testimonials from the general public to be a fixture.
- Content must also keep within the fold of being informative and edifying.
- 30-minute duration.

Implementation is expected to be completed by 2017.

6. National Harmony-themed Drama Competition

This is designed generally for the participation of schools, drama clubs, community groups and cultural and religious organizations.

Drama, by its nature, is an effective tool to bring people from various backgrounds together in the process of rehearsals and performance.

This coming together fits into the Commission's mandate thereby allowing for the creation of a potent mechanism for the promotion of harmony and good relations.

- It has logistical challenges and will necessitate a Coordinating team.
- It also allows for possible collaboration with corporate Guyana for funding, promotion of good values and for expansion into the future.
- It can possibly commence as a Regional competition with winners coming to the City for the performance in the final or can start with schools that are offering Drama at CSEC.

Implementation is expected to be completed by 2017.

7. **National Harmony-themed Essay Competition**

This is designed to target Students of Primary and Secondary schools as well as adults in the open category. It bodes well to influence thoughts which can be channeled for national harmony.

The winning entry as well other impacting ones will be featured in the Quarterly Magazine, on the Commission's website and in the Media.

This provides an opportunity to collaborate with the Ministry of Education and educational institutions.

8. **Harmony-themed Short-Film Competition**

This not only generates and captures ideas and messages through creative minds across the country, but builds a reservoir of vital resources for influence.

Films would be used across the media spectrum including special viewings at strategic places and schools and work places.

The Commission would seek partnership with corporate Guyana and donor agencies to ensure meaningful rewards for the efforts of the prospective producers.

9. **Training for Commissioners & Staff**

This is important and is designed for the areas of

- Mediation
- Conflict Resolution
- Election Monitoring

Community Leaders will also be targeted.

Relevant donor agencies will be approached for assistance with the resource persons for the various areas if not available locally.

10. **Harmony-themed Initiatives**

This is designed to incorporate broader national projects in an attempt to make the country one constituent as envisaged within the concepts of the following:-

- Sporting activities/interactions
- Community Fairs/Exposition
- Building "TEAM Guyana"
- National Day of Drumming (simultaneous across)

- National Cultural Days
- The “I AM US” Thrust

These initiatives have tremendous potential to drive interest and to engender the promotion of harmony and good relations.

The logistical details of each will have to be documented and a practical schedule worked out.

10. **Harmony-Themed Radio Serial**

11. **Harmony-Themed Radio Serial**

With radio over the years making an impacting return to the information landscape and with growing audience, this can be taken advantage of for messaging pertinent to the Commission’s mandate.

Success like “Merundoi” and what would have obtained in the past, offers a wonderful opportunity through this effective medium to aid the process.

12. **National Cultural Exposition & Unity Concert**

12. **National Cultural Exposition & Unity Concert**

This is envisaged in a similar manner to that of Guy Expo with the focus and highlight being the spectrum of our various cultures.

It becomes an exposition of our art, food, fashion, religion and history through a demonstrative passion for national harmony.

- Proposal for a two/three-night event with a formal evening launch and scheduled presentations for all ethnic groups over the period.
- Has tremendous potential for the creation of a national cultural festival with appeal for Guyanese both home and abroad and regional and international tourists.
- Culminates with Unity Concert which can potentially become an annual event as part of cultural tourism.
- Great opportunities for partnership with corporate Guyana and other stakeholders.
- Ambitious, but very possible.

13. **Harmony-Themed Radio Serial**

13. **Production of Short Films & Documentaries**

This is intended for internal production by the Commission through the Public Education & Awareness Unit.

With a better understanding of national realities enforced by research, the Commission can deliver where necessary.

Internal capacity would have to be built including technical resources.

14. **Creation of National Educational Text**

Arguably the most formidable but important endeavor the Commission would undertake for desirable long-term benefits.

It is designed to forge a gathering of Guyanese academia in local history, culture and cultural traditions to derive a holistic text book (books) that accurately captures the history of our various people, their evolution in terms of lifestyles and contributions to national development and all aspects of Guyana's social infrastructure.

This is intended for all levels of learning to foster understanding of our diversity and to improve on understanding of what serves to identify us but collectively make us a nation. This has the potential of becoming the basic but probably most potent tool to change perceptions and remove stereotypes.

This the Commission can initiate through the Ministry of Education and like-minded partners.

A special committee to be established to explore avenues for its realization.

15. **Initiate Harmony Studies in the School Curriculum**

In keeping with #14, this would help augment the process of fostering harmony within the school system with national standardization and with the expectation for it becoming mandatory.

In the absence of the desired national text, the Commission will make representation for harmony-based classes to be designed in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

This is not designed to be confined to the school systems but can be adapted for places of employment.

16. Community Harmony Projects

Innovative conceptualization of projects which necessitate the communities working together for successful execution.

- Desired prototypes to be discussed.
- Can manifest as a physical infrastructural project, agricultural, cultural, youth, women or any other initiative.

Potential opportunities for exhibitions and sport-related interactions.

17. Public Lectures & Workshops

Intended to create space and time for relevant lectures and ensuing discussions to aid in the promotion of harmony and good relations.

Consideration for the creation of at least one annual prestigious lecture featuring an expert who can be sourced both locally and overseas.

- Possibly aim for high-profile international figures if resources allow.
- Scheduled workshops for institutions of learning and places of employment.
- Incorporate Commissioner Braithwaite's social anthropology proposal.

This allows for the creation of space for frank and open discussions/debates on realities and to receive possible solutions by engaging ethnic and cultural groups together, e.g.

- The influence of culture on modern society and its possible impediment for harmony.
- The necessity of using prefixes in identifying members of the various ethnic groups (Afro, Indo etc.)
- What prevents us from being together?
- How elections impact on harmony?
- Constitutional reform and harmony.
- Employment practices and impact on harmony.
- How morals or lack thereof impact harmony?

- Impact on harmony of particular prayers in schools.

A needs assessment to be conducted for determination of human resources and rollout timetable.

17. **Conducting Research on the Impact of Religion on National Harmony**

18. Conducting Research

This is crucial to the work of the Commission in the context of being fact driven. It will build on work done in the past either by being proactive or reactive to gather information that can: -

- Accurately assess a potentially contentious situation
- Dispel perception
- Build information archive.
- Advice on correcting language considered inappropriate in national documents.

Consider research on economic disparity and its impact on harmony.

18. **Conducting Research on the Impact of Religion on National Harmony**

19. Certification of Race-Free Zones

This is an initiative that was received from the Private Sector Commission during an engagement with the Commission.

The Commission sees merit in this and believes that such certification, effectively promoted, could drive interest by places of employment, institutions of learning, government and other entities to want to be declared a Race-Free Zone.

Commission will work with interested parties to determine criteria and ensuing process.

19. **Certification of Race-Free Zones**

20. Awards for the Promotion of Harmony

Design to recognize the valuable work done by: -

- The Media
- Individuals
- Organizations/Clubs

The Commission believes that such national recognition and incentive are impetus to engender interest for innovativeness towards the promotion of harmony and good relations.

Source: Commission of the Republic of Guyana, 2017, p. 10.

21. Support Harmony Projects

This is premised on a suggestion from the interaction with the Youth constituent.

The Commission is open to supporting where possible, such projects either directly or indirectly through the mobilization of resources.

Suggestion received to design gender-based projects: -

- Women as nurturers of society and how to harness that potential to promote harmony.
- Men as fathers in providing guidance/role models and how to harness that potential to promote harmony.

Project profile for such support/initiative to be discussed and finalized.

Commission to decide on mechanism for support for independent projects.

Source: Commission of the Republic of Guyana, 2017, p. 10.

22. National Harmony Centre/Park

A project the Commission can initiate with relevant stakeholders.

Intended for a multifaceted Centre/Park that is designated a safe national space for all to access and which encourages harmony based activities including research, rehearsals, impromptu and scheduled cultural performances and other related activities.

Through its nature, it's an effective tool to bring people together unsolicited in the process of rehearsals and performance. It also allows for possible collaboration with corporate Guyana.

Allows for the show casing of a national harmony mural and creation of new material through the arts for the promotion of harmony and good relations. Would need allocation of suitable land and funding for its realization.

An ambitious endeavor that would need a detailed project/concept paper for presentation.

Source: Commission of the Republic of Guyana, 2017, p. 10.

23. Build Alliances & National Data Base

Through the work of the Commission, alliances will be built from the outreaches and a data base continuously updated.

This provides a good platform for the sustaining of messaging.

For more information, please refer to page 14.

24. National Harmony Volunteer Team (NHVT)

This is envisaged to create a national harmony volunteer corps that is drawn from all sections of society.

With requisite training, the corps members become harmony ambassadors to influence the national process.

Establishing harmony clubs in schools.

For more information, please refer to page 14 and page 15.

25. Creation of National Glossary

Intended to create a glossary of a set of words or phrases that are considered as objectionable and therefore impediments to national harmony through conversations including those by politicians.

The Commission is aware of how subjective this can turn out and the many related challenges, including cultural-based, for its derivative.

This entails extensive consultations through various mechanisms including workshops.

For more information, please refer to page 14.

26. Ethnic Days/National Observances.

Host/participate in and/or recognize activities for national festivals and significant dates e.g., Emancipation, Indian, Chinese, Portuguese Arrival, Indigenous Heritage Month, Deepavali, Phagwah, Easter, Eid Christmas etc.

For more information, please refer to page 14 and page 15.

Conclusion

The foregoing has been proposed and approved by the wider Commission.

This document is expected to provide a useful guide for the Commission to manage its program and allow for the nation to be apprised on its intention as projects are gradually launched.

It captures diverse ideas, both simple and advanced, for the delivery of the Commission's mandate to promote harmony and good relations.

It has enshrined mechanisms for useful feedback which in some instances can help to embellish for effectiveness and national appeal.

The Commission remains cognizant of the inherent challenges for its holistic realization.

Approved by the Commission

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND AWARENESS UNIT



2018 REPORT

Head, Public Education and Awareness Unit

Ethnic Relations Commission

Summary

This report provides an overview of the work done by the Commission in 2018 since officially assuming office on April 24, 2018. Despite the financial challenges and limited human resources on the assumption of office, the ERC had a successful year.

The report highlights the Constituency meetings had, the completed stakeholder engagements within (6) six regions beginning in the month of September and ending December, courtesy calls paid on the Regional Democratic Councils in regions visited as well as other autonomous offices, workplace engagements with a cross-section of organizations, special meetings with the Inter-Religious Organization, Joint Services and Men's Groups. It also provides a panoramic view on the public relations activities for the year, educational materials and branding initiatives successfully completed and finally presents a recap of the recommendations, issues and concerns raised by a number of agencies/bodies under the (9) nine Constituency.

Constituency Meetings

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) being reconstituted on February 22, 2018, conducted a number of Constituency meetings for the year by engaging members of (9) nine Constituencies and paying a courtesy call on the Private Sector Commission. The meetings were part of the Commission's initiative to introduce the ten (10) newly sworn in Commissioners, speak on its work plan and to hear from the various Constituencies about issues/concerns they needed to be addressed.

Although not regarded as a Constituency, the Commission met with the Inter-Religious Organization (IRO) as a valued stakeholder to garner feedback on promoting national harmony and called for collaborative efforts to work on future projects.

Date	Constituency	No. of Participants	No. of Organizations
July 17,2018	Hindu	7	5
July 17,2018	Christians	26	24
July 25,2018	African	15	6
July 25,2018	Indigenous	5	4
July 25,2018	Muslim	6	4
July 25,2018	Indian	4	2
July 26,2018	Youths	33	25
July 30,2018	Women	18	13
September 6,2018	Labour Union	17	12

Stakeholder Meetings/Courtesy Calls

During the year 2018, the Commission held Stakeholder meetings in Regions 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 10. Courtesy calls were also made to the Regional Democratic Councils within those regions and Mayor's Office for the regions with towns.

Stakeholder Meetings

Date	Regions	Venue	Time	No. of Participants
September 11, 2018	2	Town Hall Essequibo Coast	14:08 h – 15:30 h	19
September 20, 2018	5	Bushlot Secondary School	15:07 h – 16:38 h	32
September 26, 2018	3	West Demerara School	15:30 h - 16: 55 h	44
October 4, 2018	10	Mackenzie High School	15:45 h – 16:43 h	28
November 8, 2018	4	Houston Secondary School	15:40 h - 17:17 h	18
November 9, 2018	4	BV Secondary School	15:48 h – 16:50 h	11
November 23, 2018	4	Regency Suite	15:04 h - 17:00 h	42
December 7, 2018	9	Arapaima School	17:00 h – 18:35 h	48
December 8, 2018	9	Konashen GUNNS	10:00 h – 13:35 h	40

Courtesy Calls

Regional Democratic Council

Date	Regions	Venue	Time	No. of Participants
September 11, 2018	2	RDC Office, Anna Regina, Essequibo Coast	10: 40 h – 11: 40 h	
September 20, 2018	5	RDC Office, Forth Wellington, West Coast Berbice	10: 07 h - 10: 48 h	20
September 26, 2018	3	RDC Office, Vreed-en-Hoop, West Coast Demerara	10:03 h – 11:04 h	20
October 4, 2018	10	RDC Office, Linden	12: 15 h – 13:12 h	19

November 9, 2018	4	RDC Office, Triumph Village, East Coast Demerara	13: 57 h - 16:10 h	21
December 7, 2018	9	Amerindian Hostel, Lethem	09:20 h - 10:00 h	16

Private Sector Commission

The Commissioners paid a courtesy call on the Private Sector Commission (PSC) on July 12, 2018. The meeting provided the opportunity for the Commissioners to introduced themselves, garner feedback from the PSC on matters of national harmony and discuss a number of planned projects within the ERC work plan. The meeting was organized through the Deputy Chairman, Major General (Ret'd) Norman McLean, and attended by (8) eight Commissioners.

ABC Countries

Nine (9) Commissioners from the ERC met with several representatives of the ABC countries on July 19, 2018. The meeting was held at Duke Lodge and discussions focused on the Commission's Constitutional mandate and possible collaborative efforts between the ERC and the ABC countries on achieving national harmony.

Guyana Defence Force

The ERC also paid a courtesy call to the Guyana Defence Force on September 24, 2018, at 10:00 h. The meeting was attended by (8) eight Commissioners at Camp Ayanganna.

Mayors visit

Date	Regions	Venue	Time	No. of Participants
September 11, 2018	2	Anna Regina Town Hall	13:13 h – 14:00 h	9

Workplace Engagements

The ERC conducted a total of (5) five Workplace engagements in Regions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10. The meeting allowed the Commission to meet with employees at the grass root level to fortify awareness of the Constitutional body. A power point presentation was utilized to highlight the genesis and the evolution of the ERC to date. The presentation was very informative and interactive, and provided a deeper understanding to those in attendance about ERC's mandate, composition of the Commission, roles of each unit, complaint procedure and channels that can be used to contact and follow the works of the ERC.

Date	Regions	Venue	Time	No. of Participants
September 11, 2018	2	Richard Fikal Police Training College, Essequibo Coast	11:00 h – 12:10 h	28
September 20, 2018	5	Burma Rice Research Centre, Mahaicony	13:03 h – 14: 05 h	40
September 26, 2018	3	Aracari Resort, West Bank Demerara	13:40 h – 14:45 h	15
October 4, 2018	10	Bosai Minerals Inc., Linden	14:19 h – 15: 45 h	21
November 8, 2018	4	Sterling Product Ltd., Providence, East Bank Demerara	14:00 h -14:55 h	7

Special Meetings/Forums/Expos

Special Meeting

Date	Meeting	Venue	Time	No. of Participants
July 26, 2018	IRO	Herdmanston Lodge	10:32 h – 12:35 h	21
September 24, 2018	Joint Services	Duke Lodge	14:00 h	20
November 29, 2018	Men's Consultation	Herdmanston Lodge	10:10 h – 12:05 h	38

Indigenous Heritage Food and Craft Expo

The ERC participated in the 2018 Indigenous Heritage Food and Craft Expo September 1 to September 3, 2018. The objectives were to:

- To educate on the role and functions of the Ethnic Relations Commission
- Sensitize the public on the continuous work of the Commission through its Public Education and Awareness Unit
- To create awareness on the importance of ensuring equality of opportunity among citizens.
- To seek commitment from citizens in building a peaceful society.

Items on Display

- Photos of past and recent activities that the Commission completed
- **Pamphlets:**
 - What you Need to Know
 - Facts you Should Know
 - Representation of the People Act 2001
 - The Racial Hostility Act”
- **Tokens:** ERCs Synthetic Bands and key rings. Participants won items by answering a question about the ERC during our Trivia sessions.
- **ERC’s Selfie Boards**
- **ERC Fortune wheel**

Public Relations Activities

For the year under review, January to December 2018, the Commission sent out (6) six Press releases and (5) public messages. It should be noted that the ERC commenced building the staff complement of the Public Education and Awareness Unit in July 2018 with the hiring of the Public Relations Officer followed by the Head of the Unit and several Programme Officers in August 2018.

As a means of re-connecting with the media fraternity, the ERC held its first media engagement “Media Brunch” on July 14, 2018 at the Georgetown Club.

Press Releases

- **BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS RECALL HARROWING EXPERIENCES**
-as ERC joins in observances to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October 19, 2018

- **ERC HIGHLIGHTS MULTIPLE MEANING OF DIWALI**

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) earlier today, held a pre-Diwali event in which a number of students from various schools participated by singing religious songs, completing a few pieces of the colourful “Rangolis” and lighting the symbolic Diya.....

November 5, 2018

- **ERC MARKS YOU MAN NABI OBSERVANCE WITH CONTRIBUTION TO ORPHANAGE**

The children of the SHAHEED’S Boys and Girls Orphanage, Alexander Street, Kitty were the main beneficiaries of a donation from the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) on Monday November 19, 2018. Against the backdrop of the Youman Nabi observance, food and personal supplies, clothing and even educational games such as chess and scrabble were some of the items donated.....

November 21, 2018

- **ERC IN COLLABORATION EFFORT WITH GEORGETOWN STAKEHOLDERS**

Close to 40 representatives from private sector companies and other agencies concentrated in Region 4 met with the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) in Georgetown on Friday to offer their views on promoting ethnic harmony and peace among Guyanese.....

November 24, 2018

- **ERC SPREADS CHRISTMAS JOY TO SENIOR CITIZENS AT ARCHER’S HOME**

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) on Tuesday December 18 comforted the senior citizens of Archer’s Home, with a treat of caroling and personal-care products, to brighten their spirits for the festive season. Staff members of the ERC were challenged to participate in a shoebox gift initiative meant for the elderly residents of the home.....

December 19, 2018

- **ERC GREETES INDIGENOUS PEOPLES COMMISSION (IPC)**
The Ethnic Relations Commission, (ERC), met the Indigenous Peoples Commission (IPC) earlier this month with firm commitments on both sides to collaborate during the New Year and to confront many vexing issues affecting the indigenous peoples of Guyana.....

December 27, 2018

Messages

- **VIDEO MESSAGE FROM ERC ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS**
Together let's strive for national harmony during Local Government Elections 2018.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNrsJYYtVgg&t=44s>

October 30, 2018

- **A MESSAGE FROM THE ERC FOR DEEPAVALI 2018**
On this auspicious occasion of the festival of Deepavali, the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) would like to extend greetings and best wishes to all Guyanese especially our Hindu brothers and sisters.....
November 6, 2018

- **A MESSAGE FROM THE ERC ON THE OCCASION OF YOUUMAN NABI**
-Let's all be inspired by the pertinent lessons
The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) extends greetings to all Guyanese, particularly the Muslim community, in observance of Youuman Nabi; the birth and death anniversary of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).....

November 16, 2018

- **A STATEMENT FROM THE ERC ON THE PRESIDENT'S ILLNESS**
The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) takes this opportunity to extend best wishes for a speedy recovery to H.E. President David Granger who is currently in Cuba receiving medical treatment. It also wishes to note that its thoughts and prayers are with him; First Lady, Sandra Granger; his children; the rest of his family; relatives and friends.....

November 19, 2018

- **A STATEMENT FROM THE ETHNIC RELATIONS COMMISSION ON THE RESULTS OF THE NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION**

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) wishes to state that the debate on the no-confidence motion in the National Assembly yesterday is indicative that the democratic process of our nation is at work. It also exemplifies that, despite sharp political differences, democracy was made foremost. This is extremely healthy for our nation and its people.....

December 24, 2018

Training

Several employees from the Public Education and Awareness Unit and Media Monitoring Unit, benefited from Conflict Analysis training. The training was conducted by Mr. Derich Srdan (UN Representative) on December 13, 2018.

Name of Employees	Designation	UNIT
Mr. Renne Chester	Head, PEAU	PEAU
Mr. Shivanand Nandalall	PRO	PEAU
Ms. Abiola Chappell	Programme Officer	PEAU
Mrs. Nadine Luthers-Williams	Programme Officer	PEAU
Ms. Jennifer Persaud	Programme Officer	PEAU
Mr. Remington Eastman	Head, MMU	MMU
Mrs. Keisha Smith-Adams	Monitor	MMU

Branding Initiatives

In an effort to reposition its brand identity, the Commission invested in a number of brand initiatives with the intention to cultivate a new thinking about the ERC. Brand ideas were generated during the weekly Media Sub-Committee meetings with the objective of achieving a more formidable brand presence for the Commission.

Branded items:

- 3 ERC feather banners
- 3 ERC pull up banners
- 1000 pens
- 1200 Synthetic bands
- 10 X 25 Billboards on ECD and EBD (Because of some constraints the latter was realized in 2019)
- Rebranded and revamped the ERC Website (www.erc.org.gy)
- Created ERC's Facebook page, Instagram account, LinkedIn and You tube accounts.
- 2 social media selfie boards
- ERC fortune wheel
- 2 Harmony Challenge Boards

Educational Materials

To realize its 24 functions, the ERC set out to develop a number of educational materials in 2018. Materials took the form of both mass media and personalized communication tactics.

- 4 types of Posters (1000 each)
- Harmony Passport (2000)

Electronic Materials

- 5 Public Service Announcements
- Harmony Song

Harmony Buzz - the Commission officially launched its first Public Relations Show “Harmony Buzz” on December 9, 2018; the show will continue as an in house production in 2019 with the purchasing of the necessary graphics software and equipment. The running order of the show featured a sit down with the Chairman of ERC Rev. Dr. John Smith being interviewed by the Head of Public Education and Awareness Unit, Mr. Renne Chester. The show also provided a general overview of the genesis and functions of the ERC, featured all (10) ten Commissioners, highlighted some of the work completed and touched on upcoming events. Harmony Buzz was aired December 9 -12, 2018 on the following channels:

- CNS channel 6
- NCN channel 11
- TVG channel 28
- HBTv channel 9

Constituency Meetings in Review

Recommendations/Concerns/Issues

Constituency	Recommendations/Concerns/Issues
Hindu Bodies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms. Fareena Rosanna, Guyana Islamic Forum, recommended production of 3 min. videos for social media, nursery schools to bring peace, harmony. 2. Recommendation made for ERC to setup telephone hotline.
Muslim Bodies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religious tolerance not promoted- example of continuation of Hindu Society cited, string worn on wrist by Hindus, kemar worn by Muslims brought into focus. 2. Imam Mohamed Rasheed of Guyana Islamic Forum granted the ERC space for articles in the Forum’s quarterly magazine free of cost to promote harmony and good relations. 3. Representative of Bakja Health Movement urged the ERC to designate a representative on religion in parliament. Would like to see religious representatives speak of the good of other religions during their sermons. 4. Representative of Bakja also expressed alarm at behaviour of parliamentarians and asked Commission to intervene, thinks such behaviour stems from ethnic issues. 5. Rep. of Bakja called for establishment of small ERC groups in villages which would report to ERC Head Office.
Christian Bodies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Role of the Ministry of Social Cohesion and its relationship with the ERC queried. 2. One speaker advocated religious groupings meet together with the ERC as opposed to separately. Commissioner Subhan clarified present meetings are preliminary in nature and did not rule out meetings with different religious groupings together. 3. Pastor Oliver Moore, Seventh Day Adventist Church, commented that trust is a “big thing” and the new ERC has to earn it and be seen as trustworthy. He urged the Commission to formulate its

	<p>programmes to target young people in the classrooms, perhaps from nursery level upwards. Mr. Moore also proposed the use of sports and IT to target young people, the use of Drama, radio and television on a regular basis to “bombard” the populace to think differently.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Mr. Desmond Rogers, Full Gospel Assembly, pledged the support of the Christian community to the ERC and to make available a few scholarly works relevant to the Commission’s mandate. 5. Pastor Terrence Jaskarran, New Testament Church of God, viewed the divisions locally as mainly political and not religious. 6. Ms. Charlotte Halley, Presbyterian Church of Guyana, proposed a National Greeting be used from kindergarten upwards to generate peace.
Indigenous Groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call made for name “Amerindian” to be changed to “First People” or “Indigenous People”; similarly change “tribe” to “nation”. 2. Mining and water pollution remain on-going problem in hinterland areas. However, some pollution attributed to indigenous peoples themselves. 3. Untitled villages need to be addressed, people of indigenous communities not benefitting under Mining Act (1989) Sec.111. Persons told non-availability of pensions / pension books in Mabaruma sub-region from next year. 4. Moves to review Amerindian Act with Minister aborted. Initial meeting held but none subsequently. 5. Status of Amerindian Development Fund Project (ADFP) questioned. ERC told subject Minister unable to provide information. It was mulled that the ADFP can be investigated by the ERC to garner its role in the development of indigenous communities. 6. Wages paid late to security guards, affecting families in indigenous communities. 7. Medical services need improvement- Persons of different

	<p>ethnicity manning services. Patients from far flung areas have to wait hours and sometimes treatment does not match complaint.</p> <p>8. Unscrupulous businessmen exploiting workers in logging and mining sectors; not paying wages adequately.</p> <p>9. Call made for national holiday for indigenous peoples (September 10).September month of observances but without holiday.</p> <p>10. Commissioner Braithwaite invited Mr. Persaud, Ms. Valenzuela to write to the ERC about racial allegations in order for ERC to act; Deputy Chairman Mr. Mc Lean resolved that the ERC will write to the GGMC, Ministry of Natural Resources and other agencies to add its weight in light of complaints received about environmental pollution.</p> <p>11. Ms. Mary Valenzuela of GOIP expressed some doubt that ERC can solve problems of Indigenous Peoples.</p> <p>-Would like Amerindians to be referred to as Indigenous or First Peoples and wished not to be described as tribes but as Nations</p> <p>-expressed concern about how much ERC can do about mining in interior regions. Mercury levels high, water pollution. Mining pollution reached highest forum GGMC, Forestry Comm. still to act. Every year Toshao's Conference, same concerns raised. What can the ERC do? EPA, GGMC have reports. Reminded problems of Indigenous Peoples not only in Guyana but worldwide, UN held conference, complaints were lodged.</p> <p>12. Mr. Peter Persaud of TAAMOG supported points made by colleague. Expressed concern about untitled villages, referred to Mining Act 1989 Sec. 111 which says to protect Indigenous Communities to make them enjoy their environment but not happening. Important as ethnic relations to turn it around, show it's an ethnic problem because indigenous peoples do not have the power/means to address those issues. In Georgetown ministry is waste of time. Office there but nobody there to take up problems</p> <p>-Apart from mining concerns payment of pensions by Mabaruma sub-region. Dept. rep. told persons next year will not get pensions</p>
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	<p>/ pension books and allege it's a racial issue. Commissioner Subhan asked why think it's a racial issue and Persaud allege because person is Afro-Guyanese. Thinks it's a racial issue because not being addressed.</p> <p>- Example of mining in Barama River. River was black but muddy now. GGMC says no mining but still happening. It's an ethnic issue now. Toshao's Council says out loud but nothing happens. (Every year you hear same problems from Toshaos but nothing happens-Ms. Valenzuela)</p> <p>-Had meeting with Minister and told him e.g. looking at revision of Amerindian Act. Told him let us work together. First meeting was ok with it ministry got funding \$25mln.to revise Amerindian Act. Second meeting was told it was conflict of interest because that is govt and we are NGO's- Ms Valenzuela.</p> <p>13. Commissioner Braithwaite responded enforcement is different ball game and invited Indigenous groups to write to the ERC on concerns / issues not addressed. Not sure GGMC has the</p>
Indian Groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Indian Action Committee would like the ERC to look into employment practices at GECOM, the unilateral appointment of the Chairman, the Palmyra Monument, attacks on some individuals in the press and appointment of Permanent Secretaries at several ministries. 2. Mr. Dev feels the ERC has the most important job in the country and challenged the Commission to seek the assistance of experts (eg. Horowitz) who have done work on multi-ethnic societies. Mr. Dev cautioned that politicians always use ethnicity to suit their agenda and called on the ERC to take note. 3. The Ministry of Social Cohesion was cited for publicly contributing to one musical group but excluding another. 4. Much attention should be paid on re-writing Guyana's history with the help of scholars (e.g. Mr. Mc Gowan). 5. The "Ethnic Impact Statement" should be considered when major decisions are made by Government and "Affirmative Action" can be reviewed in the Guyana context. 6. Ms. Alli expressed IAC's concern of employment practices at GECOM, implications of President's unilateral appointment of

GECOM Chairman, issues surrounding Immigration monument at Palmyra, Berbice and hiring of Permanent Secretaries at Ministries based on ethnicity, articles in the press attacking individuals. Commissioner Subhan reminded staff at the ERC has depleted and media monitoring unit has to re-gain full complement.

7. Deputy Chair Mr. Mc Lean advised that ERC has established a Sub-Committee to look into GECOM employment practices comprising Mr. Alvin Smith, former Crime Chief, Jairam Petam, Human Resources Consultant and Stanley Moore, lawyer.
8. Ms. Alli expressed concern some members of IAC do not see Ministry of Social Cohesion as “genuine” and wider membership refuse to participate in Social Cohesion activities. When activities taking place only Ms. Alli would attend because of aforementioned reason.
9. In context of IAC, Commissioner Subhan highlighted IAC proposed Unity Play; Minister Norton liked it but didn't get approval from cabinet. IAC approached Indian High Commission to assist with monument because monument at Camp St locked out individuals. HC gave the undertaking then govt took it on, had meeting with govt but was not seen as a priority, but work is on-going, cannot get an answer, members feel ministry not forceful enough in representing the issue. IAC has not lost sight to work with Ministry.
10. Mr. Ravi Dev made reference to the politics of the 21st century will be the politics of the “ethnic line”. Must not deal with symptoms but causes of ethnicity. In 1995 predicted violence in Guyana which occurred in 1997 because theory identifies e.g. cannot lock out a people from the executive, etc. Packing the court, GECOM have repercussions.
Mr. Dev highlighted “social comparison process”- the tendency of individuals to compare themselves to others, cannot blame people because it's innate to compare. People will claim greater legitimacy e.g. First Peoples came first. Cited Mr. Donald Horowitz (1985) wrote “Ethnic Groups in Conflict” came up with simple formula: Social comparison process is tied into nature of group worth which is tied into individual worth. That's why ethnicity is so dangerous because if group is threatened, individual would feel threatened. Dev points out that both sides here want inequality for the opposing side.

	<p>Mr. Dev recommended that the ERC look at No. 11 of its functions and coined the phrase “Ethnic Impact Statement”. Also adopt “Affirmative Action” as seen in USA. Dev also reminded that politicians always politicize ethnicity and the ERC is tasked with the most important job in Guyana.</p> <p>11. Mr. Dev called on the ERC to render support to historian Professor Winston Mc Gowan programme on Guyana’s history.</p> <p>12. Mr. Akash Ramkissoon, Girmitya Research Centre, also referred to the “Ethnic Impact Statement” regarding the closure of the Wales sugar estate where predominantly Indo-Guyanese were employed. He observed that although it may be a prudent economic decision, the people affected would see it as a discriminatory act by the Government.</p> <p>13. Ramkissoon criticized the Ministry of Social Cohesion for publicly donating steel pans to UG group but no similar contribution of instruments to Indian musical group.</p>
African Groups	<p>1. One speaker alleged an example (The Procurement Act) of continuous discrimination towards African Guyanese irrespective of which Govt. holds the reins of power; another (Mr. Clyde Fowler) alleged an instance of blatant racism.</p> <p>2. Representatives called for a comprehensive history of Guyana and its peoples to be re-written by eminent scholars, building a reciprocal relationship with the ERC in the context of the UN Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024).</p> <p>3. The absence of Constitutional Reform, need for reparations, media monitoring, the non-issuance of a Banking Licence, the non-support of the Green Economy initiatives by the PSC, and the non-participation of all ethnic groups in observances such as Emancipation celebrations, were all seen as hampering ethnic harmony.</p> <p>1. Violet Jean Baptiste, ACDA, cited No.1 of ERC’s 24 functions “Provide for equality of opportunity.....between such persons. “ and said sadly lacking for African Guyanese. Procurement Act e.g. discriminates against African Guyanese regardless which Govt. in power.</p> <p>2. Speaker Royston Peters, AAGC, urged the ERC to focus intensely on the education process, especially teaching in schools</p>

adequately and properly of the correct history of Guyana and the African Guyanese. He feels that if done in the appropriate way will have various forms of dispensation and assist the country's development process. Mr. Peters also wishes that the country's premier educational institution, UG, focus on the teaching of Guyanese History (10) (Although he was unsure of the status of the UG History programme) especially for the young people. He referred to the UN Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and hopes there is a reciprocating arrangement with the ERC on sharing of ideas, information, etc. Mr. Peters also called for the formation of a collective in all African village communities and have one establishment for commonality, etc. and get assistance from the state or agencies of the state positioned to assist.

3. Deputy Chairman Mr. Norman Mc Lean readily expressed willingness to carry out the ERC's functions and specifically referred to Item No.5 & 6 of the Commission's 24 functions. He also mentioned that care must be exercised on making changes which organisations desire.

4. Mr. Eric Phillips, ACDA, echoed some of the main sentiments expressed by Mr. Peters but would also like the ERC to recommend that Govt. bring together the best historians to do a comprehensive history of Guyana. He intends to pursue reparations and approach Govt. in pursuit of claim of 18% of Guyana for African Guyanese. Mr. Phillips cited some elements of the Amerindian Act 2006 as form of reparations to Amerindians. He also expressed need for Constitutional Reform which he feels is critical for cohesion and growth where every race feels it has a role in governance. Mr. Phillips also raised additional concerns :-

-ERC and Media monitoring: some political leaders seen as racial entrepreneurs, using media with impunity and Mr. Phillips feels the ERC has serious responsibility monitoring media especially due to tensions which may arise at next elections.

-African Guyanese should get Banking Licence to develop community, referenced UN Decade for People of African Descent. Mr. Phillips also claims resistance from elements of business community fighting grant of Banking Licence. He feels

	<p>the PSC banking sub-group is preventing the granting of Banking Licence to the African Guyanese community which needs access to capital for its development. He also alleged racial bias and can cite many examples of persons of another ethnicity granted capital with similar business plan previously presented by African Guyanese.</p> <p>-Supports present Green Economy; avoid becoming Oil Economy, use revenues from Oil Economy to support Green Economy. ERC has to start educating nation on Green Economy. Although Mr. Phillips feels Green Economy is better model than purely Oil Economy, is alleging racism because PSC not supportive of Green Economy and if Govt changes, incoming administration would change economic policy for political and ethnic reasons. Opp. Leader's comments influencing PSC and Mr. Phillips alleged businesses not participating in Green Economy initiatives because of Govt.'s role and ethnic considerations. Deputy Chairman Mr. Norman Mc Lean promised to follow up on Mr. Philips' concerns with Private Sector Commission (PSC).</p> <p>-Social inclusion (thinks term is more appropriate than social cohesion); would like to see more participation of other groups in observances such as Emancipation since all groups participate in Phagwah, Diwali, etc. Observances e.g. Harmony week can render full participation.</p> <p>Commissioner Subhan referred to some plans of the present ERC among which is the production of a National Text intended to accurately reflect the history, role, culture, etc of the various ethnicities and coincidentally was among the concerns raised by the previous two speakers.</p>
Youth Organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ERC urged to spread awareness of its existence as well as its prosecutorial powers, etc. 2. Strong emphasis placed on promoting national identity

	<p>(Guyanese) as opposed to Indo, Afro, etc).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Exposure to other ethnicities advocated to engender respect, eliminate stereotypes (e.g. Georgetown school tours to hinterland communities). 4. Lesser known schools want to be invited to participate in Youth programmes e.g. Youth Parliament. Call for Universal Prayer & bullying in schools to be addressed. 5. Difference of ERC to Min. of Social Cohesion explained. 6. Ability of ERC questioned to measure success, include youth organisations' participation in its work. 7. Complaint made natural hairstyle, Tikka (spot on forehead), not allowed in school. 8. Commissioner Witter emphasized youth not only the future but the present. Probably largest constituency ERC is meeting. Youths have a tremendous responsibility in re-shaping Guyana. Seems so far an unending struggle to bring an end to race- an invention by persons towards a particular end. Instead should focus more on ethnicity and bring an end to discrimination, intolerance, suspicion, indifference, etc. Must see ethnicity as something to celebrate and not denigrate. Youths here to help us, guide us. 9. Commissioner Subhan outlined plans for 2018. 2019 a little more optimistic, staff/team coming in and better to give timelines of activities. For 2019 moving with a staff of 5 to 15. <p>Media monitoring unit far more expanded than at present. One mega project in 2019 broad consultations to come up with a National Glossary of words that should not be used in the public space.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Commissioner Singh reiterated ERC is targeting all schools. 11. Youth Rep. called on Commission not only to publicise its existence but its authority to eliminate discrimination, etc. 12. Youth Rep. Tiffany David, First Assembly of God observed identity issue as Guyanese is blurred, referring to ourselves as
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	<p>Indo, Afro-Guyanese, etc. instead of calling ourselves Guyanese. History of Guyana needs to be “coined and sold to us differently”. Recently visited Israel and young Israelis are taught in schools to know importance of being Israeli and have a very strong national sense of who they are, not Jew, Christian, etc. Advocated exposure to different ethnicities to eliminate stereotypes, etc.</p> <p>-Zero to four years age group is best time to target / expose.</p> <p>13. Gabrelle Cummings, East Ruimveldt Secondary complained her school not exposed or given attention to Youth Parliament, etc because of prejudice. More popular / well-known schools considered / given attention.</p> <p>14. Commissioner Subhan explained production of National Text for schools.</p> <p>15. Commissioner Witter stressed credibility of ERC in its work. Has more legitimacy than Min. of Social Cohesion. Credibility of ERC over time whether that legitimacy /nationalistic purpose holds or not.</p> <p>16. Youth Rep. raised concern of universal prayer in school. Commissioner Braithwaite recognized concern. Commissioner Deodat Persaud referred to the Education Act which specifies Lord’s Prayer be recited in school and ERC has to go back / start from Act to effect change.</p> <p>17. Ability of ERC questioned to measure results of its work, decentralization, its template to include youth participation.</p> <p>18. Youth Rep. Christina Basil of Rotaract, Georgetown raised concern of bullying in schools. Commissioner invited Rep. to write to the ERC on problem.</p> <p>19. Teacher Gabrelle Cummings expressed dismay style with natural hair not allowed in school. Was told to get hair-do. Commissioners also expressed dismay/ surprise. Commissioners Witter and Braithwaite advocated writing to the Ministry of Education on Ministry’s policy. ERC will then respond accordingly to Ministry.</p> <p>- Student of President College also complained spot (Tikka) on</p>
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	forehead was removed by teacher after wearing Tikka for four years.
Women Groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call made for re-introduction of morals, empathy and focus, not only ethnicity. 2. Query made about ERC's mandate and role to influence ethnic composition of staff at places of employment. 3. Guyanese Identity highlighted; individual's family roots traced to persons of different ethnicities. 4. ERC urged to work more with women's groups because women regarded as nurturers. 5. Strong emphasis placed on targeting communities directly, grassroots, esp. youths to change mindsets originating in childhood. 6. Challenge made to tackle exposure of adult racist views at home but absent in friendships externally e.g. school. 7. ERC urged to reach housewives (who usually remain at home). 8. Call on Commission to recognize "vulnerable people" who can be used to promote racist agenda. 9. Suggestion made ERC can align with "Parenting Programme" being conducted by Mothers Union. 10. Women's organisations openly pledged to support the ERC in its work 11. Cecelia Bennie, Guyana Nurses Association, urged ERC educators / adults to ensure messages reach community level to change racial bias mindset from childhood, target youths especially. 12. Chairman Rev. Smith assured participants the ERC will be going to the grassroots level and neighbourhoods. Observation made-racist opinions of adult to youth at home but racial bias absent in youth's friendship with person of different race. 13. Ms. Paula Sampson made observation housewives have no forum, called on ERC to engage since housewives are usually at

	<p>home. ERC also urged to recognize “Vulnerable Groups” who are susceptible to racist agenda.</p>
Labour Movement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ERC requested to be proactive and guard citizens’ freedom to speak out when transgressions occur. 2. Task of building trust among the people seen as greatest for the ERC. 3. To detect discrimination claims, Commission requested to consider approach by entities to implement identification of ethnic composition, first at job application stage. 4. Call made for Commission to use mass based organisations to get messages across. 5. ERC urged to conduct follow-up meetings with Union leaders to exchange candid views. 6. Mr. Sherwood Anthony Clarke, CCWU, pointed out scholarship awardees are not usually from Trade Unions and called for such awards be given to trade union members. Clarke called for more transparency in public procurement, etc for general public make own assessment as secret deals can result in negative comments. He also called for ethical values, accountability and integrity of public officials – feels dignity and respect for citizens are critical. He called on the ERC to be proactive and wants citizens’ freedom to speak out must be maintained when public officials err. He declared his union wants to work in partnership with the ERC and wants it to play an active role in monitoring Local Govt. and National elections, visit all regions and have conversations with people at the grassroots level. 7. Mr. Carvil Duncan, said ERC must create trust among Guyanese. It has difficult task and is operating from a position of trust, the largest aspect is building trust among Guyanese; unless persons see the ERC as an organisation that can be approached with expectation that problems will be addressed then job will be difficult. Doing the job efficiently and effectively is what matters! He urged the ERC to traverse the entire country during the upcoming Local Govt and National Elections, meet the

	<p>people in their own domains to get their concerns and not wait for persons to come to ERC to lodge complaints.</p> <p>8. Deputy Chair Mr. Norman Mc Lean shared the view that education is a facilitator in building trust towards the ERC but Mr. Duncan disagreed. Commissioner Witter observed that most organisations especially in the infancy stage have the challenge of building trust in the shortest possible time. He feels the ERC has to establish its legitimacy especially after a seven year hiatus. He recognized that the public will be watching to determine if the ERC is fair, just and professional. But with the assistance (feedback) from the constituencies will deliver in the most competent way possible.</p> <p>9. Mr. Pancham Singh, General Workers Union (GWU), called on the ERC to leave partisan interests outside of its work. He queried about the ERC's mandate to promote harmony outside of ethnicity and if not would like the ERC to incorporate that aspect.</p> <p>10. Dr. Jewel Thomas, UG Senior Staff Association (UGSSA), queried about the ERC being able to deal with other forms of discrimination apart from ethnic discrimination. She noted unions have inadequate mechanisms in place to deal with discrimination in the industrial relations sector. Dr. Thomas questioned how the ERC is empowered to make an award following a complaint and its relation to the legal process. Deputy Chair Mr. Norman Mc Lean clarified that an ERC sub-committee (he referred to the example of a complaint made by the GECOM Commissioners) will look at a complaint and submit its findings to parliament through the speaker of the National Assembly. The complainant is free to approach the courts for legal redress, the Deputy Chair emphasized.</p> <p>Commissioner Subhan also confirmed the role of the sub-committee in dealing with several complaints affecting togetherness since the new ERC was established.</p> <p>Media monitoring by the ERC was also raised. Dr. Thomas observed that in the absence of research, it is difficult to establish discrimination claims based on the ethnic composition of staff in organisations. She assured that there are ways around the</p>
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sensitive issue of ethnic composition in job applications, etc.

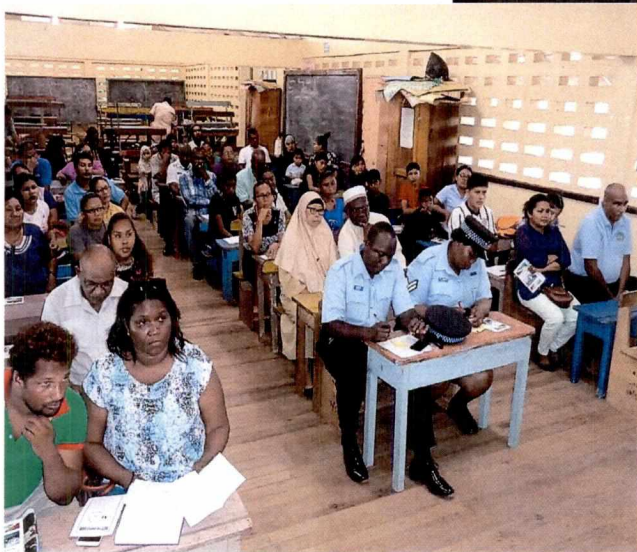
11. Mr. Lincoln Lewis, Guyana Trades Union Congress (GTUC), feels that as an Afro-Guyanese the Amerindian Act discriminates against him. He urged the ERC to use the mass based organisations as a conduit to get messages across. He does not recommend usage of the word "Guyanese" but maintains Indo, Afro, etc necessary for medical statistics purposes; certain races are prone to specific medical conditions / ailments. Lewis also urged the ERC to monitor the country's resources and equitable distribution of the wealth acquired at the national level.

12. Mr. Eon Andrews, GTUC, called on the ERC to engage the various Union leaders at a different forum and be candid with them on various issues. Commissioner Subhan pointed out the meeting is a preliminary one and the ERC looks forward to working together with the unions to achieve unity.

Appendix









Ethnic Relations Commission
Media Monitoring Unit (MMU)
Report – Local Government Elections
For the Period October 15, 2018 – November 26, 2018



Head
Media Monitoring Unit
Ethnic Relations Commission

Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC)
Media Monitoring Unit (MMU)
Report
For the Period Oct. 15, 2018 – Nov. 21, 2018

1.0 Overview:

The focus of this report is primarily on the ERC's Local Government Elections (LGE) (2018) monitoring program that was executed by the MMU (during the period Oct. 15, 2018 – Nov. 11, 2018).

On October 15, 2018 in response to the public announcement that citizens of the country would be voting in Local Government Elections on November 12, 2018, the ERC in pursuit of its constitutional mandate -Constitution (Amendment) (No.2) Act 2000¹ - to promote harmony and good relations between and amongst the country's ethnic groupings, officially launched a **limited** LGE monitoring program to, basically, ensure that electioneering activities engaged by the contesting political parties, groups and independent candidates in the run-up to the elections was done within the parameters of the Racial Hostility Act (Cap 23:01)² and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act No. 1 of 2000.³ It was also a precautionary measure instituted by the Commission to minimize in the least, or eliminate at the most, ethnic tensions which, sadly, tend to proliferate alarmingly in the country during elections periods. Additionally, the LGE monitoring program was situated within the context of the country's electoral history whereby politicians (and their supporters) have in the past shown a predilection for using political meetings, the media (print, broadcast and social media) and other mass communication platforms to stoke ethnic divisions and hostilities, mostly between the country's two (2) largest ethnic groupings, as a means to achieve political power.⁴

In light of the foregoing observations, the ERC's LGE monitoring program was spearheaded and coordinated by the Head of the MMU and consisted of two (2) components – elections monitoring and media monitoring. The elections monitoring aspect of the program was specifically designed to collate information from political meetings – in the forms of tape-recordings of speeches, posters, handbills, flyers etc. – and to evaluate them for conformity to the aforementioned extant ethnic Laws of the country. On the other hand, the media monitoring portfolio encompassed the monitoring and analysis of the local print, broadcast (television) and social media for similar adherence. If any violations were found, same was to be reported to the Commission for review and follow up action, if necessary.

The ERC's LGE monitoring program kicked-off with the holding of a one (1) day Election/Media Monitoring Training Workshop on Monday, October 15, 2018, facilitated by the Head of the MMU, for thirteen (13) Election/Media Monitors – nine (9) new recruits plus four (4) permanent staff members of the ERC, who expressed a desire to perform part-time election monitoring duties. The training program was appropriately designed to communicate to the participants the role and responsibilities of an Election/Media Monitor and to explain in detail

¹ <http://parliament.gov.gy/documents/acts/b489>

act_no_11_of_2000_constitution_amendment_act_2000.pdf (viewed 21/11/18)

² <http://guyanaelawyer.com/lawofguyana/laws/cap2301.pdf> (viewed 21/11/18)

³ <http://parliament.gov.gy/documents/acts/b489>

act_no_1_of_2001_representation_of_the_people_amendment_act_2001.pdf (viewed 21/11/18)

⁴ http://www.vandolisxpeoples.com/news022/mc21_148.htm (viewed 21/11/18)

the common elements of elections monitoring and media monitoring, so that at the end of the training they could seamlessly interchange and function efficiently and effectively in both capacities.

2.0 LGE Monitoring Objectives:

2.1 Field Monitoring

- ▶ To gather first-hand information of what is being communicated to citizens by politicians and candidates offering themselves for election to the country's municipalities and councils.

- ▶ To provide the ERC with the necessary documented evidence and witness validation that would allow the organization to take forthright action against those who may seek to violate the Racial Hostility Act (Cap 23:01) and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act No. 1 of 2000 by using ethnicity/race as a means of inciting and/or exciting audiences in order to achieve political office.

- ▶ To influence a high level of self-regulation, decorum and responsibility in the speeches made, literature disseminated or other influencing activities engaged in by political parties, supporters and the general public at political meetings insofar as they relate to ethnic/race issues.

2.2 Media Monitoring

- ▶ To monitor and evaluate the local print, broadcast and social media for conformity to the tenets underpinning the Racial Hostility Act (Cap 23:01) and the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act No. 1 of 2000.

- ▶ To bring to the attention of the ERC in a timely way, any observed violations of the above-mentioned Acts committed by any entity or person using the print, broadcast or social media sites to communicate information, in general, but, with emphasis on information relating to LGE (2018).

3.0 Modus Operandi (Explication of operations):

As inferred earlier, the LGE monitoring program was conceptualized to methodically gather and analyze information (audio, print and video) disseminated to the general public at political meetings in the lead-up to LGE; and, from electioneering done via the print, broadcast (television) and social media.

At the conclusion of the aforementioned training program for Election/Media Monitors, from the ranks of the new recruits, four (4) persons were deployed to cover pre-elections political meetings held between Regions 5 and 6 (Mahaica-Berbice and East Berbice – Corentyne), two (2) persons were deployed to Region 10 (Upper Demerara – Berbice), while three (3) persons were employed within the MMU in the dual capacities of **Temporary** full-time Media Monitors and part-time Election Monitors. The four (4) permanent staff members that completed the training program, combined with the part-time election monitors from the MMU to cover Region

4 (Demerara – Mahaica) with specific emphasis on Georgetown, East Coast Demerara and East Bank Demerara. Also, it should be mentioned that one (1) Election/Media Monitor each from Regions 6 and 10 was tasked with the monitoring of television programs in their respective areas of responsibility [copies of submitted reports are at appendices 2 and 3].

In terms of the scheduling and reporting structure put in place for the election monitors, information about the holding of political meetings (dates, timings, locations) was had primarily from Police sources, the mainstream print and broadcast media, social media sites (such as the Facebook pages of the contesting political parties) and from information gathered on the ground by the monitors themselves. For the most part however, monitors were provided with timely information about meetings in their respective locales by the Head of the MMU, as soon as such information became available, so that they could have made preparations accordingly to attend the meetings. After every meeting, monitors were required to submit to the Head of the MMU the tape recordings, any campaign literature (of an ethnically offensive nature) shared out to the public, and a filled out monitoring form [see blank copy at Appendix 7]. Moreover, a grace period of 24 hours (1 day) was given to the ‘in-house’ monitors for submission of their information and 48 hours (2 days) to the ‘external’ monitors [the longer deadline due to the extenuating circumstance of distance].

The media monitoring aspect of the operation carried out at the MMU was much broader in perspective, since it was not solely or exclusively geared towards LGE only, but quite general in scope. However, there was a dedicated focus on LGE issues and events, during the period Oct. 15 to Nov.11, instant. Relatedly, for the duration of this period, the depleted human resource capacity of the Unit was boosted by the addition of three (3) temporary monitors drawn from the training workshop, bringing the overall number of staff to five (5) persons, inclusive of the Head of the Unit. The three (3) temps were administratively taken through their daily paces and guided accordingly in the technical aspects of media monitoring – i.e. programming, downloading, recording, editing and archiving of digital information – by the Unit’s permanent staff member and unofficial Lead Monitor, Ms. Keisha Smith-Adams. In addition, monitoring of the daily newspapers and social media websites was done by the Head of the Unit.

It should be noted that based on the observations inscribed on the monitoring forms submitted by the monitors, the corresponding tape-recordings were checked by staff of the Unit to verify the accuracy of the observations made and, once verified, same was forwarded to the Head of the Unit for further evaluation.

4.0 Report on Elections Monitoring:

As was stated before, information regarding the holding of political meetings by political parties and groups contesting the LGE was had from the Guyana Police Force (GPF), the mainstream print and broadcast media, websites and Facebook pages of the contesting political parties and, in some instances, from monitors themselves. Indeed, there was a formal arrangement between the ERC and the GPF whereby the Force provided requisite information on meetings schedules to the ERC, but this turned out to be a one-off engagement, and the information provided, though

comprehensive, proved over time to be mostly unreliable, since the political parties and groups contesting the elections kept changing their schedules almost on a daily basis through cancellations and additions, which were not communicated to the ERC. Contrastingly, the information gleaned from informal police sources by the head of the unit and some of the monitors proved to be more spot-on.

Nevertheless, despite the sometimes contradicted information gathered on a daily basis from varied sources, monitors were sent to cover a total of seventy-nine (79) scheduled meetings, of which forty (40) were fully monitored, while thirty-nine (39) were canceled [see Appendices 4-6]. And from the 40 meetings monitored, approximately seventy (**70**) hours of taped speeches were submitted by monitors to the MMU.

Detailed checks of the tape-recordings submitted by the monitors did not turn up any substantive evidence of violations of either the Racial Hostility Act (Cap 23:01) or the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act No. 1 of 2000.

4.1 Observations (Elections Monitoring)

Generally speaking, there were no clear-cut contraventions of the above-mentioned ethnic Laws in the speeches delivered or other electioneering activities engaged in by politicians or their supporters while campaigning. However, the contextual use of coded language such as “we”, “they”, “us” and “them” was unmistakable in some of the speeches made by a few politicians mainly from the A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) and the People’s Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) political parties. This observation is highlighted here because, although, it can be justifiably argued that such language is ambiguous and can rightfully be subjected to varying interpretations, it cannot be easily disputed that the targeted audience fully understands the subliminal messages conveyed. Moreover, it is from the historical standpoint of the country being riven, in the past, by the overt and covert propagation of ethnic politics that the instinctive resort to the use of inferential terminology by some of the politicians was, to some extent, worrying.

The next observation has to do with the unavoidably limited number of election monitors that were available for deployment on a daily basis. As can be expected in the circumstance, this resulted in a significant number of meetings in the four (4) targeted regions going unmonitored. Granted, this was a known situation prior to the commencement of the program, it is being revisited to make the point that it was almost an impossibility to cover two (2) or more meetings being held simultaneously in the same area. Another point of note, is that monitoring of political meetings was determined solely by the dynamics on the ground and not by any bias on the part of any of the monitors for or against any political party or grouping contesting the elections. This observation is necessary since it would appear, at first glance, from the statistical breakdown of the meetings attended and monitored by the monitors, that particular political parties weren’t covered or monitored in specific regions or areas. The reason for this seeming inequity in coverage has more to do with the frequency of meetings held by the political parties and groups in certain regions as against other regions and, the non-availability or untimeliness of information regarding the holding of meetings, even in those areas where some of the monitors were/are domiciled. Another contributing factor to the situation was that the two (2) main

contesting political parties – APNU and PPP/C – scheduled a far larger quantum of meetings in those areas they considered as their ‘strongholds’ as against those not so perceived. One particular political party – AFC – hardly did any public meetings, and it is so reflected in the statistics compiled [Appendices 4-6].

Last but not least, monitors verbally reported to the Head of the MMU that they were oftentimes questioned by politicians and supporters of the two main political parties – APNU and PPP/C – while executing their duties. The good thing about these engagements however, is that even though the conversations were initiated by party representatives or supporters based on untoward suspicions, they became friendly once the monitor identified him/herself as working on behalf of the ERC. This information suggests that the objective of self-regulation was to a large degree achieved in those instances where monitors’ presence were known; and there might even probably exist a tangible correlation between their presence and the absence of any ethnically offensive actions indulged in by politicians and/or their supporters at these meetings.

4.2 Challenges (Elections Monitoring)

From the get-go, the smooth operation of the elections monitoring program was beset by several constraining factors revolving mainly around human and material resources. Notwithstanding these impediments, the more relevant issues that really had a negative impact on the program during its almost four (4) weeks implementation period (between Oct. 15 and Nov. 11) include but were not limited to the following:

- The level of technology used to gather information. Here, reference is being pointedly made to the unavoidable use of (outdated) analog tape-recorders for the recording of speeches at meetings, which led to consequential hiccups that affected the quality of information-gathering in significant ways – especially the quality of audio playback. [NB: Three (3) digital recorders were shared by the ‘in-house’ monitors operating from the ERC secretariat].
- A few monitors reported that information was irretrievably lost when they had to resort to the use of their cell phones to complete recordings, since their issued (analog) tape-recorders malfunctioned either at the start of, or, in the midst of meetings. Some of the more common problems encountered were cassettes ‘balling-up’ in the recorders and rollers and springs coming loose, rendering the recorders useless.
- A perceived lack of motivation on the part of some monitors (a minority) to personally seek out information regarding the holding of unscheduled meetings in their assigned areas. These monitors were just content to depend solely on the information supplied to them by the Head of the MMU. This dependency resulted in many meetings that should have been monitored going unmonitored. It seemed that once a transportation cost was involved to get to and from those meetings, monitors preferred not to communicate such information to the Head of the MMU. Fortunately, this attitude wasn’t uniform, since the majority of monitors provided unsolicited information to the Head of the MMU about meetings that they gleaned from

informal sources, and which weren't advertised through any of the formal sources previously mentioned (police, print and broadcast media, websites, fb pages etc.).

5.0 Report on Media Monitoring:

In the period between Oct. 15 to Nov. 11, 2018 the MMU working at just little more than half of its monitoring capacity in terms of equipment availability was able to acquire and store on DVDs for referencing purposes, approximately **140 hours** of television programming comprising News, Magazines, Talk-Shows, (Sponsored) Political Party Programs and Press Conferences. The news programs were general in nature; however, the other genres of programming were specifically related to the Local Government Elections. [NB: An additional **20 hours** of programming was stored on discs during the period 12/11/18 – 21/11/18]

Careful monitoring of television programming by staff of the MMU during the above-stated periods did not turn up any notable infringements of either the Racial Hostility Act (Cap 23:01) or the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act No. 1 of 2000.

Likewise, diligent monitoring of the four (4) daily newspapers (namely: Stabroek News, Kaieteur News, Guyana Times and Guyana Chronicle) did not reveal any violations of the two (2) Acts.

5.1 Challenges (Media Monitoring)

The MMU has five (5) computer systems. However, during the period Oct. 15 to Nov. 11, only three (3) systems were always fully functional on a daily basis. This situation, to a large degree, stymied the ability of the Unit to function at its maximum capacity. Frustratingly, system failures persisted throughout the entirety of this period and were related to myriad software and other related issues. The major setback from this was that a lot of television programming was missed, hence the number of programs that were eventually monitored by staff is not a true reflection of the quantum of LGE related programming that was broadcasted by the television stations.

6.0 Report on Social Media:

Interestingly, monitoring of the social media sites revealed a disturbing pattern of ethnically offensive blogging on the Demerarawaves news and information website. It was disturbing in the sense that, for the period in review, it was the only observed website on which ethnically offensive comments/opinions was allowed free expression.

The MMU after doing its own evaluations thought it necessary to bring to the attention of the Chairman and Commissioners of the ERC the content of some of the comments attached to three (3) articles that were published on the website, so that the Commission can discuss and make an informed decision on whether to engage the Publisher/Editor of the website on the observations made by the Unit.

The articles being referred to are: "Oil money makes 2020 "the mother of all elections"- Finance Minister (dated 11/11/18); AFC "still a credible force" in Guyana, but sugar estate closure

caused some “fallout” (dated 16/11/18); and, “Pradoville 2 established in response to violent crime wave – Robeson Benn (dated 12/09/18). [NB: The last mentioned article dated 12/09/18 though falling outside of the monitoring period is included because of its material relevance to the incipient pattern of ethnically offensive blogging observed on the website].

In terms of identification, for whatever it is worth, the offensive comments were penned by persons using the pseudonyms “Col 123”, “ExPPP_Man”, “Peter”, and “75thRgt”.

Comment: The empirical evidence at hand suggests that the Demwaves website has, over time, become very accommodating to the propagation of racist opinions. Clearly, some of the commentary given prominence on the website were/are racially stereotypical and divisive at their core and have the potential to further divide the country along racial lines, which, it must be said, goes against the primary objective of the ERC to promote ethnic harmony and good relations amongst the country’s racial groupings. Further, the MMU takes the position that the uncensored publication of these ethnically offensive views are clear cut violations of the Racial Hostility Act (Cap 23:01): 2 (4).

Incidentally, of some relevance to the point being made, is that the MMU in its wider monitoring of other websites discovered that these same bloggers (identified by their pseudonyms) also blog, on a regular basis, on the other popular websites such as Stabroek News online, but, quite dissimilarly, their commentaries are distinctly above board and non-racial. So, it is not unreasonable to deduce that they have found the Demwaves comments section to be fertile ground for planting the seeds of racial hate in the country.

For ease of reference, hard copies of the specific articles and aligned comments are attached [at the back of the appendices] with the offensive comments clearly marked with an **X** for easy identification. The online links are as follows:

<http://demerarawaves.com/2018/09/12/pradoville-2-established-in-response-to-violent-crime-wave-robesson-benn/>

<http://demerarawaves.com/2018/11/11/oil-money-makes-2020-the-mother-of-all-elections-finance-minister/>

<http://demerarawaves.com/2018/11/16/afc-still-a-credible-force-in-guvana-but-sugar-estate-closure-caused-some-fallout/>

7.0 Conclusion:

If the written and oral reports received from the field monitors who attended and monitored the political meetings in the lead-up to LGE (2018) on behalf of the ERC is used as a guide to evaluate the impact of the Commission's monitoring program on the conduct of electioneering activities, then it can only be said that the physical presence of the organization's elections monitors on the ground induced an appreciable level of self-regulation by politicians which, contributed in a tangible way, to the relatively peaceful environments – free of the usual ethnic rancor - in which the various political parties and groupings contested the elections. The relatively minor matter of politicians using race encoded language in their speeches is just what it is and no laws were broken, though it is behavior that should be discouraged in the national interest.

On a good note, the mainstream media landscape (newspapers and television) was typified by a high level of professional journalism as it related to the dissemination of information to the general public on LGE issues and events.

Lastly, the MMU's monitoring of social media websites, revealed that generally there was broad adherence to the principles of good, responsible and ethical journalism, except for the aberrance found on the Demerawaves website and which has been documented in this report for the attention of the Commission.

8.0 Recommendations:

Undoubtedly, valuable experience has been gained from the implementation of the ERC's LGE monitoring program which, among other things, provided clear insights into certain pitfalls that should be avoided in the planning and execution of future elections monitoring programs. And with the next elections in Guyana (held concomitantly at both national and regional levels) scheduled for the year 2020 (or even before, if the current fluid political situation in the country is anything to go by) the ERC is now in a better place to do forward planning for the event. In this regard, the MMU would like to offer the following suggestions/recommendations for consideration:

- Anticipatory budgetary planning should be done early for a full-scale monitoring program in 2019 – inclusive of costing the necessary human and material resources and other inputs required to adequately cover all ten (10) regions of the country - just in case National and Regional Elections are called during the coming year, taking into consideration the unpredictable nature of the extant political environment.
- As was done during past elections, a decentralized monitoring structure should be put in place whereby a Lead Monitor is appointed for every region and is responsible for coordinating the

monitoring activities in that particular region – such as compiling meetings schedules, issuing assignments to monitors and ensuring that all meetings held are monitored.

- For any future elections, a standard arrangement should be put in place between the ERC and the GPF that facilitates lead monitors in the various regions liaising directly with station sergeants or regional commanders to acquire timely information on the holding of meetings.
- Quite differently to what obtained during the just concluded exercise, payments to monitors should be done based on a fixed hourly rate per meeting, as against a fixed monthly sum. The implementation of this system of payment would, as shown in the past, incentivize monitors to be more energetic in their approach to the work, since their payments are directly tied to the hours they put in. On top of the suggested hourly payments, separate payments should be considered for monitors' transportation costs, which should be calculated at public transport rates. Also, separate and apart from the hourly rates and transportation costs paid to all monitors including the lead monitors, consideration should be given to paying a fixed sum to all lead monitors to cover the expenses incurred in the usage of their cell-phones to execute their duties.
- The whole process from monitoring of meetings to the submission of field information to the ERC should be digitized.



Remington Eastman
Head
Media Monitoring Unit

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 2

List of Television Programs Monitored

For the Period 01/11/ - 11/11/18

Region 6

Date	TV Channel	Name of Prog.	Time (From - To)	Remarks
01/11	Dave	News	20:35 hrs. - 21:00hrs	Nothing to report
	LRTVS	News watch	18:30 hrs-19:00 hrs.	
	TVG	Evening News	19:00 hrs-20:00 hrs.	
02/11	Dave	News	20:35 hrs. - 21:00hrs	Nothing to report
	LRTVS	News watch	18:30 hrs-19:00 hrs.	
	TVG	Evening News	19:00 hrs-20:00 hrs.	
03/11	NTN	In Perspective	20:00hrs-20:43hrs	Nothing to report
	Dave	Alliance on the move	20:00 hrs-21:03 hrs	
04/11	LRTVS	In Perspective	17:00 hrs-18:00 hrs	Nothing to report
05/11	Dave	News	20:35 hrs. - 21:00hrs	Nothing to report
	LRTVS	News watch	18:30 hrs-19:00 hrs.	
	TVG	Evening News	19:00 hrs-20:00 hrs.	
06/11	-	-	-	-
07/11	Dave	News	20:35 hrs. - 21:00hrs	Nothing to report
	LRTVS	News watch	18:30 hrs-19:00 hrs.	
	TVG	Evening News	19:00 hrs-20:00 hrs.	
08/11	Dave	News	20:35 hrs. - 21:00hrs	Nothing to report
09/11	Dave	News	20:35 hrs. - 21:00hrs	Nothing to report
	LRTVS	News watch	18:30 hrs-19:00 hrs.	
	TVG	Evening News	19:00 hrs-20:00 hrs.	
10/11	NTN	In Perspective	20:00hrs-20:43hrs	Nothing to report
	Dave	Alliance on the move	20:00 hrs-21:03 hrs	
10/11	-	-	-	-

A. Hintzen

Allesha Hintzen

Nov. 11, 2018

APPENDIX 3

List of Television Programs Monitored

For the Period 01/11/ - 11/11/18

Region 10

Date	TV Channel	Name of Prog.	Time (From - To)	Remarks
01/11	NCN Ch 13	News	19:00 hrs - 20:20 hrs	Nothing to report
02/11	-	-	-	-
03/11	-	-	-	-
04/11	-	-	-	-
05/11	-	-	-	-
06/11	NCN Ch 13	News	19:00 hrs - 20:20 hrs	Nothing to report
07/11	NCN Ch 13	AFC ON THE MOVE	19:30 - 20:20	Nothing to report
08/11	NCN Ch 13	News	19:00 hrs - 20:20 hrs	Nothing to report
09/11	-	-	-	-
10/11	-	-	-	-
11/11	-	-	-	-

A. Persaud.....

Anthony Persaud

Nov. 11, 2018

Appendix 4

Statistical breakdown of Political Meetings by Region

of officially scheduled political meetings – 79

Region	4		5		6		10	
# of Meetings	34		18		7		20	
Comparative Proportions of monitored & cancelled meetings	Monitored	Canceled	Monitored	Canceled	Monitored	Canceled	Monitored	Canceled
	17	17	12	6	7	-	4	16

Total amount of meetings monitored – 40

Total amount of meetings cancelled – 39

Statistical breakdown of scheduled meetings by Political Parties/Groups in Regions that were monitored/cancelled

Political Party/Group										
Region	AFC		APNU		PPP/C		LPDG		8 MM	
	Monitor	Cancel	Monitor	Cancel	Monitor	Cancel	Monitor	Cancel	Monitor	Cancel
4	-	1	5	6	12	7	-	1	-	2
5	-	-	-	-	12	6	-	-	-	-
6	1	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	4	16	-	-	-	-	-	-

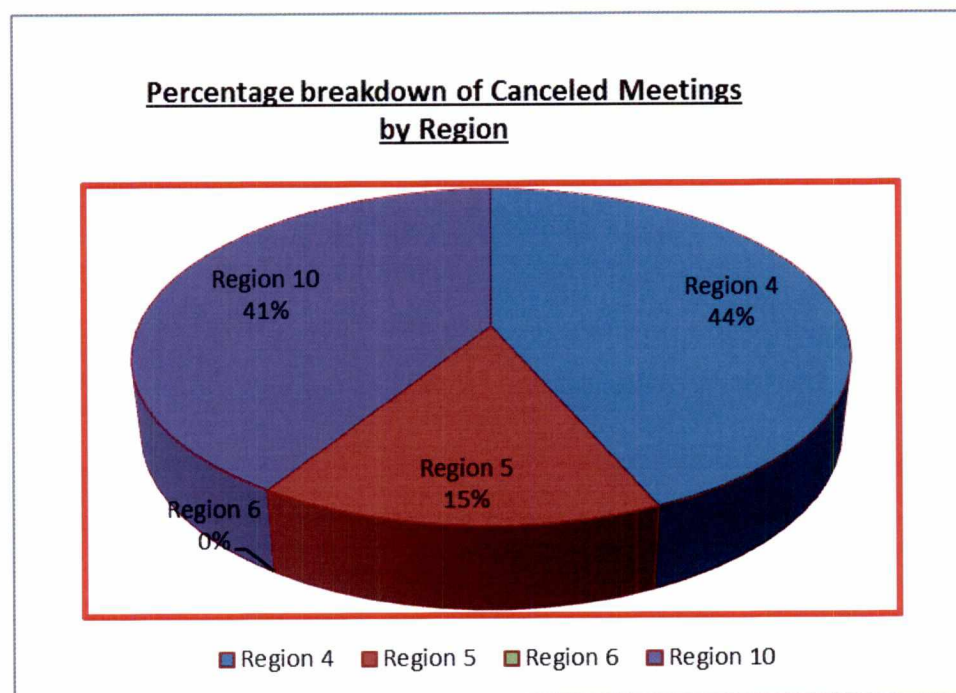
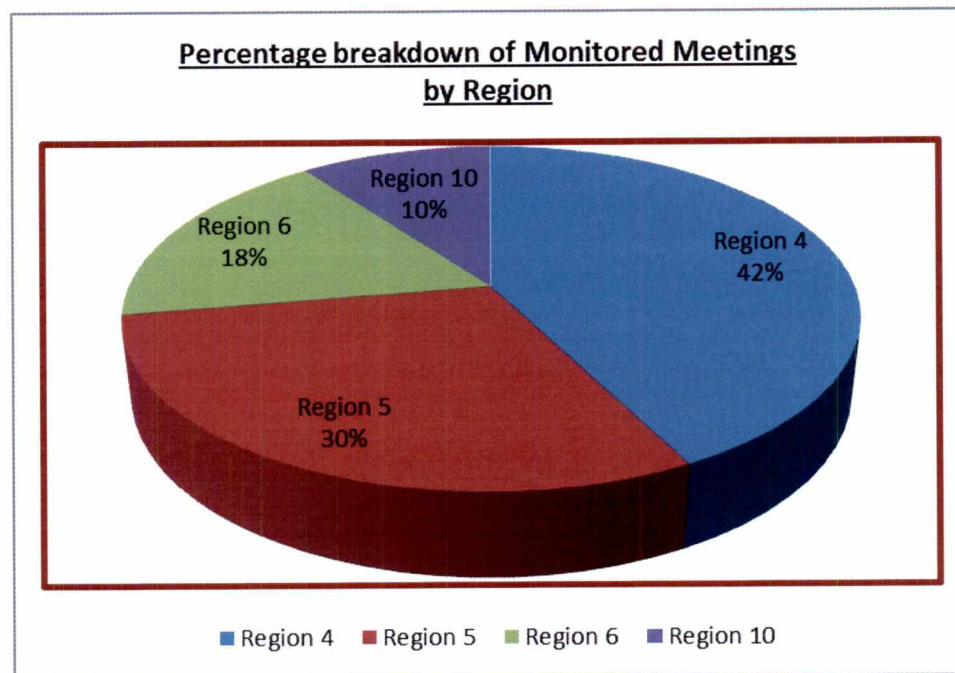
AFC – Alliance For Change

APNU – A Partnership for National Unity

PPP/C – People’s Progressive Party/Civic

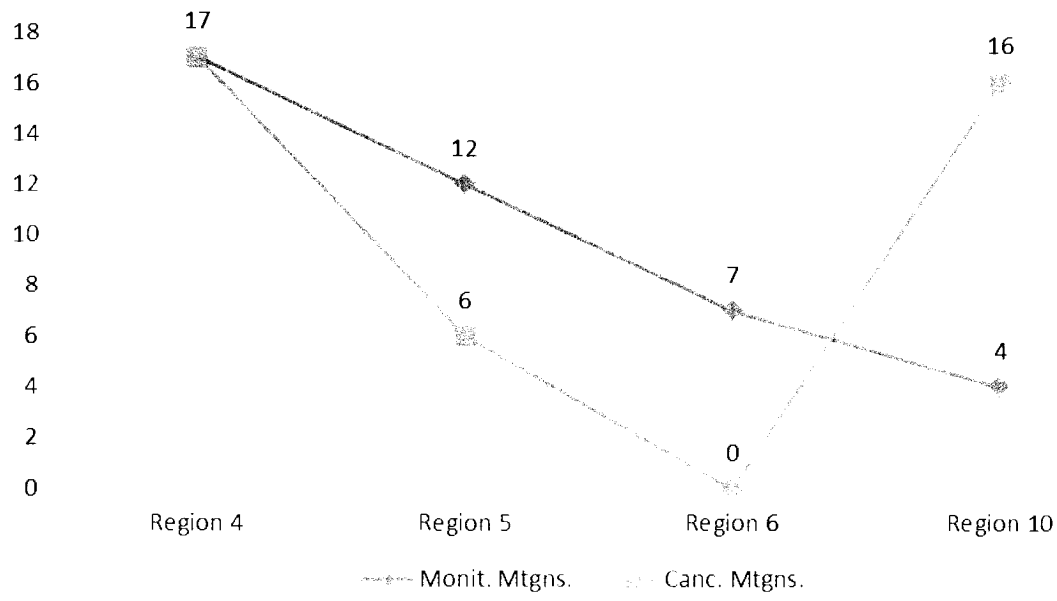
LPDG – Liliendaal Progressive Development Group

Appendix 5

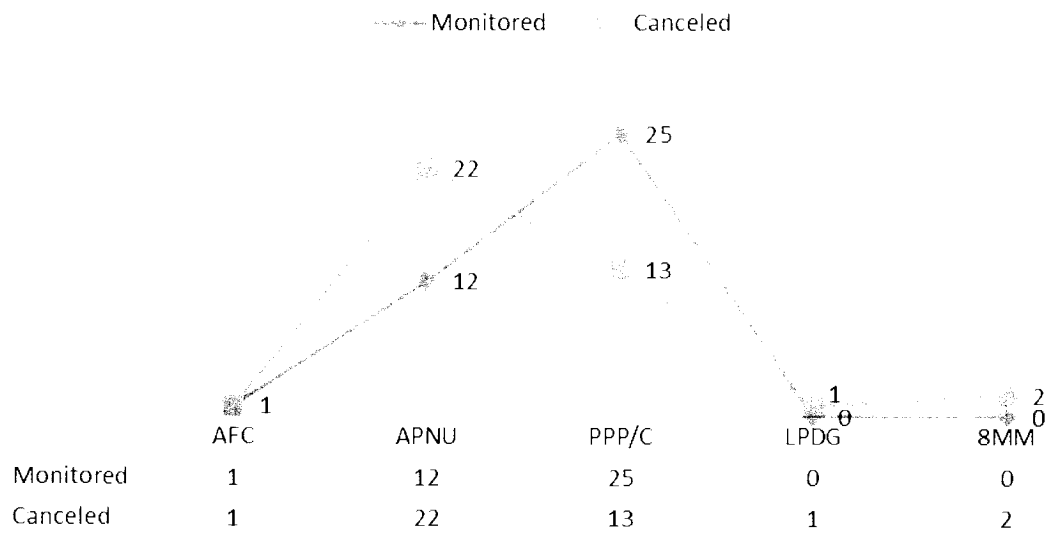


Appendix 6

Distribution of Monitored and Canceled Meetings by Region



Distribution of Monitored and Canceled Meetings by Pol. Party/Group



Appendix 7

**Ethnic Relations Commission
Media and Campaign/Rallies Monitoring Unit
Political Meetings/Rallies Reporting Form**

Region:

Name of Political Party/Independent Candidate/Group:

Place of Meeting:

Date of Meeting:

Time Meeting Started:

Time Meeting Ended:

Name(s) of Speaker(s) (1) (4)

(2) (5)

(3) (6)

Crowd Estimate (no. of persons):

Estimated Racial Composition: African [] Indian [] Chinese [] Portuguese [] European/White []

Amerindian [] Mix race []

<i>Brief description of any statements made by Speaker(s) that was ethnically/racially: inflammatory/divisive/inciting/stereotypical</i>	<i>Name of Speaker</i>	<i>Crowd Reaction to statement/speech</i>	<i>Any other observations/comments</i>

For Office Use

Name of Monitor:
Signature of Monitor:
Date: