

Pascal Bridgemohan

By : **Juggernaut**

Pascal is an unusual first name for a Trinidad Indian. Brijmohan is a common last name in India but when Indians landed in Trinidad a century ago, Brijmohan was spelled as Bridgemohan for lack of understanding among the customs officials. Juggernaut always fascinated with details of this kind.



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Subba Rao

A visit to farmers market on the corner of Alii and Hualalai Roads in Kona on the Big Island was always a great experience to see fresh produce and hear all kind of accents from the vendors and shoppers.

â How much for egg plants?â asked Juggernaut.

â Two dollar a bundle,â replied the Philippino woman with strong accent without making any eye contact.

â How much for long beans?â

â Two dollar.â

â How much for the spinach bundle?â

â Two dollar, two dollar, all the vegetables two dollar,â the vendor walked away from Juggernaut leaving him to decide.

At the vegetable stalls, the vendors put out bundles of vegetables each two dollars no matter if is spinach, egg plants or green beans or whatever. The two dollar transaction without haggling was a good business plan Juggernaut never experienced before at any vegetable market.

While Juggernaut was making purchases, he heard somebody ask â How much for that avocado?â On hearing the accent, Juggernaut turned to see a dark skin man with facial hair making the inquiry. His looks and accent tells he is Indian from the Caribbean region, perhaps from Trinidad, Guyana or Surinam.

â Donâ t you call it Jabuka back home?â asked Juggernaut taking a bold initiative to make a conversation with the man with the accent. The man surprised at Juggernaut and asked â are you from Trinidad?â

â Well, I lived in Trinidad and on Sundays I use to visit Tunapuna market to buy Jabuka and other fruits and vegetables,â replied Juggernaut introducing himself.

â I am Pascal Bridgemohan from Trinidad,â

â You know I never came across a Trinidad Indian name Pascal,â smiled Juggernaut looking at the tall lanky Indian.

â True, true,â replied the man in pure Trinidad accent.

Pascal Bridgemohan

â Your name Pascal reminds me of a computer program Pascal came into prominence in early 70s with other programs like Fortran and Cobol, I am wondering if there was any connection between the Pascal the computer program and your name?â

â You know my dad was a self-taught computer programming guru in early seventies and maybe I was named after the computer program,â replied Pascal.

â If that were the case you may be the first person named after Pascal, the French man that invented the program,â laughed Juggernaut.

â Donâ t tell me that my last name Bridgemohan has a story behind as well,â Pascal looked at Juggernaut with curiosity.

â I have a feeling when your forefather from India landed in Trinidad on boat in 19th century, at the customs, the officers perhaps mostly British couldnâ t understand the Indiansâ accent and made up spellings on phonetics; thus a name sounding like Brijmohan was recorded as Bridgemohan on the landing documents. You guys stuck with unusual spellings like Persad or Persaud for Prasad, but again Trinidadians are ingenious in inventing new expressions and names the rest of world has no clue like *limin* for hanging out, *fete* for partying, *scruntin* for deprivation, *saga boy* for ladies man and a sustained hissing sound to make a pass at women.â

â We Trinidadians invented steel band from old oil steel drums to sound like piano so making up words come easy for us,â Pascal gave a confident look.

Juggernaut bade farewell to Pascal at the market place thanking him for bringing back his memories of using large punch machines with loud sound of the electric motor and the â thudâ it makes as each key was pressed and stacks of punched computer cards to be read on mainframe computers. The images of piles of computer paper with the data printed in dot format and stacks of punched computer cards on the desk remained as distant memory in Juggernautâ s mind.

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