

Presentation by Ashook Ramsaran on January 16, 2021
Bihar-Jharkand Association of North America
Hon. Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar, Keynote Speaker

Hon. Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar

Hon. Amb Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, Consul General of India in NY

Members of BJANA; Distinguished guests and participants

Good morning. Good evening. Greetings and best wishes to everyone for the New Year.

Thank you Amb. Jaiswal for inviting me to be part of this forum on linkage to Bihar. It's going to be quite a task to summarize 183 years history at this forum in limited time.

I was born in Guyana, formerly British Guiana, a 4th generation of Indian parents. I immigrated to the USA in 1968 and settled here. I have roots in Bihar from my great grandfather Pooriya who left India in 1858 to be an indentured laborer in British Guiana and decided to settle there. In fact, my father's name "Saran" is a district in Bihar. In fact, there are many in Guyana named Beharry.

From 1838 – 1920 during the time of British rule, over 240,000 persons from India to British Guiana and 145,000 to Trinidad. Several more thousands were brought to Suriname, Jamaica and other Caribbean countries, with a significant percentage from Bihar.

Today, there are over 1.2 million people of Indian origin in the Caribbean region, speaking English, Dutch, French and Spanish. The 2nd migration: A significant number, over 500,000 have emigrated to USA, Canada, UK, the Netherlands and France. We are persons of Indian origin (PIOs), and have made many significant achievements in politics, sports, academic, writing, legal and social segments.

Indian laborers who came to Guyana were from North India, specifically from the Bhojpur and Awadh regions of the Hindi Belt located in the present-day states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Jharkhand, and a significant minority came from South India.

Despite 183 years in multi-ethnic societies, we managed to preserve Indian culture, traditions, religion, ceremonies, music, movies and foods. In fact, most of the ceremonies, poojas, festivals, and rituals are practiced in original forms from of first arrivals. This sustained us during harsh years of indenturedship, living far away from our motherland. We love Bollywood movies though most of in our generation don't speak Hindi but love the music and stories.

There is always the yearning to trace our roots and connect with ancestral villages in Bihar and UP. Including former T&T PM Kamla Persad-Bissessar, several have done so due to available records but many are missing after so many years. Several of us contributed to ancestral villages in Bihar, building schools, health facilities and ancestral family homes.

We seek the help of the Government of Bihar to facilitate in this quest. It would be good for the descendants of people from Bihar as well as the State of Bihar.

The Indian Diaspora Council is planning a virtual Indo-Caribbean museum to include artifacts, ship and historical records, photos, books, news articles, films, documentaries, and notable personalities.

Two (2) years ago, a consulting company based in Singapore contacted me about information, documents, photos, etc. for a new wing in the impressive Bihar Museum. The Indian Diaspora Council set up the IDC Bihar Museum Historic Artifacts Team, and was willing to support that effort -- but their demands were too much to accommodate.

We look forward to engagement and collaboration for these exciting projects which would keep our journeys alive for generations. Thank you.

Ashook K. Ramsaran is Guyanese born, USA educated and resides in New York. Founder/president of the Indian Diaspora Council (IDC) and past president of Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), actively engaged in Queens Civic Congress, New York Presbyterian and St John's University and others. Recipient of numerous awards, including India's Pravasi Bharatiya Saman and Uttar Pradesh Ratna Awards, in recognition of his many years of outstanding community service.





Invites you to attend the Interaction of Diaspora from
Bihar with the Hon'ble CM

Organized by
Bihar-Jharkhand Association of North America

In collaboration with
Consulate General of India, New York

keynote Speaker



Honorable Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar

Saturday, January 16th, 2021

9:00 AM -10:00 AM (EST)

6:00 AM -7:00 AM (PST)

Join Meeting



zoom

Meeting ID: 873 42328055

Passcode: BJANA



LIVE

<http://www.facebook.com/bjanaus/live/>

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**Interaction with Chief Minister of Bihar
16 January 2021, Time: 1930 hrs (IST) / 0900 hrs (EST)**

- 07.20 pm : All participants to be connected
07.29 pm: Moderator Shri Sanjay Gupta invites President of BJANA, Dr. Avinash Gupta to begin the program
07.30 pm: President of BJANA Dr. Avinash Gupta welcomes all guests
07.33 pm: Moderator calls Consul General Shri Randhir Jaiswal to make his remarks
07.37 pm: Moderator calls on community members to make their remarks
- Prof Ajay Jha, University of Denver [Purnea]
 - Shri Sanjay Rai, AIG, Charlotte [Gopalganj]
 - Shri Nitesh Kumar, CEO Sukhilai Capital [Bettiah]
 - Shri Ashook Ramsaran, President, Indian Diaspora Council [Guyana, ancestral roots in Bihar]
 - Shri Ajay Singh CEO, Slayback Pharma [Munger]
 - Shri Alok Kumar, President, United Business Solutions [Darbhanga]
- 07.55 pm: Moderator invites Chief Secretary Shri Deepak Kumar to make his remarks
08.00 pm : Moderator invites CM to address
08.00 pm : CM's address
Vote of Thanks by Shri Anurag Kumar
Program concludes

Contact persons

- Shri Randhir Jaiswal, CG Mob: +19172441295
Shri Alok Kumar, Mob: +1-7326927507 [for technical support]
Shri Sanjay Gupta, Mob: +1-9172395598 [moderator]
Shri Sudhaker Raj, Mob: +1-7324078258 [Technical support]
Shri Sanjeev Singh, Mob: +1-7326004971 [Technical support]

Speakers from USA:

- Dr. Avinash Gupta, Mob: +1-7325982480
Prof Ajay Jha, Mob: +1-9702060791
Shri Sanjay Rai, Mob: +1-9802298220
Shri Nitesh Kumar, Mob: +1-6465749928
Shri Ashook Ramsaran, Mob: +1-9175195783
Shri Ajay Singh, Mob: +1-6094770142
Shri Alok Kumar, Mob: +1-7326927507
Shri Anurag Kumar, Mob: +1-2017803691

Contact persons in Bihar Government :

- Shri Ravi Shankar Shrivastava, CEO Bihar Foundation, Mob: +919769905001
Shri Pravin Kumar, IT Manager, CM Secretariat, Mob: +919473433851

Zoom meeting ID: 87342328055

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<http://www.facebook.com/bjanaus/live/>