



Indian Diaspora Council

Indian Diaspora Council International

IDC Forum on “Descendants of Indian Indentured Labourers” 10th November, 2018 in Paris, France

International Diaspora Council of France, in collaboration with **International Diaspora Council International (IDC)**, held a very successful Forum on “*Descendants of Indian Indentured Labourers – Issues, Challenges & Opportunities*” on Saturday 10th November 2018 from 3:00pm – 6:00pm at the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris (**University of Paris**), Maison de L’Inde (India House), Indira Gandhi Hall in Paris, France.

The Forum focused on historical perspectives of Indian Indentureship to former English and Dutch colonies as well as French territories over the spanning 1826 through 1920, by a keynote speaker and a panel of suitably qualified and well represented speakers on achievements, issues, opportunities and challenges of the descendants of Indian Indentureship.

The event was hosted by International Diaspora Council International (IDC) and Indian Diaspora Council (IDC), France. The event was organized by Samarassame Taniga (President of IDC France) in coordination with Ashook Ramsaran (President of IDC International) and assisted by Krishna Ponaman (President of IDC Francophone Countries). The event was moderated by Jessica Mourtant, Francophone special projects advisor to IDC.

Following registration, a beautiful classic dance rendition was given by Sneha Hiremath, Mr. Samarassame Taniga welcomed everyone to the event and Ashook Ramsaran outlined the focus and objectives of the Forum.

Keynote speaker was Khalil Rahman Ali (UK) who gave a historical overview which he followed with in-depth discussion on issues, opportunities and challenges confronting descendants of Indian Indentureship. Other speakers included: Rita Abraham (South Africa); Prof. Mohan Gautam (Netherlands); Jean Regis Ramsamy (Reunion Island); Hélène Gressier (Guadeloupe); Rajendra Tewari (Netherlands); Nayesh Radia (UK) read poem “Escaping Inevitability” and discussed Avanti House School; Jean S. Sahai (Guadeloupe); Dr. Arnold Thomas (St Vincent); Mohan Singh Varma (Norway); presentation by Sandew Hira (Netherlands) on upcoming Encyclopaedia of Indian Indentureship was summarized by Ashook Ramsaran.

In attendance were Hon. Serge Letchimy, Member of Parliament (France); HE Dr. Richard Nduhuura, Ambassador of Uganda to France; and HE Reggy M. Nelson, Ambassador of Suriname to France. Hon. Letchimy and HE Nduhuura made special remarks during the program.

The program included a special recognition of Murray Bullock of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for many years of community service for those in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, dedication and commitment to the issues of overseas Indian community and his continuing efforts to promote and preserve the values and rich tradition of Indian culture and heritage. Dr. Arnold Thomas who is the President of Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) of St Vincent and the Grenadines, accepted the recognition plaque for Mr. Bullock who was on official business elsewhere.

The forum concluded with the determination to focus on specific issues, challenges and opportunities confronting descendants of Indian Indentureship: OCI cards; preservation of arrival records; women and gender issues; Gandhi, Mandela and King legacy; encyclopaedia of Indian Indentureship; West Indies axis of collaboration.

After the conclusion of the Forum, most of the presenters, organizers and VIPs attended the dinner which was held at Jodhpur Restaurant in Paris.

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Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage, and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations, and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.



Presenters, VIPs and Organizers – IDC Forum on Descendants of Indian Indentured Labourers – Nov 10, 2018, Paris



Portion of Attendees – IDC Forum on Descendants of Indian Indentured Labourers – Nov 10, 2018, Paris