Stronger Family Means more Stability

by Janet Jagan

Attitudes and behaviour patterns are important aspects in examining some of the problems facing our country and its development. For some reason, which I believe requires scientific analysis - sociological, psychological, or some other part of the modern forms of analysis - there has been a profound change in the way Guyanese behave. I've lived here for over six decades and it would take a blind and deaf person not to notice the changes.

Where to begin? Maybe school is a good place to start. In earlier periods, it was a privilege to attend school and one appreciated by both parents and children. Maybe that was so because not every child could afford to attend school due to many factors - money, geography and the relative lack of school space, no room for every child.

Those who attended school, I believe, did so with much greater regularity than hear of fights in school, students injuring one another, use of drugs, liquor and cigarettes as well as sex in the schools.

Now, we also have many drop-outs. Maybe I'm wrong, but my impression is that children paid more attention to their school work and the various responsibilities of attending school in an earlier period. It was rare to hear that children are given drop-outs. Medical problems, doctors will tell you. In one week, in our under-a-million-inhabitants, more than a dozen may die or be seriously injured - sometimes for life. Basically, the reason for the massive road accident which are there for drainage purposes. Thus, the environment is not only fouled up and nasty, but outlets for heavy rains are blocked. It is pitiful to see the results of this spoilage of our environment in the urban and rural areas.

Sociologists might refer to all of the above as a worldwide phenomenon. As communications become easier, the transfer of weapons, criminal ideas, the use of electronics in the sphere of crime, the growing narcotic trade and wars, add to the growth of these problems in just about every country in the world.

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School system.

Take another look at the thefts of items which harm life in general, like stealing electricity and water, copper that is used by telephones and electricity companies - which, when stolen, affect the communities by loss of services such as telephone, electricity and water. Besides, there is a serious waste in two valuable components to living - water and electricity. Genuine efforts should be made to conserve!

Why do people do these destructive acts which hurt whole communities and create waste and even increases in the rates for these services?

Of course, these anti-people behaviour patterns that seem to be more prevalent, are just the tip of the problems we faced, with growing violence, theft and vicious crimes that cause so much grief and pain.

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Much more attention has to be paid to these problems which affect our way of life, our living standards and our goals of attaining peace, happiness and a better life for our children. Our family system, the bedrock of stability, must be strengthened and this is not an easy task in a world of changing values.