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Guyana: Whether members or supporters of the People's National Congress/Reform (PNC/R) are targeted because of their political beliefs (October 2004 - September 2006)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

Information on whether members or supporters of the People's National Congress/Reform (PNC/R) are targeted because of their political beliefs was scarce among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

In January 2006, radio journalist Ronald Waddell was murdered; he was a well-known talk-show host "who was outspoken in his criticism" of the government, which is led by the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) (RSF 2 Feb. 2006; *The Economist* 29 Apr. 2006; CGID 7 Feb. 2006). Waddell was also "an active member" of the People's National Congress/Reform (PNC/R) (RSF 2 Feb. 2006). Reporters Without Borders (Reporters sans frontières RSF) reports that his mother told *Stabroek News* that Waddell "had received many threats and 'knew he was going to be killed'" (ibid.). His radio program had been taken off the air three months earlier, after he openly defended Afro-Guyanese gangs (*The Economist* 29 Apr. 2006). The *Caribbean Media Corporation* refers to statements made by the Guyana Human Rights Association (GHRA) claiming that drug traffickers were responsible for Waddell's murder (5 Mar. 2006).

In news releases published on 8 August 2006 and 24 August 2006, the PNC/R condemned attacks against some of its candidates for the 28 August 2006 elections, allegedly claiming that the attacks were committed by PPP/R supporters. The PNC/R also protested the arrest of three supporters in Linden, "even though nothing was found after [an] illegal search" (5 Sept. 2006). This information could not be corroborated among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

According to *Global Insight Daily Analysis*, despite efforts to improve relations, there are still tensions between the Indo-Guyanese and Afro-Guyanese communities partly because of President Jagdeo's ties to the PPP/C and his failure to stop the killings of Afro-Guyanese opposition members (28 Aug. 2006).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Caribbean Guyana Institute for Democracy (CGID). 7 February 2006. "CGID Questions Government Involvement in Murder of Guyanese Journalist: Calls for International Probe." <<http://www.c-gid.org/newsarticle2.htm>> [Accessed 22 Sept. 2006]

Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC) [Bridgetown]. 5 March 2006. "Guyana Rights Group Calls for New Political Project to Halt Crime." (Factiva)

The Economist. 29 April 2006. "Racial Politics in Guyana: Good Hopes and Bad Intentions." (Factiva)

Global Insight Daily Analysis. 28 August 2006. Marion Barbel. "Elections 2006: Security Steps Up as Guyana Readies for Election." (Factiva)

People's National Congress/Reform (PNC/R). 5 September 2006. "Arrest of PNC-R-1G Activists in Linden." <<http://www.guyanapnc.org/index2.htm>> [Accessed 14 Sept. 2006]

_____. 24 August 2006. "PPP/C Thug Attack Young PNC-R-1G Candidate." <<http://www.guyanapnc.org/index2.htm>> [Accessed 14 Sept. 2006]

_____. 8 August 2006. "PNC-R-1G Condemns Attack on Its Candidate By PPP/C Activists." <<http://www.guyanapnc.org/index2.htm>> [Accessed 14 Sept. 2006]

Reporters sans frontières (RSF). 2 February 2006. "Opposition Journalist Gunned Down in Georgetown." <http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=16339> [Accessed 22 Sept. 2006]

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Caribbean Guyana Institute for Democracy (CGID) and an expert on political and ethnic issues at the University of Guyana did not respond to a request for information within the time constraints for this Response.

Attempts to reach the People's National Congress/Reform (PNC/R) were unsuccessful.

Internet sites, including: Amnesty International, Factiva, Guyananection.com, Human Rights Watch, *Stabroek News*, United States Department of State.

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