

News of Senator Leticia Ramos-Shahani



Dear Brothers and Sisters

Loving greetings from Manila, Philippines!

Late Senator Leticia Ramos-Shahani (fondly called by the BK as Sister Shahani) flew to Baba's lap on Monday 20 March (BapDada's coming) 2017 after three years of battling with 4th stage colon cancer.

She came in contact with the Brahma Kumaris in 1985 in Nairobi, Kenya when she served as secretary-general of 3rd UN World Conference on Women. She fondly related to us how she first met the Brahma Kumaris. *The BK sisters were the first to greet and welcome me when I arrived at Nairobi Airport. After the pomp and show of the conference and the tedious work of packing up conference materials it was the BK sisters who met me again, to bid farewell again at Nairobi Airport. They were warm and very friendly which I felt was a good send off after the Conference. I was even surprised that BKs and BK sisters contacted me when I returned in the Philippines."*

In 1986, Sister Letty Shahani retired from the United Nations, returned to the Philippines and was appointed as under-secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and also to head the National Commission for the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) by the then first woman President Corazon C. Aquino. Since then Sister Letty Shahani had been in close contact and connection with the Brahma Kumaris in the Philippines. She graced the BK finale of the Million Minutes of Peace Appeal (MMPA) in Celebration of the UN International Year '86 with the then Vice President of the Philippines, Salvador Laurel and his wife Mrs. Celia Diaz-Laurel who chaired the National Committee of MMPA, Philippines.

Since her return to the Philippines she was the most prominent BK VIP contact and connection who served as a senator in the Philippine Senate from 1987-96 and

became the first woman Senate President Pro-tempore from 1994-96. During her senate days she took Raja Yoga course and as Bapdada's child she met Dadiji in 1989 in the Philippines, and in 1997 brought Dadi Gulzar to meet her brother the then Philippine President Fidel V. Ramos.

In 1993, Sister Shahani served as a member of the Global Cooperation for a Better World International Committee. Influenced by the BK principles, Sister Shahani initiated the nationwide Moral Recovery Program (MRP), which sought to integrate ethical values into nation building and government.

After politics she played a more active role in BK service bringing the BKs to meet politicians and women leaders, and to attend with her international and local conferences held in Manila. She became the President of the Brahma Kumaris Philippine Foundations, Inc. from 2010 to May 2014 right after BK Global Functioning. She was very proud of being Baba's child and she dreamed of a BK retreat center in the Philippines so she sought the blessing of Dadi Janki to have a retreat center. Her wish came true and Dadi came 2003 to open BK Philippine retreat center which was the first in South East Asia.

For the BKs she demonstrated and taught us diplomacy and how to build partnership with organizations. She demonstrated great enthusiasm in sharing Gyan to her VIP contacts and colleagues. When given a chance she spoke highly of BK work and advocacy in the country and the world. A few months before leaving her body she was interviewed by CNN Philippines in her farm house in Urdaneta, northern Philippines. During that interview which was played nationwide she proudly told the reporter about her BK involvement as she showed the wall where photos of Shiv Baba, Brahma, Dadiji and Dadi Janki were displayed. She fondly shared the spiritual influence of BK in her life and how she found real solace in the practice of meditation

We remember her as a highly principled and humble soul who proudly incorporated and shared Baba's spiritual knowledge in all aspects of her life as a politician, a diplomat, an advocate for women's rights and as rural farmer-entrepreneur advocating care for the environment.

In the last day of her wake on 27 March before the cremation, BKs had the last memorial ceremony where Dadi Janki's message was read, Sr. Rajni shared her personal experience with her and BK Jun Serrano, President of the BK Board of Trustees also shared how he learned from Sister Shahani how to lead mainstream BK Foundation work in the country. Sister Shahani's friends, family members and close friends were asked to pay their last tribute as each of them put rose petals or a rose in silent thoughts of appreciation and gratitude for her being a sample and example of a woman leader, a politician, a diplomat and a spiritual student. Her friends and family members including the former President Fidel Ramos were appreciative and full of gratitude for the BKs' daily presence while she was in the hospital for a month and at the cremation.

We have lost a sweet sister who had been a very effective instrument in BK service in the country. We thank BapDada for the role Sister Shahani played in His service.

In Baba's love and remembrance,
BK Becky