

BY: M. of A. Fernandez

COMMEMORATING the 157th Birthday of Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Laureate of India on Monday May 7, 2018, in New York City

WHEREAS, The true architects of society and community are those extraordinary individuals whose faith and unremitting commitment have served to sustain the spiritual and cultural values of life; Rabindranath Tagore, the first Nobel Laureate of Asia was undoubtedly such an individual; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 157th Birthday of Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Laureate of India on Monday, May 7, 2018, in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Born on May 7, 1861, in Calcutta, India, Rabindranath Tagore was the youngest son of Debendranath Tagore, a leader of the Brahmo Samaj, which was a new religious sect in 19th Century Bengal; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore was an Indian/Bengali poet, philosopher, novelist, visual artist, playwright, composer and Indian public figure; his works transformed Bengali literature and music in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries; through his works he vigorously influenced the development of Bengali as a literary language, elevating its poetry with new forms and meters; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore was educated at home; at age 17, he was sent abroad to England for formal schooling, but he did not complete his studies there; and

WHEREAS, In his mature years, in addition to his many-sided literary activities, Rabindranath Tagore managed the family estates, a project which brought him into close touch with common humanity and increased his interest in social reforms; he also began an experimental school at Shantiniketan where he tried his Upanishadic ideals of education; and

WHEREAS, From time to time, Rabindranath Tagore participated in the Indian nationalist movement in his own non-sentimental and visionary way; at that time, Gandhi, the political father of modern India, was his devoted friend; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore's influence, however, elongated to Indian literature holistically, for he established the short story and the political lyric as genres, integrated new dimensions to the socio-psychological novel, and contributed to the development of critical realism; he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore was knighted by the ruling British Government in 1915, but within a few years he resigned the honor as a protest against British policies in India; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore wrote his first poem when he was only eight years-old; he published his first large poetry collection in 1877, and wrote his first short story and dramas at the age of 16; his major works included, Gitanjali (Song Offerings), Gora, (Fair-Faced), and Ghare-Baire (The Home and the World) along with many other literary and art works; he was a cultural reformer who modernized Bangla art by rejecting the rigidity of form and style; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore had early success as a writer in his native Bengal; with his translations of some of his poems, he became rapidly known in the West; in fact, his fame attained a luminous height, taking him across continents on lecture tours and tours of friendship; for the world, he became the voice of India's spiritual heritage, and for India, especially for Bengal, he became a great living institution; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore wrote India's national anthem, "Jana Gana Mana" and also "Amar Shonar Bangla", the national anthem of Bangladesh; and

WHEREAS, Rabindranath Tagore died on August 7, 1941; even many decades after his death, his legacy continues in countless ways as organizations and institutions across the globe host numerous festivals and celebrations in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Throughout his purposeful journey of life, Rabindranath Tagore compiled, with dignity and kindness, decades filled with gracious literary works, moral causes, and humanitarian efforts, justly earning the devotion of his followers and the admiration and respect of his fellow man; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 157th Birthday of Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel Laureate of India on Monday, May 7, 2018, in New York City; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Tagore Society of New York and the Consulate General of India in New York.