

KITTITIAN TALK

SOME LOCAL PROVERBS & THEIR MEANINGS

Compiled by Morlene Whittaker

1. *Long grass got ear and baddicada could hear.*

Be careful when speaking since you never know who might be around to carry tales. (Long grass and baddicada are common plants growing wild. The idea is that one never knows which individual from amongst the crowd could be listening for the sole purpose of tale bearing).

2. *Cockroach ain't have no call in fowl business.*

One should never become involved in any matter or situation with which he cannot cope and might be at a disadvantage. One should keep out of situations or matters that does not concern him.

3. *One hand can't clap*

There are some situations where it is absolutely necessary to have more than one individual for the function or job to be performed. Isolation is not advantageous in all cases. Cooperation is necessary to achieve anything worthwhile.

4. *Follow foot bring break neck.*

If you just follow the crowd or company without thinking it can be disastrous. Do not be easily led by companions or the crowd.

5. *Who got meal look for rain.*

One has to be on the lookout for events or happenings that would adversely affect him. (The 'meal' here is that made from the cassava plant. After the grating and wringing the meal or flour has to be aired or is usually put out to

be sun-dried. This means being careful that rain does not wet it as it would become mouldy.

6. *Goat don't bring cow or sheep don't bring goat.*

One cannot expect people to get children that are a different type altogether from the parent. (Usually used to express the idea that a child is not expected to behave well when his parent(s) do not behave well.)

7. *Wha sweet goat in 'e mout' bitter in 'e backside.*

Something that might be great pleasure at the beginning could turn out to be quite unpleasant later on.

8. *Wha hurt eye mek nose run water.*

What affects the part, also affects the whole. For example when you do something to one member of a family you affect all members of that family.

9. *Hog did ask 'e marmee mek 'e mout' so long; 'e marmee say "wait for time".*

As one gets older he gets more experienced and learns the truths of life and living.

10. *When you play wid puppy, puppy lick you mout'.*

If you allow yourself to become too familiar with your subordinates you are sure to lose their respect.

11. *Doan clean ground' for monkey to run on.*

Do not spend too much time and energy doing something from which other people would reap the benefits.

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LOCAL VERNACULAR

WORDS AND PHRASES THAT ARE PART OF THE LANGUAGE OF OUR PEOPLE

Touloulou refers to a small black and red crab that lives near the beaches and which is also found further inland.

Jacko is a name given to our green vervet monkey and is used particularly by people in rural areas where it is sometime eaten.

Voorah House or Trash House is the term used to refer to a house that was in use up until the 1950's with walls made of matted sticks and roof of dried sugar cane or palm leaves.

“Monkey”, a large clay jar with a cover that is used to store water and keep it cool.

Cook-up, a one pot meal containing different meats (pig tail, pig snout, salt fish, chicken) that is well seasoned and boiled down in rice.

Yaba Pot. a large clay pot with a cover that is used to cook food in, usually a “cook-up” type meal.

Konkie is food made from corn meal, sweet potato, grated coconut and sometimes raisins mixed together and cooked in a banana leaf.

Relish refers to meat cooked with a meal.

Some Expressions

“A wah go on” a greeting equivalent to What's up?

Me Arm/Me Mudda/ Mudda wok are exclamations of surprise.

Me nah no means I do not know.

I go bang you means I'm going to hit you, beat you up.

Ah Bang me mout is to say what you have to say.

Wah mek? means What's going on/happening?

De cup spalled u refers to an enamel cup has some flecks of enamel off.

A jokey man is a funny person

I feeling peckish mean I am felling hungry

To wash off me feet and go means to hurry to go out.

To no hold water in me mouth is to say something frankly, without mincing words