Indian Diaspora Council

Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

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IDC MOURNS THE PASSING OF DR. YESU PERSAUD, RENOWNED GUYANESE ICON

The **Indian Diaspora Council** International (**IDC**) joins in solidarity with our global network, organizations and friends globally in mourning the passing of renowned Guyanese icon Dr. Yesu Persaud, age 93, on Monday 17th January 2022 in Guyana after brief stay in the hospital in Georgetown. We express heartfelt sadness and deepest sympathies and condolences to his family, extended family, friends and associates.

'I fervently believe that as capable human beings we have the capacity to do things for the benefit of others and hence I've taken an active part in anything to do with development of youngsters and people in general.' Yesu Persaud

"A man of courage, achievement, philanthropy and humility. An admired icon of Guyana, the Caribbean and worldwide, Yesu Persaud transformed the landscape of Guyana in economics, politics and culture in truly historic ways which are imprinted in the history of Guyana. His entrepreneurship and achievements are exemplary; his humanitarianism without fanfare and his extra-ordinary humility are commendable; his generosity of heart and support of the needy are unmatched. His commitment, dedication and outstanding service in the preservation and promotion of Indian history and culture will always be remembered. His multi-faceted efforts in many segments of society were always with the interest of Guyana in mind. A consummate, energetic visionary, a great son of Guyana is gone. He was a man of peace yet one with strong convictions of respect for culture and discipline. It is fitting that the company he founded produced "El Dorado" which means "City of Gold" because he had a heart of gold. He was my dear friend and mentor, I am blessed to have known him, and I will miss him dearly" – *Ashook Ramsaran, President of IDC.*

In recognition of his long and continuing effort to preserve Indian culture, he has been accorded an enormous array of recognition and awards, most notably the Government of India Pravasi Samman Award -- only 97 persons have been so recognized at that time. In addition, he was accorded Honorary Doctorates from University of Warwick (UK), University of West Indies (Trinidad) and the University of Guyana, for his many outstanding years as a highly successful entrepreneur, civic leader and philanthropist.

Dr. Persaud was in charge of the 150th Arrival Day celebrations in Guyana in 1988. He founded the Indian Commemoration Trust (ICT) which worked to obtain land for the Indian Arrival Monument at Monument Park in Georgetown. The commemoration of Indian Arrival with the symbolic ship and Indian Arrival Memorial in Highbury and Georgetown will be lasting tributes to Indian ancestors to Guyana who braved obstacles and pain to make their lives better and more secure. He was also integral to the success of the 175th Arrival Day celebrations in Guyana in 2015.

He worked hard to locate the documents, list the many ships and document what he could to preserve the history of our arrival. He is an ardent supporter of documentaries, books, symposia and series lectures which promote Indian heritage and culture. Examples: Film "Once More Removed" by Shundell Prasad; the late Pradeep Samtani's movie filmed in Guyana; as well as writers, poets, historians. His autobiography *"Reaching for the Stars"* reveals the initial struggles and obstacles which he overcame through hard work and determination. Dr. Persaud often said, "*Boy, we all come is ships, but we are in the same boat".* He worked hard for harmonious co-existence, in peace and understanding.

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