



"Gems of Debe" is the first of its kind. This work depicts and represents Indian Indentured workers (contract workers) in the context of their culture and the contributions they made to the success and development of Trinidad and Tobago.

Penal-Debe is a county in the south west of Trinidad and Tobago and, after the Indentureship scheme was abandoned, many of the Indentured workers chose to remain, settling permanently in Penal-Debe.

It is fascinating reading! The Indo-based cultural foundation and cultural practices of these new settlers have proven to be a recipe for personal achievements as well as national development. The ex-prime minister, Ms. Kamala Persad-Bissessar, and Minister Trevor Sudama are from Debe.

The author, Jang B. Bhagirathee, has identified and described how the Indo-based socio-cultural traits of honesty, respect, and community-mindedness served to engender community cohesiveness, providing a sweetness, like honey, for the new immigrants as they engaged in the pursuit of self-determination and nation-building.

His approach (and, perhaps purpose) departs from the usual mess of fighting over historical records and numbers as such records and numbers have been recorded by the British. *Gems of Debe* presents the settlers as people from a place, people from a civilization that has survived (and adapted) and thrived.

Gems of Debe will take a new place in the literary market place of Caribbean literature and should serve as excellent reading for the casual reader as well as to the seasoned academicians.