

Cheddi Jagan Has Become an Afterthought

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Kaieteur News – The absence of the top echelons of the PPP/C leadership, past and present, from the Babu John last weekend is inexcusable. It is a sign of political conceit and insult to the memory of the party's patriarch.

It has been traditional, each year, for the PPP to host an annual activity at Babu John, Port Mourant, to mark the death anniversary of the late Dr. Cheddi Jagan. It has also been traditional for the top leadership of the party, and for the PPP/C President to be in attendance.

The PPP is the party of Cheddi Jagan. He was the central figure in the party for more than 50 years. Those who presently hold political power in Guyana are indebted to Cheddi, eternally indebted. This is not the way to treat someone to whom so much is owed.

Of some consolation was that this fact was acknowledged by Minister of Agriculture, Zulfikar Mustapha. He conceded in his remarks at the Crematorium site that it was due to Dr. Jagan's teachings and legacy that the PPP/C was able to overcome the recent attack on democracy.

He was also quoted as saying that the PPP/C has remained true to the founding principles of the great leader. Not many are so sure about this.

It is inexcusable for the PPP/C to organize the annual Babu John memorial, and for none of the senior political leaders of the PPP/C, including the venerable Vice President and the President to be present. It is shocking and it is a disgrace.

The old guard of the PPP/C must be outraged that Cheddi has become an afterthought. Such a low-level event is undeserving of Cheddi, especially considering the fanfare that is being raised about the struggle for democracy.

The present cabal, which runs the PPP, are deluding themselves into believing that they are heroic figures who saved Guyana from the clutches of dictatorship. They had resigned themselves to being cheated out of power after the APNU+AFC dragged out the declaration of the results of the March elections for five months.

The PPP leadership could not be sure that APNU+AFC would have stepped aside. The PPP leadership had become demoralized by the long drawn out court battles and the stubbornness of the APNU+AFC to comply with the democratic will of the people.

Were it not for the then United States Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, who made it clear that Granger had to step aside, the PPP/C would have been in deep distress today. They were never sure how the election crisis would have panned out and this was evident in the time it took for them to name their Ministers and to put measures in place to fight the pandemic and to produce a Budget. There was little planning for getting into office, so unsure was the PPP/C as to how the election crisis would have ended.

The ultimate hero of democracy in Guyana was Cheddi Jagan. He never gave up during the 28 years when he and his party were cheated out of office. And this is how his party repaid his sacrifice: with a low-level death anniversary commemoration.

It is not as if the pandemic stood in the way of the top leadership of the party attending the hurriedly put-together event. The President attended public events organized over the same weekend for a sugar worker, who was killed even before he was born. He turned the sod for a hotel. He even went to the Everest Ground, where hundreds of spectators and players were breaching the COVID-regulations, during a cricket tournament.

So why could the upper echelons of the PPP leadership not be at Babu John for the death anniversary of the patriarch of the party. This is gross disrespect to those who established and developed the party.

The party's matriarch, Mrs. Janet Jagan, died a bitter woman. She was deeply aggrieved after she was called a private citizen by a party leader, whom she virtually handpicked for the position of President. She died gravely concerned that certain individuals were being catapulted to high office and those persons had played no part in the party's struggle for free and fair elections.

The old guard of the party was deactivated after the 2015 defeat. They should now recognize the dangers, which is facing Cheddi's legacy by a group of leaders whose policies are completely at odds with the working class philosophy for Cheddi. It is time to rout the charlatans who have seized the reins of control of the party. Otherwise, Cheddi will turn from an afterthought to an afterglow.