

George Subraj:

A CONTEST BETWEEN MORTAL MEN AND DEVAS OF THE HEAVENS

A few hours ago my friend, Jaskaran Persaud, broke the news to me that the 43rd Anniversary of Guyana's Independence Ceremony will honor George Subraj for outstanding community work.

Hearing this, I felt the greatest thrill of joy, for George deserves this and more. Over the years, he, together with his brothers Ken and Jay, has elevated their organization, Zara Realty, into an auspicious abundance of philanthropy. They give charity, help and donations, in tens of thousands of US dollars, to mandirs, ashrams, small schools, individual scholars and artists, and to samelan festivals such as those done by the Phagwah Parade and Festival Committee recently.

A few months ago, George Subraj himself, with open and willing arms, had given a hefty donation of nearly US\$30,000.00 to the Prem Bhakti Mandir to install an elevator there. However, the deed that moved, startled and enlightened the Caribbean world and beyond was when George had spent over US\$30,000.00 on a kidney transplant to save the life of 17-year-old Munesh Mangal, who was surviving on dialysis and who had only a few months to live. The thing that marveled me in this act of mortal compassion was how George had come to do this, what

divine power had cocooned him and urged him to do something that summarized all religions of the world: human love and kindness. I know that there were thousands of businessmen equally financially capable (or even a hundred times more) than he, but they did not respond to an appeal for Munesh's help. Hence, no one can challenge that George had done one of the greatest deeds of this millennium and previous ones with the simple and selfless act to serve as a mortal angel to intervene at the right time to save the life of a suffering and dying teenage boy.

What surprises me, however, despite the generous and profuse praises in the media (here and abroad), little was done here in New York by our Indo-Caribbean people and others to garland George as one of our greatest heroes of all times. Except what Dr. Tara Singh and the PFFC had done during their samelan activities, to acknowledge him with gratitude, the leaders of our New York community have not made an adequate and concerted effort to arrange a massive convention of thousands

of people in a special function to honor this man with affection and gratefulness for all the great things he has done.

Perhaps not to honor George in this explosive manner with the willing hearts of our own people is an oversight and not a deliberate act by our Caribbean people. Therefore we have time to make restitution and begin now

this.

I would like to make an important point, which is relevant with honoring and acknowledging our own heroes, where we must put aside animosities and a greed for communal power. If we fight among ourselves and suppress our heroes, other ethnic communities will not respect us, and we will never grow. More-



GEORGE SUBRAJ

with grand preparations after the 43rd Anniversary of Guyana's Independence Ceremony on June 5 to do something for him what he deserves. What such a cooperative and massive organizing will do is to tell the government of Guyana to immediately honor this man in next national award ceremony with one of the highest national honors, the Order of Roraima. Truly, George deserves

over, vicious, obscene, depraved and wild pieces written by jealous and envious minds on websites will continue to take us down to the stench and poison of mud and filth canals. Other ethnic groups are laughing at us and will continue to laugh at us at some of these depraved minds. If we honor George for what he has done, and the world, in turn, honors him, stellar

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scholars like doctors Basdeo Mangru and Gary Girdhari will be honored too in the same fervency and dignity. Likewise, a deserved community leader like Ramesh Kalicharan and eminent organizational activists like doctors Tara Singh and Dhanpaul Narine will be treated in the same gracious way. As for the media people like Vishnu Bisram, Jaskaran Persaud, Alim Hassim, Bhavani Singh, Eshri Singh, Tanuja and others, they will quickly get their native, national and international recognition that they have been deprived of. But, first, we have to stop wounding or killing ourselves with internal feuds and vulgarity, with acerbic hate, envy and jealousy; stop

that dirty addiction and depravity on websites; pool our strengths together and show the world that we Caribbean people of New York have potentials to be not only the best of America but the best of the world. In this light, then, I appeal to all our Caribbean leaders, let us start with charity at home, and honor this great man George Subraj with a million garlands, a million songs, and a mil-

lion embraces.

I personally thank George for giving me a donation of US\$4,000.00 to publish the second book, Modern Western Fiction and Sanskrit Aesthetics and Theory: A Search for a Postcolonial Concept, of my doctoral dissertation.

To be fair to others, Ramesh Kalicharran has given me US\$1,000.00 to assist publishing the second book, A River Dreams Red, of the first part of my doctoral dissertation, and he has designed the cover of that book to shame books of international standards. Ramesh Kalicharran, too, is one of our community heroes, and, apart from his financial, founding and organizational contributions to our community, he has an artistic talent that nobody has seen in New York. When my book, A River Dreams Red, comes out in six weeks time, you will see what he has done to the cover and what a gifted artist he is.

In conclusion, I do think we have mortal men, despite their human frailties, men with compassion, generosity, talent, intuition and a gift of love to rival the devas of the heavens; and George Subraj is one of them.