



The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

Celebration for First Anniversary of Felicity Police Youth Club

Felicity Hindu School, Felicity

Saturday 24th August 2013

Remarks by NGC's Chairman -

Roop Chan Chadeesingh

<<Salutations>>

- Founder of the Felicity Police Youth Club - ACP Deodath Doolalchan;
- Chairman of the Felicity Police Youth Club - Inspector Chunilal Bedassie;
- Felicity Police Youth Club Leader- WPC Tricia Maharaj;
- Deputy Police Youth Club Leader - Constable Ramnathand;
- Members of the Felicity Police Youth Club;
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

First of all I would like to thank you for inviting me to be a part of this ceremony. There are few things more uplifting than to witness so many bright and determined young people coming together to celebrate the first of many milestones for a group that has so quickly become an important and vibrant part of their community.

Life in Trinidad and Tobago moves at such a tremendous pace that it is easy to get caught up in things like work, school, traffic, hustle and bustle.

Sometimes we forget to pay attention to the small, wonderful miracles that take place every day. We may forget that there are sincere, unselfish people out there who are willing to share their time, knowledge, patience and skills with the next generation. Indeed, there are people stepping up and saying that their community is worth investing in, and are making a personal investment in the form of time and effort.

People like the founders of the Police Youth Clubs that are scattered throughout the country, especially the Felicity Police Youth Club, which is probably one of the youngest of the 36 Youth clubs functioning in Trinidad and Tobago are such persons who are investing their time and skills to better their communities. People like the Founder of the Youth Club - ACP Deodath Doolalchan, Chairman of the Felicity Police Youth Club, Inspector Chunilal Bedassie, Youth Club Leader- WPC Tricia Maharaj and Deputy Youth Club Leader - Constable Ramnathand.

Since their inception, the Police Youth Clubs have reached out to young people in their teens and early twenties who are at risk due to

their exposure to poverty, negativity, and bad role models. Thanks to the dedication of the officers who have given their commitment, they have been exposing young people to productive, worthwhile, and fruitful activities in the fields of education, sports, culture, spirituality and community service.

These young people have been given a hand when they needed it, a strong shoulder to lean on, a kind and sympathetic ear, and an authority figure they could trust and rely on when often those around them were either unwilling or unable to help them. The activities, which included talks, community projects and field trips, have helped participants to be more self-directed, confident and positive. These activities have taught respect for authority, love for community, and most of all, opened the eyes of young people to the endless possibilities that life offers.

The increased self-esteem that these young people enjoy, arising from their interaction with their peers and trusted adults, has gone a long way to presenting them with an alternative to a life of drugs, crime and juvenile delinquency.

This may seem a pretty tall order for groups that have few resources, which are run by people who are part of an overburdened system, but the truth is that it works. The philosophy behind the Police Youth Clubs is so simple: If young people are treated with respect, kindness and trust, they will respond likewise.

In just one short year, the Felicity Police Youth Club has become a prime example of all that is right with these community projects. The evidence is sitting right before me.

And the fact that so many young people are being recognized today for their achievements, in areas such as academics, sport, and culture, is proof that they are opening their ears and listening to what they are being taught. They are opening their hearts and accepting the caring attention that is being offered to them. And they are opening their hands to clasp the helping hands that are being held out to them.

To the awardees this afternoon, I want to say congratulations. You have set your goals and achieved them. Now I challenge you to set them even higher, and then higher still.

To the other members of the youth club, I congratulate you on your wisdom in joining such a worthwhile organization. I am sure that since you first signed up, and continued to participate, it was because you knew just how valuable these lessons will be to you, now, and in the future. It is good to see you all here, and believe me when I say that joining this group is probably one of the best decisions you have ever made.

And to the directors, administrators, counselors, and all other adults who have given of their time, I say Thank You.

Thank You for giving up your time so unselfishly. Thank you for taking a stand against negative values. I am sure you know how important the work you are doing is, but I doubt you are aware of just how grateful the people of Trinidad and Tobago are to you for your efforts.

People sometimes fail to adequately express such gratitude, so in case no one has said it before, Thank You again, from the bottom of my heart.

Participants, I hope your successes and adventures over the past year have convinced you that this group is where you belong. Continue to enjoy it, spread the word, and encourage others to join. If you want to make your community a better place, and if you want to fulfill your own God-given potential, there is no better place to start than right here.

Continue to have a wonderful day and do enjoy and learn from your association with the Police Youth Club experience.