



## **The Communications Unit**

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**Address by the Honourable Senator Anand Ramlogan—Attorney General of Trinidad and Tobago at the launch of Trinidadian Author Rajni Ramlakhan’s semi-biographical book entitled “Munna’s People.”**

The Honourable Professor Ken Ramchand, Professor Brinsley Samaroo, Honourable Minister Rudranath Indarsingh, other distinguished guests, friends, well-wishers and “The Lady of the Moment-Accomplished Local Author—Rajni Ramlakhan:

**It was the English philosopher/lawyer/statesman Francis Brown who said, “Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.”**

I can unequivocally state that first time novelist Rajni Ramlakhan’s book entitled “Munna’s People” epitomizes the last part of Francis Brown’s quotation. Further, I am sure that the academicians and English-Literature luminaries in our midst would endorse my sentiments.

As I stand here before you, I am overcome by emotion and feelings of joy, relief and ecstasy at the feat that this woman has attained. If you have known Ms. Ramlakhan for as long as I have you will understand the sentiments expressed previously.

Here is a woman who came from extremely humble beginnings and through dint of dedication, diligence, perseverance, determination and most importantly resilience was able to bring her life-long dream of becoming an author to fruition.

Consequently my specially invited guests, we can all come to the resounding conclusion that we are gathered here this evening not by coincidence nor luck but by the end result of a woman who held the key to success which entailed adopting and sustaining a sound canon of moral values and ethics—something that is available to all regardless of social status, professional ranking or financial wealth or lack there of.

These critical ingredients for success are not endemic to one locality, ethnic group or class structure but to anyone with an insatiable desire like Ms. Ramlakhan. This should serve as a model for all young people to emulate.

Well ladies and gentlemen, given the fact that I have always been immersed in reading literature dealing with Constitutional Law and Political Science, it

was truly an anomaly for me when I actually read this authentic work of fiction and had to re-read it at least three times.

I was totally enthralled and captivated as I could have identified and empathized with the experiences of the protagonist and other characters. It was really astounding to see how my sojourning years of childhood through adolescence could have vividly been recaptured through the vehicle of the literary experience. I felt as though I was re-living the early stages of my life through a mind-movie as I read. Moreover, I felt as though someone for once was able to have my life collated in one document---living testimony to the power of fictional writing.

The thematic concerns and subliminal messages in Ms. Ramlakan's work of fiction are potent and applicable to many of us in Trinidad and Tobago.

They depict real-life issues that have plagued many of us and are still evident in society today. Issues include emotional and physical dislocation as a result of the change/format of governance, self-identity issues in a plural society, the crippling effects of discrimination, the plight of the poor and under-privileged.

Ladies and gentlemen, I will refrain from divulging much more because my intention was just to “whet your appetite” so that you will have a burning desire to get your own personal copy.

Ms. Ramlakan, I would like to thank you for resurfacing my once-upon-a-time love and interests in the world of fiction. After reading your masterpiece, I am inclined to read only genres of literature like Realistic Fiction, Memoirs and semi-biographical works.

I now have a desire to re-read adolescent classics like “A House for Mr. Biswas” by Sir Vidya Naipaul; “A Brighter Sun” by Samuel Selvon; and “To Kill A Mocking Bird” by Harper Lee.

At this juncture, I must conclude because Rajni, today is your day—you are in the spotlight and you are there rightfully so. You have earned this place in our nation’s English-Literature history. You are deserving of it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I leave you with the most apt and fitting quote that will come to you and resonate with you when you have completed reading “Munna’s People”:

**“Books are the quietest and most constant of friends, they are the most accessible and wisest of counselors and most patient of teachers”.**

**I thank you!**

**MINISTRY OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**