

Ashook Ramsaran's Speech

Unveiling of Street Sign Co-naming 1 block of 169th St on May 25, 2019

In Honor of late Ramesh D. Kalicharran

<p style="text-align: center;">PROGRAM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderator: Arsalan Mohamed Event Organizer: Romanee R. Kalicharran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ OPENING CEREMONIES • WELCOME and UNIVERSAL PRAYER - Arsalan Mohamed aka Pradeep Kumar • CHRISTIAN PRAYER – Pastor James Richmond, SDA Church Organization • MUSLIM PRAYER – Arsalan Mohamed, The Interfaith Council for Community Development • HINDU PRAYER– Pandit Tillackdhary Seerattan, Shri Devi Mandir Pujari Anil Mangal and Romanee Kalicharran, Shri Maha Kali Devi Mandir, Inc. • LAMP LIGHTING - Miss India New York 2017- Shivangi Maini, Judith Kalicharran, Ashook Ramsaran • THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Arsalan Mohamed ❖ NATIONAL ANTHEM OF AMERICA “The Star-Spangled Banner” by HighLite Vibes Steel Combo - (Pannists -Kevin and Kenrick Lowe) • REMARKS – NYC Council Member Rory Lancman District 24 • REMARKS – Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC)- Ashook Ramsaran ❖ NATIONAL ANTHEM OF GUYANA “Dear Land of Guyana, of Rivers and Plains” • HighLite Vibes Steel Combo- (Pannist -Kevin and Kenrick Lowe) • REMARKS BY Consul General of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, NY - Honorable Barbara Atherly ❖ NATIONAL ANTHEM OF INDIA “Jana Gana Mana” - HighLite Vibes Steel Combo • REMARKS BY Deputy Consul General of India in NY- Mr. Shatrughna Sinha ❖ REMARKS – OFFICIALS • Office of NYS Assembly Member, David I. Weprin • Representative, Harpreet Singh Toor Special Assistant, Community Relations • Community Board #8 Chairperson -Martha Taylor ❖ ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ❖ REMARKS – FRIENDS & ASSOCIATES • Founder of Federation of India Associations (FIA), International Hindu Federation of Non-Violence and Peace Inc. - Yash Paul Soi • Founding Member of Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) & South Asian Council on Social Services (SACSS) – Sudha Acharya • Guyana Cultural Association NY Inc. – <i>Speaker:</i> Claire Goring <i>Accompanied by:</i> Dr. Rose October, Verna Walcott, Claire Patterson-Monah • Guyana Tri-State Alliance (G TSA) – <i>Speaker:</i> Patricia Jordon-Langford <i>Accompanied by:</i> Yvonne Chalhita, Rozanna Beaumont, Lita Inderjit • Jyoti Satsangh- Dr. Dhanpaul Narine • Community Leader - Dr. Mohammed Hack ❖ SPECIAL PRESENTATION ❖ SONG DEDICATION • Original Composition in Traditional Taan/Baithak Gana Style – Title: “Pyara Rahega Tera Naam” <i>Translation:</i> “Your name will always shine with love” Performers: Babloe Shankar, Ashley Annpersaud, Anil Shionarain, Romanee Kalicharran ❖ REMARKS – FAMILY MEMBERS • Siblings of the late RDK “Kali”: Rayjendra D. Kalicharran, Juliet Tajeshwar, Shobna Tomescu • Daughter: Romanee R. Kalicharran ❖ THANKS & APPRECIATION ❖ UNVEILING OF STREET SIGN ❖ CLOSING DRUMMING by Akoyaw Rudder and HighLite Vibes Steel Combo 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Thank you for being part of this historic event!</i></p> <p>HONORABLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of the Mayor Bill De Blasio, Queen Borough Director Community Affairs, Kevin Morris • NY Senate District 14 - Senator Leroy Comrie • Queens Borough President, Melinda Katz • Chairman of Youth, Education and Library Committee of Queens Community Board #8 - Marc A. Haken • Area Chair Community Board #8 – Kevin Forrestal • Member of Community Board #8, President of Fresh Meadows Homeowners Civic Association -James Gallagher Jr. • Former District Leader of Assembly District 25, Yolanda Dela Cruz Gallagher • NY State Committee Member Assembly District 24 – Dr. Taj Rajkumar • District Leader, NYS Assembly District 31, Richard David • Former President of Guyana, Honorable Bharat Jagdeo • NYC Council Member I. Daneek Miller District 27 • NYS Assembly Member David I. Weprin • Member of the Democratic Party County Committee, Farouk Rahaman <p>SPECIAL THANKS TO</p> <p>The Interfaith Council for Community Development (ICCD) Queens Borough Community Coordinator - Dr. Mohammed Hack Simple Solutions Production Group LLC Community Activist/Volunteer - Mohammad Rashid Community Activist- Santram Dukhbanjan Community Board 10 Member -Mohammad Salim Babloe Shankar Music School</p> <p>SPONSORED BY</p> <p>NYC Council Member Rory Lancman District 24 Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) – Ashook Ramsaran</p> <p>IN CONJUNCTION AND PARTNERSHIP WITH:</p> <p>NYC Queens Community Board #8 NYC Department of Transportation Queens Borough President, Melinda Katz</p> <p>OTHER SUPPORTERS:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Jagan Law Firm, PLLC -Vrinda Jagan, Esq. Kali Travel and Tours R. D. Kali Realty Arceel Driving School Raykal Contracting Inc. Romanee and Company USA Support Services Inc. Trinidadians & Tobagonians USA Mid-Queens Community Council (MQCC) Indo-Caribbean Alliance (ICA) Shri Maha Kali Devi Mandir, Inc. </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shaanti Bhavan Mandir Bhavane Maa Mandir Shree Maa Gourie Ganesh Bhavan Shri Devi Mandir Bhuveshwar Mandir Arya Spiritual Center Shri Satyam Mandir IFC (worldwidepageants.com) ITV QPTV West Indian Newspaper Guyana Times </td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;"><i>*Thanks for the tremendous support from the print and video media, various civic, religious and community organizations, entire neighborhood of Jamaica, Queens, associates, relatives, family members and friends of the late Ramesh D. Kalicharran.</i></p> <p style="font-size: x-small; text-align: center;"><i>**This bill was signed into law by the City Council of New York in December 2018.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Jagan Law Firm, PLLC -Vrinda Jagan, Esq. Kali Travel and Tours R. D. Kali Realty Arceel Driving School Raykal Contracting Inc. Romanee and Company USA Support Services Inc. Trinidadians & Tobagonians USA Mid-Queens Community Council (MQCC) Indo-Caribbean Alliance (ICA) Shri Maha Kali Devi Mandir, Inc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shaanti Bhavan Mandir Bhavane Maa Mandir Shree Maa Gourie Ganesh Bhavan Shri Devi Mandir Bhuveshwar Mandir Arya Spiritual Center Shri Satyam Mandir IFC (worldwidepageants.com) ITV QPTV West Indian Newspaper Guyana Times
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Good morning, salutations and greetings – to Judith, Romanee, Jagdesh and the entire Kalicharran family.

Consul Generals of Indian and Guyana; Hon. Council Member Rory Lancman; other officials, friends, and everyone in attendance here today.

Thanks to Romanee and her helpers to organize this outstanding event to mark a historic event.

Firstly: On Monday we commemorate Memorial Day in the USA and I request that we all take a moment to reflect on the sacrifices of those who secure and preserve our freedom, and make it possible for us to be doing what we are doing here today – here or at your own convenience.

In addition to the numerous plaques, praises and poojas, here today is a permanent marker to honor the life and legacy of Ramesh Kalicharran - husband, father, brother, friend, advisor and mentor – a community icon and well known cultural advocate and unwavering supporter.

This is an historic moment – a street co-named for **KALI**. This is a public acknowledgement and recognition

Our brother and friend did not ask for this - But we all know that it is well deserved.

And I am enormously honored to be part of it.

It began on a sad day at the wake on December 4, 2017.

With short notice, I encouraged and assisted AM Weprin to produce a NYS posthumous proclamation which he presented to Judith at the wake on December 4, 2017.

I followed with my remarks -- and I realized right at that moment that I had to do something significant to honor my friend and brother Ramesh Kalicharran. I could not let that moment pass without making a bold, unprecedented commitment - **to co-name 169th Street as “Kali Way”**. It was the right thing to do and the right moment to do so.

Overwhelming applause welcomed my announcement.

Lots of guidance, advice and encouragement by those who know. I could not have done it without them.

The process was long - filing the application, justification, my presentations to several organizations for their support, many letters of support, hearings at Borough Hall, Hillcrest Jewish Center and C/Board #8.

Not all was smooth – some administrative delay. But the application had merit and enormous support.

The bill was passed by NY City Council into law – December 2018. Yes, it was a successful effort as we are witnessing here today.

Thanks to all who helped, encouraged, advised, mentored and guided the effort throughout the long process:

First and foremost – Judith for her consent to the application from the inception; to Romanee and Jagdesh and other members of the family for their support and encouragement.

NYC Council Member Rory Lancman and his staff – Massis, Henry and others

NYS Assembly Member David Weprin and his staff – Anthony, Muhammed, Sumeet, Janna and others

Marie Adam-Ovide - District Manager Community Board #8

CB#8 and its Transportation Committee – Martha Taylor, Kevin Forrestal, Mark Haden, Harbachan Singh, Dilip Nath and others

Jeff Gottlieb – Mid Queens Community Council

Abe Fuchs - Mid Queens Community Council

Kevin Forrestal, Jim Gallagher – Queens Civic Congress

My colleagues at Indian Diaspora Council – Santram Dukhbhanjan, Peter Persaud and Jhairam Persaud, Dr. Sharla Khargi, Vidur Dindyal (UK) and others

Prof. Roopnarain Persaud & Rev Seopaul Singh - Indo-Caribbean Cultural Council

Patricia Jordan-Langford – Guyana Tri-State Alliance

Dilip Nath- New American Voter Association

Mohammed Hack - Interfaith Council Comm. Development

Dr Dhanpaul Narine - Shri Trimurti Bhavan

Richie Lipkowitz - Indian Jewish Council

Vishnu Mahadeo – Richmond Hill Economic Development

Richard David, Taj Rajkumar – District Leaders

Farouk Khan – Community and Political Advocate

Anoop Dhanpat – Trinidadians & Tobagans USA

Francis Persaud – Canada

The West Indian, Indo-Caribbean World – and others

And importantly – the late Dharmacharya Pandit Ramlall.

And many others whose names I may have missed.

Thanks to all of you for your support and encouragement.

ADDED NOTE

Following the success of Kali Way, I was encouraged by Pat Langford to lead the effort to co-name 1 block of 144th Street bet 85th Road and 86th Ave as Dharmacharya Pandit Ramlall Way - the street where the Arya Spiritual Center is located.

The request has been submitted to CM Lancman and CB#8.

I am sure Kali would want that too and he would be proud of it – Well deserving NEIGHBORS 169th & 144th Streets.

ADDITIONALLY

Indian Diaspora Council is working with UNESCO and other entities to establish a Caribbean Heritage Museum in New York. The remarkable histories of both Kali and Pandit Ramlall would belong in that museum.

Finally,

To Judith, Romanee, Jagdesh and the Kali family – Thank you for sharing this moment and best wishes.



Ashook Ramsaran making his remarks



NYC CM Lancman and Ramsaran lighting the ceremonial lamp



NYC CM Lancman presenting the new street sign to Judith Kalicharran and family



(l-r) NYC CM Rory Lancman, Ashook Ramsaran, Guyana's Consul General Atherly, India's Consul General Sinha