

The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited

Launch of Ministry of Education's

Character Education and Citizen Development Programme

Monday June 11th

President's Remarks

Mr. Indar Maharaj

The Honourable Kamla Persad Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago

The Honourable Tim Gopeesingh, Minister of Education

Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education

CEOs and Chairmen of sponsoring companies

Members of the Media

As you are probably all well aware, a large part of NGC's Corporate Social Responsibility Programme is focused on youth development. And in turn, a large part of that is geared toward equipping school leavers and young adults with the training necessary to find employment, and even, we hope, put their entrepreneurial ideas to work and start their own business.

But throughout all this, we have never lost sight of the younger set, the children of primary school age whose minds are so rich and fertile and willing to learn. For more than twelve years, NGC has maintained an ongoing schools outreach programme through which we have personally visited hundreds of schools in every educational district in Trinidad and Tobago, teaching them about natural gas, natural gas safety, and its importance to the economy.

It has always been a delight to work with them. We have found that if you teach a child, you are, in essence, teaching their whole family, as they are eager to share their new-found knowledge with anyone who will listen.

This is why we at NGC were happy to be invited by the Ministry of Education to be part of their Character Education and Citizen Development Programme. For us, this is not just another opportunity to give back to the community through

sponsorship, but to help inculcate into the youngest generation the values that we as a company, and as a nation, believe in.

We complain that good manners, courtesy, thoughtfulness and kindness are lost arts, but they will only be lost if we do not pass them on. Teaching our children to read, write and think is only part of their education. The rest is about developing an awareness of one's own value and that of others. About maintaining decorum, consideration, and comportment.

I have no doubt that a programme like this will help repair the damage being done every day as our children see adults being rude, impatient, discourteous and selfish. In fact, I expect these youngsters, with their natural ability to pass on what they have learned, will soon be teaching us a thing or two about how things should be done.

And if this programme is as successful as it promises to be, I am sure we will soon have the pleasure of witnessing a kinder, more thoughtful generation grow into adulthood. And that's something we can be proud of.

I congratulate the Ministry of Education for this initiative, and reassert NGC's pledge to support it and make it a reality. Again, we thank you for the opportunity to be part of this.

Do enjoy the rest of your day.