



THE FREEDOM FIGHTER



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO RASTAFARI UNITED

AUGUST 2005

THE PEOPLES NEWSPAPER

#9

How good it would be, before God and man, to see the unification of all Rastaman.
How good it would be, to see the unification of all Africans.

Robert Nesta Marley.



Sunset from hill overlooking TTRU Hq.



From the Editors hole in the wall.

Greetings Readers.

Thank you for the continued support. We have now reached approximately 18,000 – 20,000 readers worldwide.

We apologize for the late publishing of I n I August newsletter, and the reason be, August was particularly a busy month for I n I. Most of the publication staff was in Trinidad for the TTRU groundation, which was an overwhelming success.

Thank you for your patience, enjoy the pictures and reports from the groundation. You can also visit I n I website for more pictures.

[Http:www.aiyamar.com](http://www.aiyamar.com)

Peace and many blessings.

Editorial Staff.



TTRU Sistren gather to reason August 6th 2005

The TTRU women’s arm is well supported and defined, with the Sistren all in agreement that they should step up and perform more positive roles in the community. The role of the woman in the community was discussed, the outcome being that of more involvement in HIM business. The development of better family relations was of high importance. Sister Ichell Abraham of the TTRU US house was well accepted and missed upon her departure.

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Entrance to TTRU HQ.

Cover Art— *Ras Ravin-I*

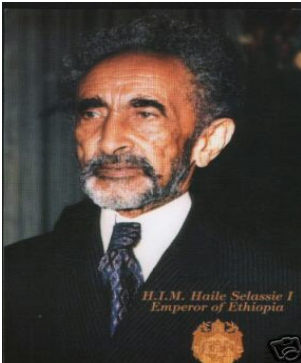
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RASTAFARI SPEAKS



The true leader is a different sort; he seeks effective activity which has a truly beneficent purpose. He inspires others to follow in his wake, and holding aloft the torch of wisdom, leads the way for society to realize its genuinely great aspirations.

He who would be a leader must pay the price in self-discipline and moral restraints. This details the correction and improvement of his personal character, the checking of passions and desires and an exemplary control of one's bodily needs and desires.

He who has not learned to render prompt and willing service to others will find it difficult to win and keep the goodwill and cooperation of his subordinates. A leader will kindle interest, teach, aid, correct and inspire. Those whom he leads will cooperate with him in maintaining discipline for the good of the group. He will instruct his followed in the goals towards which to strive, and create in them a sense of mutual effort for attaining the goal.

This whole-hearted acceptance of the demands imposed by even higher standards is the basis of all human progress. A love of higher quality, we must remember, is essential in a leader. The true leader is one who realizes by faith that he is an instrument in the hands of God, and dedicates himself to be a guide and inspirer of the nobler sentiments and aspirations of the people.

SELF HELP

The people themselves must come to realize their own difficulties in the development of their community and try to solve them by collective participation following an order of priority and taking their potentiality into account.



Her Majesty Empress Menen

"Princess Mrs (Woizero) now Empress Menen was born in March 25, 1883 in Wollo province Ambassel Region at 'Egua' area from her father 'Jantirar' Asfaw and her Mother 'Woizero' Sehin Michael.

His Majesty King of Ethiopia Haile Sellassie was the Governor of Harar.

The bride princess 'Woizero' Menen was in Addis Ababa. The then Dejazmach Teferi Majesty King of Kings of Ethiopia, Haile Sellassie I sent to Addis Ababa his loyal servant the then Gijazmach now prince 'Ras' Emiru Haile Sellasse, "Lij' Beshah Wured. "Kegnazmach Gobaw leading other invited follows with them were sent travelled from Addis Ababa riding horses and mules and reached in July 23, 1903 in Harar. When they arrived there, Dejazmach Teferi waited them at the place called Hammaressa near to Harar Kejazmach Teferi was accompanied by his loyal servants and lords to receive her with respect. In addition to this the Harar army was awaiting to receive the princess around Awash.



TTRU TRINIDAD FOUNDATION REPORT AUGUST 2005

Greetings and heartical irits in the name of His Imperial Majesty Haile I Selassie I from the Trinidad and Tobago Rastafari United (TTRU).

2005 FOUNDATION TRIP REPORT.

The TTRU was formed in 1999 to meet the growing need for Rastafari Inity in Trinidad & Tobago. In 1999, TTRU was able to purchase 9.2 acres of land in South Trinidad (Fyzabad) for the purpose of erecting and establishing a small but effective educational and self-help project as well as the development of an agricultural project.

The TTRU held its first annual motorcade on July 23rd 2005 in commemoration of the 113th Earthlight of His Imperial Majesty Haile I Selassie I, the motorcade was a tremendous success.

The TTRU US house left JFK airport on August 3rd, 2005, to engage in what was to become a 13 day high energy foundation. On arrival at The Piarco International airport, Trinidad, the delegation was met by TTRU vice chairman Ras Lincoln and EOC member Ras Abayomi (also a member of the TTRU) The pit stop made on the way to Fyzabad to sample a local Indian delicacy called "doubles" was a welcomed event.

TTRU international headquarters in Fyzabad, Trinidad, was officially opened by Sister Aiyana, the 16 year old daughter of Ras Ravin-I, in a ribbon cutting ceremony on August 14th 2005. This young Sistren made the long tiring trek along with other TTRU US house members, beginning at midnight of the 2nd of August, starting in Massachusetts and driving 4 hrs to JFK airport in New York, arriving in Trinidad at 3.05 pm on the 3rd via Grenada. She was given the utmost respect and recommendations for being the youngest member of the delegation, with word sound being forwarded to the local community of her involvement. She also made a financial contribution, making it possible for the TTRU to purchase and occupy the land that it now owns.

The delegation arrived at TTRU base around 5:30 pm to begin immediate construction on sleeping arrangements, after much anticipation of I n I equipment not arriving on time (our equipment was shipped a month earlier), but due to hurricane Emily, ships were docked on another island en route to Trinidad. Due to good relations and business dealings, a representative of the shipping company called to say that I n I gear had arrived and was moved up to the front, so we were able to get access to it the same day we arrived.

On the night of the 3rd, members of the Rastafari family in the immediate area all came up to the camp for a visit. The foundation was officially started with the sounds of Nyabinghi chanting and drumming which echoed into the stillness of the night, followed by heartical reasoning. We were also treated to a very entertaining session by several Rastafari children, who sang songs of praises. The discussions centered on the concerns of the Rastafari Family in Trinidad.

The next morning (4th) everyone was awake as early as 5:30 am, by 9:00 am construction of a bamboo frame 20' x 30' tent was underway, which was filmed, photographed and documented as a tent building workshop. The work/study participants were given hands-on instruction on how to correctly use a machete while cutting 60 -100 ft. long bamboo. All during the remainder of the day, the energy was high with preparations for the 6th and the 7th. In the night Bongo Zack of the EPF (Ethiopian Peace Foundation) visited with a small delegation, after much reasoning and ises, the EPF delegation extended an invitation to Ras Nathaniel of I.R.I.E to attend and conduct the Repatriation Census workshop, which was conducted at the TTRU headquarters.

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August 6th was very well attended, surpassing the expectations of the TTRU.

TTRU's newly elected Chairman Ras Jag hosted the day's activities.

Ras Jag (TTRU FOUNDER) invited Dr. Lance Seunarine (TTRU Educational Director), a Trinidadian author of many books on Rastafari, to address the congregation, after which TTRU vice chairman Ras Lincoln (TTRU FOUNDER) gave the most heartfelt word sound, which moved one woman (not a Rasta) to tears. There was a deafening silence as Ras Ravin (TTRU FOUNDER) came to the podium to block his sound, which was given respect and total support of the congregation and local community (Rastas and non-Rastas alike). Ras Jag gave heartfelt irits and back-grounds on the speakers in attendance, after which EPF Coordinator Bongo Zack gave his sound followed by Ras Ivor of the Grenada Nyabinghi House. At around 10:00 pm the congregation started to close. Afterwards, the reasoning continued into the early morning hours of the 7th.

The morning of the 7th greeted I n I with a request for intervention from a Rastafari Sistren concerning her exceptionally bright youth who was having problems at school. This reasoning highlighted the concerns of many other parents in the community. TTRU educators took the outcome of the reasoning under advisement and began to work immediately on solutions.

Later that day, Dr. Seunarine gave one of his highly entertaining lectures, followed by Dr. Jennifer Jones-Kernaham of the Opposition Political Party of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, who highlighted and described the social and environmental situation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Immediately following the 2 days of community reasoning sessions, some members of the US/ TRINIDAD TTRU houses were treated to a visit to the town on San Fernando and La Brea. On the La Brea leg of the trip we visited the "Pitch Lake" (Asphalt) which is the largest in the world, and were given a very educational tour by Rasta Elder Chanker (I n I tour guide). Ras Chanker was extremely eloquent in his dispensing of information concerning the use of Asphalt on the world's roadways. For anyone visiting Trinidad it will come as a surprise to see the un-repaired and under-repaired road system in Trinidad and Tobago.

The delegation was then taken to the Vessingny beach where the warm waters of Trinidad directly opposite the coast of Venezuela cooled down the extreme heat.

In the days following, TTRU conducted a series of workshops and reasonings on the political and cultural situation in Trinidad and Tobago, resulting in decisions to directly work with the local community in fostering and maintaining a pattern of behavior that eventually will properly implement HIM Haile Selassie's global solutions for economic and cultural advancement.

A TTRU contingent paid a visit to Ras Roger's farm situated in the southwest corner of Trinidad, in a town called Point Fortin, where an organic farming workshop was conducted. Ras Roger explained his farming techniques and methods on the 5 acre farm which houses a two story building.

The rains came down on August 14th almost non-stop, as TTRU members were busily working to keep the torrential downpour from collapsing the congregational tent. A temporary medical center was set up, where 47 people (Rastas and non-Rastas) were treated to free health care by three Cuban Doctors, who came as part of a mobile health unit bought on site by Senator Jones. Afterwards the Doctors made a pledge of a working relationship with the TTRU to provide free health care in the future. Even after the rains stopped and the doctors had left, people were still coming. The TTRU has since embarked on discussions of building a free health center on its land in Fyzabad, Trinidad.

The TTRU women's arm was well supported and defined, with the Sistren all in agreement that they should step up and perform more positive roles in the community. The role of the woman in the community was discussed, the outcome being that of more involvement in HIM business. The development of better family relations was of high importance. Sister Ichel Abraham of the TTRU US house was well accepted and missed upon her departure.

Continued on next page.

The TTRU groundation was an overwhelming success, which brought the administration and membership closer together to pledge support and love for the tasks at hand. During the 13 days, TTRU showcased all of its aims and objectives, highlighting its purpose as a non-churchical order. The TTRU plan for local Rastafari governance and inity was very well accepted as members of the community vowed their support for community development. The one idea that seemed to take hold is the fact that Rastafari people need to move closer to the general community and develop better relationships with their immediate neighbors. This idea was heartically accepted all sides.

Throughout the entirety of the trip, our stay in Trinidad was very well supported and we were well cared for; food and ital was in abundance, as Rastafari farmers brought in a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Binghi Kai who was I n I chef for the duration of the trip had I n I eating some very ila ital everyday.

Next year 2006 the TTRU will be making another trip in July to the island for its yearly groundation. Interested parties are asked to start planning now, and the necessary information will be posted soon.

TTRU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE THANKS TO ITS MEMBERS AND FRIENDS:

Binghi Kai for taking care of I n I dietary needs.

Bongo Zack.

Bongo Shawn.

Ras Marcus.

Sister Trudy.

Sister Merle.

Bro. Frank.

Sister Savitri.

Sister Grace

Sister Liz.

Sister Girlin.

Ras Kawame.

Sister Gloria.

Ras Tights.

To the EPF members for their support

To the Nyabinghi house of Grenada and Ras Ivor.

To the Nyabinghi house of Siparia.

Dr. Jennifer Jones-Kernaham.

To the Cuban Doctors.

Bro. Bunda for supplying I n I with electricity for the duration.

To the entire neighborhood surrounding TTRU base for all their support

Ras Roger.

Elder Ras Chanker.

Bro. Bomber for I n I transport.

Ras Pappas

To the Rastafari Corporation for their support.

To Bongo Lenny for the sacrament.

Ras Alex

Ras Abayomi

Ras Nathaniel of I.R.I.E.

AND TO THE MANY PEOPLE WHO HELPED I N I TO MAKE THE SUCCESS OF THE FOUNDATION POSSIBLE, IN THE UNITED STATES AND TRINIDAD.

Give thanks and praises

TTRU CENTRAL COMMITTEE.



TTRU international headquarters in Fyzabad, Trinidad, was officially opened by Sister Aiyana, the 16 year old daughter of Ras Ravin-I, in a ribbon cutting ceremony on August 14th 2005. This young Sistren made the long tiring trek along with other TTRU US house members, beginning at midnight of the 2nd of , starting in Massachusetts and driving 4 hrs to JFK airport in New York, arriving in Trinidad at 3.05 pm on the 3rd via Grenada. She was given the utmost respect and recommendations for being the youngest member of the delegation, with word sound being forwarded to the local community of her involvement. She also made a financial contribution, making it possible for the TTRU to purchase and occupy the land that it now owns.

REGGAE AND RASTA

Greetings once again:

This is the second in a regular series of articles about reggae music. Last time we dealt with dispelling certain myths surrounding reggae music and its connections to Rastafari. We highlighted the misconception (outside the Caribbean) that reggae music is pure Rasta music or entirely the product of Rastafari culture, and attempted to explain how this misconception came about.

The history of Jamaican popular music's development shows that, at every stage and from the beginning, Rasta culture has always made significant contributions, but that the music was developed by all sorts of people and cultural influences, both Jamaican and foreign, which had nothing to do with Rastafari. At the end of our last installment, we posed the question, among others, "what is the fuller story on reggae music and what is Rasta music?" Unfortunately, due to space limitations this month, we'll only be able to scratch the surface of this topic, to be continued next month.

To address these questions, it is first necessary to set the stage by exploring the nature of Caribbean culture in general. Caribbean culture is the result of different cultures, most of them imported (mostly by force) and not indigenous to the area, mixing together in a wildly complicated process of cross-fertilization. It can be thought of as a complex fabric and, like fabric, the result of multiple strands of cultural traditions cross-woven into a greater whole. In the same way, each Caribbean island tends to have its own distinctive culture which is also the result of different ethnic traditions weaving themselves together into a new hybrid fabric over time. This phenomenon occurs on multiple levels: language, race, music, cuisine, agricultural methods, architecture, etc.

Tracing the roots of each cultural strand in the fabric can be a daunting task, because these cultures were the product of slavery and brutal economic expansionism by Europe. As such, there was often little or no early documentation of the cultural landscapes on these islands, since they were viewed as little more than what they in fact were: plantations, and not playgrounds for explorers and anthropologists. We do however have the journals and diaries of the plantation owners, which provide some degree of detail about the various African cultures, appearance and behaviors of the enslaved.

Trying to disentangle and trace back all these cultural threads continues to be the subject of much painstaking research. The informants who perhaps could have easily solved these mysteries, had anyone bothered to ask them at the time, have been dead for hundreds of years, and the threads themselves have changed a great deal by being interconnected and influencing each other over centuries, a process that is ongoing today. Added to this, is the nature of smaller island cultures, where information and cultural trends tend to spread quickly and undergo a high degree of recycling. Just as it seems an older tradition has nearly died out, it springs back to life in a new form, usually mixed with another newer tradition. This tendency has been observed and well documented not only in the Caribbean, but in other areas of the world like Indonesia, particularly the island of Bali.

Thus, in the course of Caribbean cultural research, it seems that every answer unlocks twice as many questions or presents twice as many contradictions. There usually emerges a set of simplified, convenient theories which become the "official" and widely accepted explanations for what is going on culturally. While these "official versions" are usually "true" in essence, it usually turns out on closer inspection that they are only a fragment of a greater, more complicated truth.

The origin of pure Rasta music and reggae music is no exception. For reggae music the "official" story usually reads: "Jamaicans listened to 50s R&B records broadcast on Miami radio stations, and in attempting to imitate it they turned the beat around, and presto, ska music was born, which turned into rock steady, which became reggae which was invented by Bob Marley." Partially true, but skewed, simplistic and hardly the whole story.

Let's touch on pure Rasta music, or what is known today as nyahbingi music. A specific style of drumming and song, nyahbingi music can be thought of as pure Rasta music because it is essentially a form of Rastafari worship and prayer at meetings (groundations), and is rarely played by non-Rastas. Its origins can be traced back to the very birth of the faith in the early 1930s, nearly two decades before the dawn of the Jamaican recording industry.

Next month: More history of Nyahbingi music.

SELF HELP

The people themselves must come to realize their own difficulties in the development of their community and try to solve them by collective participation following an order of priority and taking their potentiality into account. HIM Haile Selassie

I Trip to Trinidad and Tobago— Brian Rossi—Appalachian State University

HAILE! SELASSIE! Greetings sons and dawtaws of king Jah Rastafari;

This past August I man forward to Fyzabad, Trinidad on the work study trip sponsored by the Trinidad & Tobago Rastafari United.

Through the guidance of Jah I came across the TTRU work-study/groundation advertisement and checked the web site aiyamar.com. Pon sighting what them have goin on, immediately I was attracted to the mission the bredren were setting out to accomplish.

A non-profit organization that is developing an anti colonial education/health center open for all Rasta or non Rasta. They own the land so Babylon can't mash it down. I read on the aims and objectives they wanted to develop an organic agriculture project and being that I am studying that very subject in school, I knew this Jah guidance, i don't know how I came across this ad on the internet, but it was exactly what I had been seeking.

Rastafari groundation and a development center that I could put I school in to practice for the benefit of Rastafari. From this time, I was goin to make the necessary effort to get on board. After linking with Ras Ravin-I he informed I bout the runnings. This would be a two week stay in the bush, not a hotel or any of those amenities, there was to be the first national Rastafari groundation ever held in Trini and no partiality, all houses welcome. Also we would see first hand the Trinidad culture and get schooled in the history of Trinidad and of the Rastafari movement therein. This was a true blessing. I could not pass dis up.

This was my first time out of the US and I was amazed, it was beautiful. On the way to the compound we stopped for some Trinidad fast food, "doubles" these are sooo good, (at time we would go on searches for dem through the city). Once we belly full we continued to Fyzabad taking the less trodden path through the vilage.



Bongo Shawn

The stomping grounds of the bredrin when they was youth, where they first went natty. The houses are very close together and quite small. They all have 400gal black tanks that capture the rain water which is a prime water source. Small gardens are every where and fruit trees dot the road side. Along with the above ground pipes used to transport oil. Yea the main export is oil so there are oil machines all over. Riding through the streets there were constant hails coming through de windows, every where we went there was Rasta.

The people we passed knew something was goin on as everyone stopped what they were doing and watched us pass. As we arrived to the land I thought where are we it looked strange not what I imagined. However this feeling went away within minutes. Soon it transformed into a high energy compound with rasta comin in and goin out continuously. No time was wasted and we began to set up are temporary camp for the night.

These tents were to be InI resting places for the next 13 nights. No problem man. Bongo Zach came forward in company with some youth who blocked verse and sound for we. Chanting up his majesty, I was moved in a way I had never been before. This was the lighting of the fiyah that would bun the duration of the groudation

After camp was set InI gathered and the iyabinghi ises ride up. This was I first session and I was taken, all the impurities, began ta bun! da fiyah light inside I man and to this day has not ceased. The ises sealed up and we settled to relax a little from the long travels.

The reasoning began and we learned of the revolutionary times of the seventies, the struggles which have led the bredrin to where they are now.

I Trip to Trinidad and Tobago— Brian Rossi—Appalachian State University

Until this point I really did not overs the magnitude of where we were. My whole outlook changed on life. These men have been fighting for justice for they whole life and have not escaped the hardships. The wickedness of the downpresser has been chasing them but Jah keep dem one step ahead. I feel truly honored to be here in this house. I now know the seriousness of TTRU. They not playing no games, and no dreamy illusions, only serious business man rastafari works guided by the teachings of his majesty. Nuff respect to the Idren. All the while we was waiting on the pot ta bubble cause man we was hungry. Eventually we filled we belly and laid we head for a rest. It was now early morning.

The next light after some morning tea, began our first workshop on bamboo construction. We constructed a 20'x30' frame that would shelter our tents. This was a collective project involving all, but Ras Nathaniel, Bret, and I did the majority of the work. The instruction, was well received and throughout the day ones would take some time and come assist we. At the end of the day we had a complete and covered structure that stood tall all the time enduring the weight of gallons of water at times. It was the rainy season and rained at some point most every day.

In the first two days a kitchen was added to Lincoln's cabin, a tent shelter was built, another one improved, the books for the true-brary cataloged, flags raised, and many details worked out concerning the next two days

The gathering kicked off with some ises and an introduction by Ras Ravin-I. Then the speakers came forward. We learned of the current economic conditions, the root of those problems and what can and need to be done. The need for action was strongly emphasized. Ras Ravin, Brother Lance, Ras Jag, Ras Lincoln, and Ras Nathaniel all delivered heart-felt speeches that hit deep and hard.

Each one of we must develop and work toward uplifting the Rastafari nation. The time has come, we cannot afford to wait any longer. Repatriation is a must for the decedents of Afrikans taken in captivity, and is the duty of others to support that. Time for Rastafari to raise up. **No sleeping no slumber for that equals poverty.**

By night fall many had come forward and ones n ones continued to come and gather. Da pot bubblin Da ganga blazin an da reasoning strong. I had never been present for any thing so blessed. This was what I needed for real.

The bredrin Ivor came forward who was the priest of the binghi house in Grenada and dropped serious wisemind on ini concerning prophecy in Revalations. The vibe was so strong with the repatriation census, the movements of TTRU, the ises, the bredrin an sistren comin forward, the vibrations must a been coverin da whole island. The official gathering sealed up but the ises continued tru de night.

The second day brought out Jennifer Jones who is a senator of parliament in Trinidad. By the end of the day the locals had a plan for cleaning up the local community and what other improvements must be made. The problems with education system and what could be done to improve it were discussed. I can not report all things there was so much it was definitely a success. After the gathering I had a clearer overs of the foundation of TTRU and the driving factors. This has been in the making for long time and now its time to take off. The gathering was strong exceeding the expectations of TTRU. The movements are now visible.

The vibes built during the gathering did not subside an each new light brought forward wonderful experiences. We began to develop strong bonds amongst the local rasta an non rasta being recognized any where in the village InI were warmly accepted. There were no problems much love. Yes I. One blood an one creator. Together InI can chant down Babylon.

Each day was a session to be at. Binghi ises, chanting, reasoning never cease. The spiritual healing was crucial an iditation deep an everlasting. I never been so close to Jah the irits is soaring like the dove above. Every day was there was something learned. The reasoning covered many topics from history to daily life and solutions to problems facing InI in this time.

NEXT PAGE

I Trip to Trinidad and Tobago— Brian Rossi—Appalachian State University

Through a reasoning on the topic of the Nyabinghi ises InI learned of the heartical irations that come outta da word soun* an the effect that it creates. One man can sing out ta Jah but if ones an ones come together the word soun* is much louder the vibrations much stronger. It is these chants that disrupt the Babylon system an give InI strength and motivation to trod forward. The ises reveal truth to the I an ya caan not escape. Thats the healing the transgressions get burned its purifying you can't runaway from yourself or the almighty. These things I will never forget these experiences are now imbedded InI an help reveal the righteous path of Rastafari.

In conclusion this was the best two weeks of I man time on this planet. The amount and wealth of knowledge gained exceeds what I have learned from the three years of sighting Rastafari. In Iman trod this is what I have been seeking, a time an place to come to a solid overstanding of the fullness of Rastafari through witnessing the livity and being in the presence of many wise sons an dawtas of Jah Rastafari. I now take up the struggle an give I full energy to TTRU and the Rastafari nation as a whole. Through this time I developed many friendships and think bout all of you everyday. I give thanks for the many blessing bestowed pon InI over the duration of the trip. Fyzabad(fyzagood) is a village that will be known in all the world. Its history deep, the people strong with revolutionary blood flowing hotta.

More fiyah bless up the people dem. TTRU is mekin a step forward for Rastafari and the liberation of all people from the colonial grip that is holdin the people down. This is a place for development an skills trading to strenghten the bredrin an sistren an prepare we for repatriation. Yea the giant gonna wake up an den Rastafari goin ta take over. I give thanks to Ras Ravin-I an Bro. Lance for holding things up in the US and taking I man down to they home. Also to the bredrin holdin it up in Trini, Ras Lincoln, Ras Jag, especially for all their hard work an again for welcoming InI to they home. I man will do all I can for the progress of the TTRU. I left to Trinidad as a youthman seeking, and returned a youth man still seeking but with a purpose and a mission.

Yes JAH I give thanks for providing I with the ability to make this trod. For me these were the best days ever, in the company of rasta old an young African and Indian. The ease of life here is great, things happen when they do no worries Fari, Jah Will be done.

BIG UP ta Bro. Lance, Ras Ravin-I, Ras Lincoln, Ras jag, Binghi Kai, Ras Kwamie, Bongo Sean, Bongo Zach, Ras Nathaniel, Ras Marcus, Frank his wife an daughters(they treat I with much love), Sista Ichel, Bali Ram, to the youth who came to dwell with InI an block they word sound, an to all who made this possible.

Giving Ises

Jah B.



Empress Trudy of the TTRU with the Sistrenites Special Edition Newsletter at the TTRU HQ, Trinidad.

Sistrenites Newsletter is organized and published by Rastafari Online.

We recommend that the Rastafari Global family do the service of reprinting any and all newsletters produced, and developed by Rastafari available to family members who don't have computers, or access to the internet.



THE DAY FYZO STOOD STILL —By Dr. Lance Seunarine



I had visualized Fyzabad (FYZO) as a striving community. After all, it was at Fyzo that oil was discovered, and it was at Fyzo that on June 19, 1937, a national strike was called that would ricochet and have far reaching consequences around the British Empire. It was also at Fyzo that The National Union of Freedom Fighters (NUFF) led an armed struggle to draw attention to the discrepancy which existed between the Haves and the Tillers of the land. So, you could understand my shock as I stepped off the plane on August 3, 2005 from NY and landed in good old Trinidad with some of my Rastafari idrens. My first observation as I embarked at Piarco International was to appreciate the scale of the bobol scandal of enormous proportion that took place there. Incidentally, one of the ring leaders, a Cuban, was recently apprehended in Miami, USA and was extradited to Trinidad to face this commess.

We were met by Ras Lincoln and Ras Aboyoni and after exchanging salutations we headed for South and home. The journey was a mad race into hell. The driver drove as if he was in the "Indy 500" and had to be reminded that he had "valuable cargo on board."

The journey also afforded me the opportunity to focus on the paradox between the houses of "macho size" located side by side to shanties. Trinis were functioning as if they were in a daze or under the spell of Mandrake, the magician.

I reminded myself of the dichotomy which exists: out of 1.3 million people, 442,000 are living in abject poverty; 168,000 youths are unemployed and left to roam the streets and that Trinidad is richer than 16 States in America. Most of all, I, however, observed that a veil of fear hung over the country. Trinidad had witnessed 221 killings. (254 as of 9/7/05).

At Fyzabad, though, I went into shell shock. Did the government not know how important Fyzo was to its economy? Did they forget that the "Chief Servant" resided here? Did they forget that the first African and Indian Union was started here and that Indians and Africans still continue to live in harmony? I noticed that the signs to the Casbah and High Noon still appeared above their entrance doors but their activities had long ceased to operate. The streets were kept clean but there was an eerie feeling that people were just getting by; there were some bright spots to dull one's senses such as Brother Zeno who was championing his cause and bringing out the best of the youth who were under his direction. The market which used to be the hub of southern activities still stood but did not have any activities of times long past. This was the place and where the market women dominated. One could measure the success of the South by checking on this market. Today it stands as a sad reminder of things long gone.

We pitched tent and immediately word got around that we had arrived. We had broken Mandrake's spell! Suddenly, our compound became the talk of the village. Rasta came to pay homage and pledged their support.



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THE DAY FYZO STOOD STILL —By Dr. Lance Seunarine

Indian and African unity suddenly became visible as if the ghost of Tubal Uriah Buzz Butler, the Chief Servant was blowing in the wind. Or, perhaps the resurrection of the unity of 1975 where Basdeo Panday, Raffique Shah, Joe Young and George Weekes demonstrated that there was indeed unity between the two largest ethnic groups - the African and the Indian. The children had conducted a major workshop on Education and we became their students; the neighbors in a continuous flow came and shared their crops with us; Ras Nathaniel of IRIE always kept us in a heartical upliftment chanting Nyabinghi ises; His repatriation census was well received and this document has substantiated the call for Repatriation. His action coincided with the pre planned journey of some idrens of the Ethiopian Peace Foundation to Mother Africa - Ghana, Nigeria and Zion Ethiopia.

INI word sound emphasized the importance of the role of the Africans in the Diaspora and why it is so important to overstand the importance of Africa to INI livity. In another one of my utterances, I emphasized a New Day, a New Approach and a New Order. This was reasoning based on collective strength. Who says that we have to have lots of money to achieve success! As Ras Ravin -I often says "he has a phantom budget." He was correct for it has always been a budget of this magnitude that has allowed TTRU to be successful. Anyone who witnessed the movement in the camp, would immediately deduce "dem Rasta had money, oui." What we really have is collective unity that induces the collective strength within we. It also showed that in order for Rastafari to be effective, it had to have a direct linkage to the community. In other words, we cannot be "standoffish" as we Trini would often say. Once we accept our existence as directed by HIM and emulate HIM as directed tru HIM's Utterances, it does not matter if you are Nyabinghi, Twelve Tribes or Bobo. This new found strength signaled this togetherness. Furthermore, this gathering limited any talk or finger pointing or "we camp better than your own."



We had planned and executed four events in Trinidad in rapid progression. Firstly, TTRU had successfully conducted an orderly motorcade on July 23, 2005 and had its own escort throughout the Southern part of Trinidad. Secondly, TTRU had planned and coordinated a successful National Rastafari gathering and showed that it could have both Rasta and Non Rasta support from far and within the community. And more importantly, INI took the time to lay out the plans to build our Multi-cultural and Multi purpose educational center. Finally, TTRU with Dr. Jennifer Jones were able to provide free medical care for 47 idrens -- something the existing government had failed to provide for FYZO. The latter feat was accomplished with the assistance of three Cuban doctors.

As Rasta, we should always remember the time that Fyzo stood still. However, Fyzo no longer is asleep. It has come alive and Rasta and the village people have pledged their support to become the vanguard for positive change while INI adhere to the calling of Mother Africa.

INI give thanks to all who forward and who have made this dream become a reality. INI give thanks to all the idren in the US and Trinidad who have kept this hope alive and as Ras Ravin says "nothing moves before Jah wills it."

Give Thanks
Brother Lance



Rasta Elder Chanker TTRU tour guide, gives lecture on the La Brea Asphalt lake, to visitors and members. The lake is said to be the biggest in the world, TTRU visited the "pitch" lake as part of its island tour package.

Achieving Collective Security in Trinidad (and Beyond) by Engaging in Politics of Position

By Bretton Alvare, Temple University

When Selassie I manifest on Earth, HIM fulfilled the prophecy and loosed the Seven Seals. His holy presence signaled the downfall of wicked Babylon.

Unfortunately, this radical change did not magically occur overnight. As Ras Jag (TTRU Chariman) reasoned, "HIM nah go do the job for InI. Selassie I gave InI the tools, the wisdom, the livity to do it we-selves."

Rastafari bredren all over the world have been waiting for the revolution to come, waiting for that mythical day when people all over the world will wake up and realize that their lives do nothing more than perpetuate a Babylonian system of inequality whose goal is just that; perpetual and eternal inequality and downpression.

As time wears on it becomes more and more apparent that the changes will not happen in such a mythical fashion. When them belly full most people don't care that they are simply tools in a Babylon system.

InI need to stop waiting and actively shape the changes ourselves by taking up politics positionally (because as Ravin I said Rasta is political whether InI wants it to be or not).

What I mean by conducting politics positionally is different Rastafari mansions and political bodies coming together, recognizing/establishing their common position, and endeavoring to take on one another's agendas. I do not mean conglomeration, compromise, or the sacrifice of churchical diversity that is Rastafari's greatest strength. Rather, I refer to a collaborative political process whereby different Rasta houses/organizations communicate, open up reasoning with one another, and establish a set of common priorities so Rastafari can work toward achieving Selassie I's vision of collective security. That process is absolutely crucial to facilitating the educational and collective development of Rastafari and it is that process that Trinidad and Tobago Rastafari United (TTRU) is trying to establish in Trinidad.

The trip to Fyzabad in August was a major step forward for TTRU in this respect. At the ground-ation, Ras Lincoln, Ras Jag, Brother Lance, and Ras Ravin made all of the Rasta houses on the island aware of TTRU's intentions. Pledges of support were made. The lines of communication were thrown open. One week later TTRU was able to hold an enormously successful free clinic for local residents. But the doctors weren't Rasta, they were brought by Trinidad and Tobago Cuba Solidarity. It was only by taking up a common position with them despite our differences, accepting each other's agendas despite our differences, and collaborating despite our differences that we were able to succeed in providing free medical care to all in attendance.

Everyone, whether they Rasta or not, suffers from the dearth in healthcare and education in the Caribbean and Latin America. Only through collaboration (positional politics) based on this common suffering will we be able to provide for ourselves what the colonial governments should but will not.

The prophecy will be fulfilled, BABYLON WILL FALL, just as every evil empire has fallen throughout human history. But it is on we to overstand that InI actions alone will dictate whether Babylon falls in our lifetime, or long after our children and our children's children have suffered under her yoke.

The TTRU project in Trinidad has the potential to open doors toward Rastafari community development, not because we can do it we-selves, but because the local collaboration we do on the island can have a major global impact by serving as an inspiration and model for others around the world (Rasta and non-Rasta alike) who share the same position.

Even though wicked Babylon seems all consuming, InI will fight her and as Selassie I said, "... we know that we shall win, as we are confident in the victory of good over evil."

Lividity at the TTRU HQ—By Sister Ichell Abraham



On August 2, 2005 I boarded a plane early in the morning hours to forward to the meeting place of the US delegation to join others who would travel as a group to Trinidad for the beginning of the TTRU (Trinidad & Tobago Rastafari United) opening ceremonies. As I began i travels many thoughts were going through i mind. Being made aware that i would actually be at a Rastafari Camp - no electric, no running water, no permanent structure i was prepared for anything and expecting nothing. I attempted to keep i mind entirely open. This is my first trip out of the country and i had no expectations because i simply did not know what to expect. As a white (or clearskin as it is called in the islands), I did anticipate some form of abrasiveness due to race. I have been raised in a very integrated community as a young child and though I am not well traveled I have been to several major cities throughout the US & have never seen the amount of "race-mixing" as what I am used to in my city. One experience when i went to Chicago & stayed for almost 2 weeks, i saw no white folks. While visiting friends in the southside, I got the most awkward looks & my friend told me, "They ain't never seen no white person in real life." So, as i said i expected nothing, but was prepared for anything. I can say that the whole time i was in Trinidad, i did not experience even one feeling of discomfort.

After my arrival at the meeting place, i&i had still more errands to run and last minute things to wrap up. i&i had forwarded all of our tents, many tarps and other camping & first aid supplies over a month prior. The word was that after the tropical storms were getting stronger the boat with all i&i shipment was held over in a next island, Monday was a Trinidad National Holiday and our barrells still were not cleared. Now i worry a bit because all i can think of is "Where will I sleep?", "What if i get stung by something & don't have any medicine?"

Later that evening, i&i find out the barrells had reached and would be moved to the front of the boat and be able to be picked up the next morning, the afternoon was when i&i were scheduled to arrive. See how things work in Jah time!

One thing i did expect was problems at the airport. A group of Rasta leaving the US going to the Caribbean, I thought for sure i&i would get all kind of search bizness. Thankfully, no problems except for one person luggage was not up to specifications & he had to go spend \$100 on a new piece. The plane ride was good except for the turbulence at the end, going around the mountain to land - i also experienced my first panic attack. I give thanks for Ras Nathaniel who sat in the seat next to i & mostly kept i mind off of being in the air & although he was laffing at i during the turbulence incident, he did fan me wit some paper & turn his head.

Once i&i arrive in Port-of-Spain, no problems at all. I&I ride pull up, a big van or "maxi-taxi" wit 5 mens already in it & now we bout to squeeze in 7 people & a heap of luggage, lawd a mercy. Just like the movies, we barrellin down narrow windy roads wit no stop signs, stop lights, jus lots of blowing horns & people walking everywhere. Finally i am on solid ground so i feel pretty safe even with all the tilting and smushing one inother!

We take a small journey thru towns & villages & stop at a roadside vendor & eat doubles. YUM! i gots to learn how to make those things! - basically it is a bean sandwich. Curious yet? chickpeas in some curry sauce loaded onto a flat doughy soft bread, spread some hot sauce on top & throw a next piece of bread on that - doubles cuz the i gets double amount of bread, seen? Best thing is right now i got american money & one US dollar is a lil over 6 in Trini money & doubles are only 2 bucks. That's whats up. Can i say Brett ate about \$10 worth and put the x-tra hot sauce on top. I was jus hoping him body used to beans - cuz HIM know whappens when it's not - give thanks he was!

i&i forward onto the land & i feel so at home, peaceful already. many were there to greet i&i, we start to pitch tents & all a sudden, it is night out. no electric, so imagine how dark it is - but it is only 7:00. Glad i expected nothing cuz i woulda been so confused.

Livity at the TTRU HQ—By Sister Ichell Abraham

But not as confused as in the morning, roosters crowing - what in the world? Yeah, i am a city girl so this was very unusual for i, but it sure made i rise up quickly. Mostly the first days were a lot of work & reasoning. the media got it all wrong the way dey perceive island life. i&i was working our tails off & it is blazing sun! being a girl, i didn't get to use the machete - i had to sit and log books for deh trueberry into deh computer. Also, being a single child from a single mom, i was always told i can do anything boys can do, etc. so this was a challenge for i, not wanting to be out of line - not wanting to disrespect by jumpin in to help mankind. I think ones could tell, cuz then i heard - we don't discriminate - get up on the ladder & hold this or that. I felt alot better. I am "busy" - i have to always be doing something - so it was frustrating to not know what to do.

After being around idren all day - i can not explain how excited i was to see Trudy coming around the bend, i felt like a little girl meeting a new friend on the first day of school. Finally! a woman to reason with! As the men worked on the new structure for ini tents to go under, Trudy & i logged in all the books for the truberry. ini was jus liming & logging, all a sudden here come Ravin-I screaming sommin bout grab sommin - Trudy & i turn to see a tent gettin caught by the wind & bout to fly away! Ravin-I reach & grab deh tent & the wind is blowing so hard bamboo trees touchin deh roof of where Trudy & i sitting - oops! ini was so into what ini was doin, we didn't know a storm was coming to pass. ini hurry so quick to gather up all deh books, save the computer document & keep everything from getting wet. well, as fast as it come is as fast as it go. another difference, where i live it get dark, one can smell the rain coming, wind blow hard & you know it is time to take cover. not there - it come & then it go and it is more of a refreshment than a hindrance.

Oh, speaking of refreshments - i surely have a new appreciation for ice. with no electric, we rarely had ice so mostly ini drank jus warm water. Almost every morning someone would come bring fruits & veggies from a garden & one

morning i was surprised & excited to see Jesse come wit a 2-liter bottle filled wit water & placed in the freezer overnight to bring ini ice! I felt such a sense of unity with everyone there. everybody looked out for one inoother & not like in america where ini are taught to have our own cup & not eat after others, etc. When the ice came, it didnt matter who you was drinking after - as long as that cup still had a chunk of ice!

Remember, i dear readers, there is no electric, no running water & no permanent structure, where do i shower? Well, i being the only woman visiting was sure to send a camp shower. This is only a 5gallon bag with a hose on the end. You fill it wit water & hang it from a tree & wash up. Well, mankind just take they bucket & wander off deeper onto the land. So, what i gonna do? As a woman - i just CAN NOT be out in the open like that and wit so many other works taking priority my lil ol' shower stall wasn't going to get put up until after the conference. One of the idren, Kye, asks i do i want to go take a fresh. Please yes i raspond. So i gather all i things & am thinking i am going on a journey. As ini walk down the road, we stop at the first house & they say "sure come take a fresh". They don't have running water now, but they do have a bathroom & shower stall - i can deal wit deh bucket & pitcher - i jus need a closed area. Every day they invite i down to freshen up & tell i to come the next day & wash a load of clothes (they have electric). This is what i can not express enough of, the kindness & respect of everyone there. Everyone is so polite & loving. During an energetic reasoning between the idren, one start to overtalk the other & that idren say so calmly, "If i may please finish my point. May Jah find the words of i mouth and the meditations of i heart acceptable.", the other idren say yes please and forgive me. What could have turned out to be an argument was quickly calmed and remained on track.

Give thanks for Kye who kept us fed everyday from morning til evening. I could go on & on about all the different foods & how wonderful everything was - so many different things that now, back in amerikka - i don't want nothing to eat. I miss that food so much.

**Livity at the TTRU HQ—
By Sister Ichell Abraham**

During the gathering, i would try to help cook - even tho i didn't know what some foods were or how they were cooked. The other sistren keep tellin i - "the i been working all day, sit and take a rest." and i couldn't - so i would wash dishes. It was so nice to have everyone help. Ones who were to be guests at the gathering, came in asking what needed to be done. And - it wasn't no buffet, serve yahself either. Plates was made & served to ones wit a cup of juice. Not just during the gathering - it was like that each light. Everyone took care of one ino-ther.

The gathering itself was very powerful. i&i realized how livicated the people were to doing HIM works. During Sister, or i should say, Par-liament Member Jennifer Jones presentation, i received such a feeling of impowerment from her. She mentioned about how the govern-ment gets away with certain things because i&i (as women!) do not stand up and fight against it. It is so true, even in amerikka, i&i mostly moan & complain about what is happening in- stead of joining together and taking a stand. Things CAN be changed and she is a living ex-ample of how it can be done. I had to depart one strong before the others & i know i missed out on another talk from her (or possibly a chance to reason with her) and the amazing display of interest from the community during the health fair that took place after i left, but I know my sistren there are ready to move for-ward!

I was so excited and felt blessed with the op-portunity that many will never get. I want to give thanks to everyone who expressed an in-terest in uniting Trinidad & Tobago Rastafari, ones who were not even Rasta who came to the conference to learn. Give thanks to ones who had preconceptions or insecurities and ex-tingushed them, keeping their minds open not only to Rastafari but also to the 3 of us clear-skis & looked at each of we as individuals so ini could assist in doing HIM's work to organize and uplift the entire community. This was defi-nately one of the biggest blessings i have re-ceived in i life, the opportunity, the challenge and soon the reward!
GIVE THANKS— Sister Ichell Abraham



Bongo Lenny and Ras Jag, President of TTRU



TTRU HQ at Fyzabad, Trinidad



TTRU Idren

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