



Indian Diaspora Council

## ***Indian Diaspora Council***

Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

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### ***Press Statement***

## **Commemoration of 161<sup>st</sup> Indian Arrival Day 2018 in Grenada**

The Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) joins with its global affiliates and membership to pay honored tribute and express its gratitude to those who made the first journey as indentured laborers from India arriving at Irwin Bay in Saint Patrick in Grenada on 1st May, 1857 aboard the SS *Maidstone*. This year marks 161 years since the first East Indians arrived from Calcutta, India aboard the SS *Maidstone*. The total number of Indian labourers from India to Grenada during the period of Indian indenturedship is approximately 3,200.

In 2017, the Government of Grenada has officially declared 1<sup>st</sup> May as Indian Arrival Day when Grenadians of Indian descent will officially celebrate the arrival of their ancestors to the island. Indian Arrival Day will be celebrated in conjunction with Labour Day and added to Grenada's list of Bank Holidays. The centenary celebration took place in 1957. In 2009 the Government of Grenada recognized 1<sup>st</sup> May as Indian Arrival Day in conjunction with Labour Day. The Indo Grenada Heritage Foundation was instrumental in getting official recognition for Indian Arrival Day and has installed a plaque at Irwin Bay in St Patrick to commemorate the day.

We are always reminded of their pioneering spirit, determination, persistence and endurance under extremely harsh conditions. While survival must have been the primary concern, they strived and persevered to maintain their sense of origin, traditions and culture. Their children, grandchildren and following generations will always take pride in this unique accomplishment, recognizing and appreciating the sacrifices and achievements made on their behalf. We also recognize the invaluable contributions they have made to the diverse culture and economic development of Grenada.

We extend Indian Diaspora Council's congratulations to the Government and people of Grenada on the commemoration of this 160th anniversary of that historic day. We also extend our continued best wishes to all the descendants of those early pioneers for peaceful and prosperous co-existence both in Grenada and other lands where they have subsequently settled.

We continue to encourage and support active promotion of the rich and enduring Indian traditions that served their forefathers so well. We also wish to remind all the descendants of those early pioneers to recognize and reach out to others of Indian origin whose forebears also embarked on similar journeys

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*Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.*