

Remarks by Ashook Ramsaran at Unveiling of Dharmacharya Seerattan Way on Sep 17, 2022

We are honoring the life and legacy of Dharmacharya Laldharry Seerattan, an outstanding humanitarian and community advocate. This celebration brings enormous pride and joy to his family, congregation, his community, his peers and all those who knew him.

I am privileged to have been requested to lead a well-organized committee to apply for this street co-naming and work through the long and tedious process to a successful achievement – which we are witnessing today. Thanks to my team members: Pt Tillackdharry Seerattan; Seelochni Seerattan; Shyam Ramlall; Pat Jordan-Langford; Dr. Dhanpaul Narine (birthday tomorrow); Naro Balli; Judge Karen Gopee. Their zeal, enthusiasm, focus and commitment enabled me to coordinate their superb efforts to get this done. It was a long process but certainly worth the effort.

I am especially grateful to City Council Member Natasha Williams, who believed in this from the onset and championed the application through all the City Council hearings to finally become law. Her hard working staff have been so supportive: Ashley, Rasha, Kathleen, Everton, Anne-Marie: Their regular updates, follow-ups, prompt responses, friendliness and helpful attitude – thank you all.

It's a day of celebration and remembrance. Best wishes to Shri Devi Mandir, Global Humanitarian Foundation, Pt Tillackdharry Seerattan and family for continuing the dreams and aspirations of Dharmacharya Laldharry Seerattan.

Which is now **DHARMACHARYA SEERATTAN WAY**

It's a privilege to welcome and introduce City Council Member Natasha Williams, an energetic, rising star among electeds in NYC, one who can be counted on to serve her constituency with passion and consistency.



IN HONOR OF THE LATE
DHARMACHARYA LALDHARRY SEERATTAN



Co-naming of 173rd Street

DHARMACHARYA SEERATTAN WAY

September 17, 2022



Program

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Moderators: Dr. Dhanpaul Narine & Mr. Shyam Ramlall

NATIONAL ANTHEM & FLAG RAISING

NYPD Desi Society

INVOCATION PRAYER & MOMENT OF SILENCE

Pt. Seerattan, accompanied by other Pandits

INTRODUCTORY BHAJAN & DANCE

Taran Tara Na Taray (*Group Bhajan*)

Anita Seerattan (*Granddaughter of Dharmacharya Seerattan*)

LIFE & LEGACY OF DHARMACHARYA SEERATTAN

Dr. Devanie Seerattan Ramdass (*Granddaughter of Dharmacharya Seerattan*)

DANCE/BHAJAN/SONG

A Vandana item by Urvashie Kissoon from the Arya Spiritual Center

Classical item on the flute by Sasha Blackman

TRIBUTES BY FAMILY MEMBERS

Lakshmi Farrow (*Granddaughter*), Radha Hemraj (*Daughter of the late Pt. Khemraj; Granddaughter*), Rakesh Budhu (*Grandson*),
Munesh (*Son*), Devesh Ramjit (*Great-grandson*), Kamla (*Daughter-in-law*), Bhai Ganesh, Police Officer Kayume

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF GUYANA, READ BY DR. TARA SINGH

TRIBUTES BY FRIENDS, ASSOCIATES, & COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Bhai Ganesh; Police Officer Kayume; Michael Brotherson (*Consul General of Guyana in NY*)

TRIBUTES BY ELECTED OFFICIALS

NYS Sen Roxanne Persaud; QBP Donovan Richards; AM Alicia Hyndman

REMARKS BY ASHOOK RAMSARAN, COMMITTEE CHAIR

REMARKS BY COUNCIL MEMBER NANTASHA WILLIAMS

PRESENTATION TO CM NANTASHA WILLIAMS

Pt. Tillack Seerattan and Shri Devi Mandir

RECOGNITIONS, CITATIONS & PROCLAMATIONS

CM Nantasha Williams Presentation to GMA Plumbing & Heating Corp. and Parasram's WI Market

RECOGNITION OF SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS

Pt. Tillack Seerattan

ANNOUNCEMENTS - UNVEILING & REFRESHMENTS

THANKS & APPRECIATION

Pat Langford, President of Guyana Tri-state Alliance

CLOSING REMARKS

Judge Karen Gopee

CLOSING SONG/PRAYER

PROCESSION TO UNVEILING LOCATION

****UNVEILING OF STREET SIGN****

REFRESHMENTS AT SHRI DEVI MANDIR

IN HONOR OF THE LATE DHARMACHARYA LALDHARRY SEERATTAN

LIFE & LEGACY OF DHARMACHARYA SEERATTAN - 37 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Pandit Laldharry Seerattan was born on October 5th 1933 in No. 56 Village in Corentyne, Berbice, Guyana to Shivrattan Maharaj and Sanpatti Maharaj. He was the husband of the beautiful Oomriah Seerattan, with whom he shared 67 years of marriage and worked along as a rice farmer.

On May 8, 1983, Pt. Laldharry Seerattan, his wife and children migrated to the United States to pursue the American dream. He was a great devotee of Durga Maa and in 1988, his dream became a reality when he founded Shri Devi Mandir in Jamaica, Queens. He was supported by his family and members of the community. His son, Pt. Tillackdharry Seerattan, followed in his path and is the spiritual leader of the mandir today. In 1995, Pt. Seerattan and his wife built the Shiv Shakti Mandir at No 56 Village, Corentyne. The mandir was maintained by them, and every month food and clothing are shipped to the Mandir and distributed to local villages.

Pt. Laldharry Seerattan offered his selfless service to the community and to international organizations. He worked closely with the BAPS Care International through which, in 2005, he built a well in a village in rural India to provide clean drinking water. He donated funds to natural disasters worldwide, including to the Gujarat and Pakistan earthquake, Guyana flood, Hurricane Katrina, Haiti earthquake, Guyana Mission, and Superstorm Sandy. He also sponsored Thanksgiving lunch in the senior citizen community in Richmond Hill, Queens.

Pt. Seerattan has made contributions to the medical community, including the Division of Cardiology at North Shore LIJ and Queens Hospital Center to provide cardiology equipment and to aid in cancer research. He has also contributed to organizations supporting injured veterans. Globally, he sponsored 25 eye surgeries through Sankara Eye Foundation and 15 lip surgeries through Operation Smile Medical Mission.

Pt. Seerattan was the religious director and founder of the Shri Devi Mandir Global Humanitarian Foundation Inc (SDMGHFI). In November 2014, the organization built a home for a disabled mother in Bath Settlement WCB Guyana, and another one in October 2015 at No. 56 Village, Corentyne. The organization also distributes food hampers to the underprivileged, purchased eyeglasses for the less fortunate, and sponsored a scholarship for a student to attend University of Guyana.

His legacy continues through his 11 children, 29 grandchildren, 40 great grandchildren and 1 great-great grandchild. His grandchildren have gone on to have careers in esteemed fields such as the medical field, aviation, education, clinical research, finance, technology, art, business and engineering.



BORN: 1933
DECEASED: 2020
LIVED IN JAMAICA, NY SINCE: 1983

- Humanitarian at Heart with selflessness, dedication and advocacy for the poor; betterment for people and community
- Exemplified the best of community service
- 1988 - Founded Shri Devi Mandir on 173rd Street - 34 years of service
- 1988 - Founded Global Humanitarian Foundation - 34 years of service
- Tremendous charitable contributions to disasters and people's urgent needs:
 - Super Storm Sandy – food and clothing assistance
 - Covid-19 – food, food baskets and clothing distribution
 - Donations to Queens Hospital Center, Cardiology Dept.
 - Donations to Long Island Jewish Hospital, Cardiology Dept.
- Partnering with local groups and organizations to serve the community
- Funding: Personal, members, well-wishers who care to make a difference
- Recognitions & Citations Received:
 - Queens Borough President Melinda Katz
 - NYS Sen. James Sanders, Jr.
 - Gandhi Peace Award, New York
 - US Census Bureau for outreach services
 - Long Island Jewish Hospital, New York
 - Mandir of the Year Award
 - Federation of Hindu Mandirs
 - Visit by NYC Council Member Nantasha Williams - supportive
 - Visit by District Leader Preston Baker - supportive
 - Several local and regional letters of recognition

Street Co-Naming Committee Members

Pandit Tillackdharry Seerattan: *President*, Shri Devi Mandir Global Humanitarian Foundation Inc.

Raochan Ramlall: *Treasurer*, Shri Devi Mandir Global Humanitarian Foundation Inc.

Silochni Seerattan: *Secretary*, Shri Devi Mandir Global Humanitarian Foundation Inc

Munideo Seerattan: *Vice President*, Shri Devi Mandir Global Humanitarian Foundation Inc

Hon. Karen Gopee: *Member*, Shri Devi Mandir Global Humanitarian Foundation Inc

Dr. Dhanpaul Narine: *President*, Shri Trimurti Bhavan

Naro Balli: *Official*, Arya Spiritual Center of New York

Patricia Jordon-Langford, *President*, Tri-State Alliance, Inc.

Ashook Ramsaran; *Executive Vice President*, Queens Civic Congress

CM NANTASHA WILLIAMS DL PRESTON PARKER, PT. SEERATAN, KAREN GOPEE



SHRI DEVI MANDIR

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