



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

**ADDRESS BY
THE HONOURABLE CAROLYN SEEPERSAD-BACHAN
MINISTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

**AT THE
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO BRAHMA KUMARIS RAJA YOGA
CENTRE'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION &
THANKSGIVING
AND THE PLATINUM (75TH) ANNIVERSARY OF THE
BRAHMA KUMARIS WORLD SPIRITUAL UNIVERSITY**

ON

SUNDAY 24TH JUNE

RAJA YOGA CENTRE HEADQUARTERS – SAN FERNANDO

3:00PM

RELEVANT SALUTATIONS

I am honoured to have been asked by our Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, to represent her this afternoon at the 35th Anniversary Celebration of the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre in Trinidad and Tobago and the 75th Anniversary of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.

The Prime Minister sends her deepest regrets and apologies to you. Unfortunately she had prior commitments otherwise she would have been here. As you are aware, she enjoys a close relationship with the Centre and I bring these greetings on her behalf.

I also bring my own greetings as Member of Parliament for San Fernando West. This is part of my Constituency and I, too, enjoy a really good relationship with the Centre and its devotees.

I have always felt that all of us in Trinidad and Tobago, especially we who are in government, can profit from the wisdom and teachings of the Raja Yoga movement.

Sister Dadi Janki of the Raja Yoga movement has pioneered a method of spiritual development that has impacted profoundly on the lives of millions of people across the world. I find this quote from her both insightful and appropriate.

“At this time we must make the effort to become those with the highest quality of character. Someone who has a middle level of quality will see both weakness and strength. One who has the lowest level of quality will see that which is wrong as good and will not even be able to see that which is good.”

At this time, make the effort to make your character extremely high and you will only see the goodness and potential of all of those around you.”

The context in which I found the thoughts of Dadi Janki particularly instructive is a programme that was recently launched in our primary schools. It is known as “The Character Education and Citizenry Development Programme” and is meant to instill in our children a firm grounding in values, respect and appreciation of their own self-worth, as well as the self-worth of others.

I believe that the words of Dadi Janki are relevant in any developmental context because they represent a philosophical position that is the fundamental belief, the essence in fact, of the Raja Yoga movement locally and globally. It is also one to which I am deeply committed both as an individual and a Minister of Government.

I am sure that you are aware of our determination to transform the public service of Trinidad and Tobago and make it more citizen-centric. We call it “From Gold to Diamond”. What we hope to achieve is a country in which every citizen can access every government service anywhere,

even from home. Everyone in Trinidad and Tobago will get the best possible service in the shortest time at the lowest cost and of the highest standard. We all consume Government services – I am a Minister of Government but I am like everyone else when I need a service. I want to get the best from the public service.

We cannot do that without instilling in everyone – public servant or ordinary citizen – a respect for all the values for which you stand. When it comes to values all of us must be on the same page – honesty, integrity, discipline, diligence, and a work ethic that puts duty before self.

As we move the public service forward into the future, as we recruit new public servants or provide training to the leadership of the service, these values will be stressed. Having the education will not be enough to be hired or promoted. You must be people of integrity. Service before self- that is what we will stress.

This is the lesson you provide us in this constituency and this country. In a world characterised by anger, hatred and violence, you are steady, solid and stable. You know who you are, what you want and what you stand for. You recognize the good and potential in all of us –even those that society has rejected – and you work tirelessly with love and compassion to bring us to the realization of our self-worth.

Not many may know of the Raja Yoga Centre’s track record in Trinidad and Tobago. But today, on the occasion of this joint celebration, I wish to publicly note and commend the tremendous efforts of the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre of Trinidad and Tobago, particularly here in San Fernando, in creating a positive impact in the lives of many of our citizens.

Sister Hemlata has led the way as has Brother Harry. While Sister Hemlata has been establishing arms of the movement in Trinidad and elsewhere, Brother Harry worked closely with the Ministry of Education, then led by our Prime Minister, to promote a values

education component in the school curriculum. This emphasis on education is admirable and will always add value to our school system.

As our country prepares to celebrate its Golden Jubilee later this year, I believe that the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre has much to offer Trinidad and Tobago. Even as we adjust our economic strategies to deliver on our goal of “Prosperity for All”, I firmly believe that the ideals of inner peace, purity, love for humanity, selflessness and on-going spiritual development must also be encouraged in our citizens, if we are to become not only a materially wealthy Nation, but a people of honour with deep regard and respect for each other.

As teachers, mentors or spiritual guides, you the members of the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre of Trinidad and Tobago and the Brahma Kumaris Worldwide Spiritual University, are beacons of hope, light, happiness, peace and love.

I encourage you to continue your good works in Trinidad and Tobago, the Region and worldwide.

Once again, on behalf of the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, and on my own behalf as MP for San Fernando West, I congratulate you on your many accomplishments as you celebrate your Anniversaries.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you. May God continue to bless you and May God Bless our Nation.