



Contact:

Junior Bacchus - President

Phone: 784-528-6886

Email: svgindianheritagefoundation2@gmail.com

Website: svgihf.org

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PRESS RELEASE

FROM: THE SVG INDIAN HERITAGE FOUNDATION

COMMEMORATION OF INDIAN ARRIVAL DAY ON JUNE 1st AND THE RE-ENACTMENT OF THE ARRIVAL OF INDIANS TO SVG

Mr Junior Bacchus, President of the SVG Indian Heritage Foundation, all Executive members, supporters and friends of the Indian communities in SVG are pleased to announce the commemoration of **Indian Arrival Day 2023**.

By the significant passing of an Act of the Parliament of SVG on March 26th 2007, June 1st was recognized as Indian Arrival Day, and October 7th as Indian Heritage Day. Hon. Rene Baptiste, the then Minister of Culture, was instrumental in this historic achievement. She remains a supporter and friend of the Foundation throughout the years. We thank her for her interest and encouragement.

The SVG Indian Heritage Foundation was officially launched on July 20th 2006 at the P'Tani Resort Argyle, where the first formal Executive was elected. Some of the members of the original Executive still serve on the present Executive, namely Junior Bacchus, Denzil Bacchus, Anna Baptiste Insanali and Cheryl Rodriguez.

Thursday June 1st 2023 will mark the 162nd anniversary of the arrival of 2,474 Indians from India to SVG during the years 1861 to 1880.

The SVG Indian Heritage Foundation encourages all citizens of SVG to participate in their celebrations by wearing an Indian outfit and eating Indian food on that day.

Please share your photos /videos with us by sending them to Mr Colvin Harry, PRO of the SVGIHF at:

colvinharry@yahoo.co.uk

WhatsApp 1 784 530 9864.

The Annual Re- enactment of Indian Arrival day will take place on Sunday June 4th 2023 at 8.00 a.m. at Indian Bay.

A boat will arrive at Indian bay with persons dressed in Indian wear, followed by a mock registration and despatch to the various estates will be done. There will also be an official ceremony, with addresses from Dignitaries, a photo session and breakfast served to all in attendance.

The SVG Indian Heritage Foundation continues to demonstrate its appreciation and thanks to our forefathers, who remained in SVG, so that we could be here now. We understand that a small percentage returned to India.

History tells us that many of them were captured and taken by force; leaving their families behind. Many were lied to, and told that they will find employment and housing of a better standard than they were used to. Some said that were told that they will be free to return to India when their contracts were completed. The journey from India to the Caribbean was long and difficult. Some spoke of the harsh treatment meted out to them, and the horrible conditions of work on the estates, in the hot Caribbean sun. This sacrifice was for their loved ones. We will never forget. We will always honour the magnificent determination, dedication and hard work of our ancestors, and seek to emulate them, by carrying on their legacies.

The Foundation was fortunate to capture some fascinating stories; having successfully released sixteen (16) interviews “Conversation with our Indian Elders”, some of whom have since passed on to the great beyond.

The Foundation recently recorded the stories of six (6) “Outstanding Vincentian Indians in the Diaspora”, namely Doctor Gideon Lewis, in the USA, Doctor Rudi Bailey in the USA, Mr Peter Moore, in the USA, Mr Shawn Bullock, in Canada, Mr Noel Thomas, in the UK, and Mr Lenroy Thomas, in Turkey.

Their rich, intriguing and educational stories are available on YouTube and on the Foundation’s website: svgihf.org

We thank these outstanding Vincentian Indians in the Diaspora for sharing their stories with the world.

We thank Mr Colvin Harry, our PRO, and Mrs Cheryl Rodriguez, our Treasurer, for initiating and conducting these interviews. We encourage the Youth, especially, to watch and listen to them, to learn about your/our heritage.

The SVG Indian Heritage Foundation takes this opportunity to:

1. Extend sincerest sympathy to the families, relatives and friends of all who have transitioned.
2. Invite **ALL MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA** to cover the function at Indian Bay on Sunday June 4th 2023 at 8. 00 a.m. and join us for the remainder of the programme.
3. Invite everyone in SVG to attend the function at Indian Bay on Sunday June 4th 2023 at 8.00 a.m.

Happy Indian Arrival Day 2023 !

Thanking you.

Yours truly,

Junior Bacchus
President of the SVG Indian Heritage Foundation

***The Executive of the SVGIHF:
President Junior Bacchus, First Vice President Dave Baptiste,
Secretary Luann Hadaway, Vice President Culture Denzil Bacchus,
Vice President Regional Co-ordinator Elliot Thomas, Assistant
Secretary Anna Insanali, Treasurer Cheryl Rodriguez, PRO Colvin
Harry***