



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

**MESSAGE TO THE NATION BY
DR THE HONOURABLE KEITH ROWLEY, MP
PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
ON THE OCCASION OF
INDIAN ARRIVAL DAY 2017**

On the occasion of Indian Arrival Day 2017, I extend warm greetings to our East Indian community, on behalf of the people and Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

Each year on May 30th we commemorate the anniversary of the arrival of the first East Indian immigrants to Trinidad and Tobago. In some areas of the country there are often re-enactments of this historic occasion, which allow community members to showcase their knowledge and creativity.

This year also marks the centennial of the abolition of Indian indentureship. It was in 1917 that the transportation of Indians out of India for labour in another country was ceased. In March of this year I was honoured to be invited to the Indian Diaspora World Convention 2017, which was held in Trinidad and Tobago under the auspices of the Indian Diaspora Council.

I believed that it was important for me, as the leader of a country which has been impacted by Indian indentureship, to attend a Convention which brought together diasporic scholars, researchers and community advocates and activists from various regions and countries, for open dialogue on the Indian Diasporic experience.

Similarly, Indian Arrival Day must therefore be considered as an opportunity for all of us, as citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, to recall our history as a Nation and determine how we may all continue to positively impact our future.

These events have impacted every aspect of life in Trinidad and Tobago and are evident in the ethnic and cultural diversity of our people. It is also reflected in how we interact with each other and in our social, political and economic expectations.

Today we acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and contributions of our East Indian brothers and sisters to our country's on-going development and success.

Let us continue to take the best from our convergence of experiences and use it to ensure that our Nation enjoys peace, fellowship and prosperity.

To the members of our East Indian community and to the national community, I wish you a safe and happy Indian Arrival Day.