

# ROYAL AND PRESIDENTIAL DISTINCTION

## FOR SABANAPETI'S PRESIDENT

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands awarded kabiten André R.M. Pakosie, president of the Sabanapeti Foundation, a knighthood "Ridder in de Orde van Oranje Nassau" (Knight of the Order of Oranje Nassau) on April 27, 2001. Kabiten Pakosie received the distinction for his work in public health care and for his impressive achievements in the field of the preservation of Maroon art, culture and history. Only a few months later, on August 21, 2001, the President of the Republic of Suriname, dr. Ronald R. Venetiaan, awarded him a high Surinamese distinction "Ridder in de Ere Orde van de Gele Ster" (Knight of the Honor Order of the Yellow Star). In his speech, President Venetiaan elaborated on the reasons that had moved the Surinamese government to confer such high a distinction: "André Pakosie, you are a son of the people of the interior. You were born in Diitabiki at the Tapanahoni River.



As a phytotherapist you are professionally engaged with the production and application of medicines derived from natural products. In addition you are well known as a historian and a poet. Up till this very day I still feel inspired by your work. The "broko pari" (broken paddle) you once found in the Marowijne River and presented to me, this object still occupies a prominent place in the entrance hall to my residency. I took this to mean that no matter how difficult circumstances are, one should

proceed with one's work, and see to it that one's boat arrives where it should be. Those considerations have moved the Government of Suriname to make you Knight of the Honor Order of the Yellow Star (Ridder in de Ere Orde van de Gele Ster).

In august 2000, the leader of the Ndyuka Maroon community, gaanman Gazon Matodja, appoints a council of traditional authority with André R.M. Pakosie as 'kabiten' (leader of the council) for the Ndyuka Maroon community residents in the Netherlands. Within the Maroon structure of authority, the kabitenship is the first but one of the highest after the function of gaanman. Gaanman Gazon Matodja also appoints six persons as basiya in the council of traditional authority for the Ndyuka Maroon community in the Netherlands. A basiya is the assistant of the kabiten.