



Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

# Finance News

JANUARY 2015

A PUBLICATION OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE ECONOMY

VOLUME 25



Minister Howai (right) was on hand to present staff of the Preventative Branch, for their outstanding service (left).



▲ The Point Lisas Examination Center was also honored for their numerous interceptions of narcotics and other contraband by Minister Indarsingh. Looking on is Mr. Ammar Samaroo, Comptroller of Customs and Excise Division (right).

## Customs and Excise Honours Their Law Enforcement Division

In recognition of their recent seizures and confiscation of narcotics and other contraband, Minister of Finance and the Economy, Larry Howai and Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Economy, Rudranath Indarsingh, participated in a luncheon to honour the hardworking members of the Customs and Excise Division's Marine Interdiction Unit and Preventive Unit.

Speaking at the luncheon, Minister Howai praised the diligence and dedication of the MIU and Preventive teams, stating that the duties they performed had a dangerous element as well as the personal sacrifices it contained.

The Pt. Lisas Container Examination Station was also recognised for their numerous interceptions of narcotics and other contraband. ●

2014

# New Year Greetings

The Ministry of Finance and the Economy thanks you for your continued support over the years. We extend our very best wishes for a Happy and Successful New Year 2015!

# 2015

## Customs Officers Participate in Joint Customs Border Protection (CBP) Training in Miami

On September 14th 2014, a team of eight (8) officers of the Customs and Excise Division participated in a joint seaport training with the United States Customs Border Protection (CBP) at the Port of Miami.



The training, which lasted seven (7) days, was facilitated by CBP Advisor to Trinidad and Tobago, Robert Gross who also accompanied the team to Miami. The training included hands on and classroom exercise on contraband interdiction, cargo concealment, vessel searches, outbound inspections and

container targeting. The officers also assisted CBP Miami's AT-CET team in the interdiction of a smuggled firearm discovered in an outbound container going to Honduras. The group also had the opportunity to

meet other agencies such as the Miami-Dade Police, Homeland Security Investigations to exchange best practices and view facilities and operations at the Port of Miami. ●

## FIU Obtains Court Orders Against Two Members' Clubs



The Financial Intelligence Unit has successfully obtained court orders against two Members' Club, which are businesses that the FIU supervises under the FIU Act.

On May 8 2014, the Honourable Madam Justice Dean-Armorer made an order in favour of the Financial Intelligence Unit and directed New World Members Club Limited to:-

1. Register with the FIU; and
2. Develop and implement a written Compliance Programme in accordance with the Proceeds of Crime Act and submit same to the FIU in accordance with the FIU Regulations.

A similar order was made against Jerry's Club Limited on June 10th 2014 by the Honourable Madam Justice Joan Charles. The FIU issued Directives to both New World Members Club Limited and Jerry's Club Limited in April 2013. Upon the failure of both Members' Clubs to comply with the Directives, the FIU, in accordance with Section 18G (8) of the FIU Act, applied to the High Court for orders to compel compliance.

The granting of these Orders further enhances the FIU's efforts to effectively supervise businesses within the sectors listed in the Proceeds of Crime Act and mitigate against the risk of money laundering occurring through these listed business sectors.

## Finance News JANUARY 2015 VOLUME 25

### In this issue:

Customs and Excise Honours Their Law Enforcement Division	1
Customs Officers Participate in Joint Customs Border Protection (CBP) Training in Miami	2
FIU Obtains Court Orders Against Two Members' Clubs	2
MOFE to Pilot Business Continuity Management (BCM) in the Public Service	3
Finance Fitness Centre Unveils Its New Wing!	4
Celebrating Christmas with the kids	5
MoFE holds "A Caribbean Christmas" Dinner and Dance	6&7
Inland Revenue Division launches ITPS upgrade and E-Services Projects	8
MOFE hosts Whistleblowing Seminar	8
Treasury's grand send off for Comptroller of Accounts, Mrs. Roselyn Ramdin-Doobraj	9
Protecting Against Credit Card Fraud	10
Weighing the Claims in Diet Ads	11

# MOFE to Pilot Business Continuity Management (BCM) in the Public Service

In an effort to ensure seamless continuance of public services, in the event of a local disaster, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has determined a need for the establishment of a Business Continuity Management (BCM) capacity.

BCM is the management process which provides a framework that identifies potential impacts which threaten an organisation, as well as build resilience and capacity for an effective response thereby safeguarding the interest of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value generating activities.

The Ministry of Finance and Economy (MOFE), according to Cabinet Minute No. 485 was appointed as an "early adopter agency" for piloting Business Management Continuity (BCM) in the Public Service. The Ministry of Public Administration



(MPA) was given the mandate for leading, managing, monitoring and evaluating BCM implementation across the Public Service.

As part of this implementation, the MoFE, and the Treasury Division has been working diligently with MPA to develop the Business Continuity

Some participants which include MOFE staff during the MPA's 2nd Stakeholders Workshop.

Plans (BCP) and Disaster Recovery Plans (DRPs) in 2014/2015. This project aims to progressively increase BCM capacity over the period 2013 to 2016 and will aid the Ministry to uncover critical risks, quantify the impact of business interruptions and take preparatory actions to reduce risks.

During the 2nd Stakeholder's Workshop held on October 29th 2014 at the Trinidad Hilton, the Honourable Carolyn Seepersad Bachan, Minister of Public Administration commended the efforts of the Treasury Division team for their timely support and contribution to all activities of the BCM project. ●



MOFE's Facilities Manager, Deryck Downie engages the attention of other participants

Photos courtesy: Ministry of Public Administration

## Finance Fitness Centre Unveils Its New Wing!

The Finance Fitness Centre has provided convenient and affordable fitness services to staff of the Ministry of Finance and the Economy since 2007. The membership of the Fitness Centre grew tremendously over the years and in 2013 the Committee noted the urgent need to expand the services and square feet for its members.

Under the directive of the Permanent Secretary, expansion works were undertaken and on November 6th 2014, Permanent Secretary, Vishnu Dhanpaul, officially launched the new wing of the Finance Fitness Centre. In his opening remarks PS Dhanpaul stressed the importance of having the Finance Fitness Centre as part of the Ministry's Corporate Wellness Programme and encouraged staff to adopt healthy eating and regular exercise as part of their lifestyle.

The launch introduced the new classes that will be conducted in the new wing including TRX training, Mixed Martial Arts, and Circuit training as well as gave staff the opportunity to experience the new equipment and get 'hands on' with the professional trainers during demonstrations. These additional classes are included in the monthly fee of \$100.00 and staff is encouraged to take full advantage of these calorie crushing sessions.

The Finance Fitness Centre is open to all divisions of the Ministry of Finance and Economy and interested persons can register by calling Melissa Mattoo, Chairman of the Finance Fitness Committee, at 627-9700 ext. 1815.

**The Finance Fitness Centre Committee would like to thank its members for their support over the past year and wishes everyone a prosperous and healthy new year! ●**



PS Dhanpaul officially opens the new wing of the Finance Fitness Center



Professional Trainers of the Finance Fitness Center in action as they displayed use of the new equipment.



Staff members getting "hands on" experience with the new equipment

# Celebrating Christmas with the kids



It was all fun and excitement as the MoFE brought Christmas cheers to approximately 400 kids on Saturday 22nd November 14 at the UWI Conference Centre, St Augustine. Kids were treated to games, bouncy castles, snacks, gifts and even jolly old Santa Clause dropped by to spread the joy!! The event was held in keeping with the spirit of the festive season.

The MoFE would like to extend heartfelt thanks to all those who volunteered and ensured the event was successful. ●



This kid was excited about his new toy



Sharing a moment with family



This little one was happy to collect his snack bag



Kids were serenading Santa with sweet parang



Having fun bouncing around



Kids were fascinated by the making of the cotton candy



Kids enjoying an outdoor activity



# MoFE holds “A Caribbean Christmas” Dinner and Dance

On December 20th 2014, the Ministry of Finance and the Economy held a Christmas Dinner and Dance for staff at the Centre of Excellence, Macoya. The event themed, “A Caribbean Christmas”, was the first Christmas function to include several Departments and Divisions of the Ministry, celebrating the festive season together at one event. According to Permanent Secretary, Vishnu Dhanpaul, having the Departments and Divisions joined at one function, saved the Ministry approximately \$0.5 million in cost. Staff members and their guest enjoyed entertainment by the dynamic Soca band, A Team and ace saxophonist, Francis Prime.

Here are some highlights of the event:





# Inland Revenue Division launches ITPS upgrade and E-Services Projects

The Board of Inland Revenue (BIR) and staff are pleased to announce the kick-off of the upgrading of their Integrated Tax Processing System (ITPS) from GenTax Version 6 to GenTax Version 9 and the implementation of their E-Services project. The ITPS is a merger of key information about taxpayers into one master database and is used to facilitate research and analysis on taxpayers.

The upgrade which commenced on the 16th October 2014 is scheduled to be completed by August 2015 and aims to provide the following benefits:

- **A better tool for managing IRD business by managing your IRD account online**
- **Easy access to your IRD accounts ANYTIME- 24/7, by opting to submit electronic correspondences, online filing of returns and reports**
- **Easy use and faster application, since the Version 9 of the GenTax ITPS is web based.**
- **A suite of e-services**
- **Enhanced communication through the establishment of a call centre**

Officiating at the kick-off function was Inland Revenue Board members lead by the Chairman, Alison Raphael. Others present were Senior Managers of BIR and officials of the contract provider, Fast Enterprises Limited. The occasion was a very pleasant one indeed with a wide cross-section

of staff volunteering to serve as Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), Testers and Trainers. Each group had the innovative task of designing a project logo, the best of which is yet to be announced. The function concluded with the presentation of gift tokens to each participant.



We kicked-off the project on 16th October 2014



We will score the GOAL (completion of the projects) in August 2015

## MOFE hosts Whistleblowing Seminar

As part of ongoing efforts to provide an efficient public procurement system, the MOFE was pleased to host a seminar on 5th December 2014 on the topic of "Whistleblowing (Public Procurement)". The event featured a presentation delivered by David Lewis, Professor of Employment Law, Middlesex University, UK.

Professor Lewis is a convenor of the International Whistleblowing Research Network who has performed extensive work in the field of Whistleblowing and has published a number of International articles on the topic. Approximately seventy (70) participants, which included stakeholders from

Government Ministries, State Enterprises, and selected organisations from the business community benefitted from the presentation which highlighted Whistleblowing as an important tool in the fight against corruption and risk management prevention.

The MOFE would like to thank all those who attended as we look forward to similar future engagements and further participation. ●



## Treasury's grand send off for Comptroller of Accounts, Mrs. Roselyn Ramdin-Doobraj

The recreation room of the Eric Williams Finance Building was filled with a myriad of emotions on September 19th 2014, as the Treasury Division bid Happy Retirement to Comptroller of Accounts, Roselyn Ramdin-Doobraj. To bid farewell, the Treasury staff serenaded her with the song, "May you stay forever young".

Affectionately called "Ros", she was referred to as "the Treasure in the Treasury Division", as she is a well-rounded individual with her own management style which focused on delivery and quality of work, while encouraging staff to do their best and providing mentoring support to those who sought her guidance. One must not forget her devotion to God. Her prayers were strong and affirmative. She often counseled many on personal matters. Those who worked with her over the years characterised her as someone who sets high standards and a stickler for meticulous work with supporting information.

Ms. Roselyn Ramdin entered the Treasury Division on September 5th 1972 as a Temporary Clerk I. She worked her way up the ranks through the various levels. Later on in her career, she decided to study Chartered Accounting. In 1999, having completed her studies and qualifying, she moved up the professional stream of Treasury Accountant and became the Seventh (7th) Comptroller of Accounts of the Treasury Division in 2011.

In her farewell speech, Mrs. Doobraj

thanked staff members for their tremendous support to her over the years. Mrs. Doobraj will be sadly missed but it was a retirement well deserved after serving in the Public Service for 42 years. She officially retires from the Public Service on January 15, 2015.

On her departure from the Public Service, Mrs. Doobraj handed over the reins of the Comptroller of Accounts to former Deputy Comptroller of Accounts, Catherine Laban.



Mrs. Doobraj is presented with a bouquet of flowers by Director of Treasury Management, Mrs. Savitri Seepersad.



Cross section of Treasury Division's staff during the retirement function



Mrs. Doobraj and her husband during the retirement function

Senior staff members of Treasury Division as they made a presentation to Mrs. Doobraj (front centre). Sitting at her left, is new Comptroller of Accounts, Ms. Catherine Laban



## Protecting Against Credit Card Fraud



Credit card fraud takes place every day in a variety of ways. You can't always prevent it from happening, but you can create some obstacles and make it tougher for someone to get hold of your cards and card numbers. Treat your credit cards and account numbers like cash — that is, very carefully!

### How does Credit Card Fraud Happen?

Theft is the most obvious form of credit card fraud and can happen in a variety of ways; from low tech dumpster diving to high tech hacking. A thief might go through the trash to find discarded billing statements and then use your account information to buy things. A retail or bank website might get hacked, and your card number could be stolen and shared. Perhaps a dishonest clerk or waiter takes a photo of your credit card and uses your account to buy items or create another account. Or maybe you get a call offering a free trip or discounted travel package.

### What Can You Do?

- Keep a record of your account numbers, their expiration dates

and the phone number to report fraud for each company in a secure place

- Don't lend your card to anyone — even your kids or roommates — and don't leave your cards, receipts, or statements around your home or office. When you no longer need them, shred them before throwing them away.
- Don't give your account number to anyone on the phone unless you've made the call to a company you know to be reputable. If you've never done business with them before, do an online search first for reviews or complaints.
- Carry your cards separately from your wallet. It can minimize your losses if someone steals your wallet or purse. And carry only the card you need for that outing.

- During a transaction, keep your eye on your card. Make sure you get it back before you walk away.
- Never sign a blank receipt. Draw a line through any blank spaces above the total.
- Save your receipts to compare with your statement.
- Open your bills promptly — or check them online often — and reconcile them with the purchases you've made.
- Report any questionable charges to the card issuer.
- Notify your card issuer if your address changes or if you will be traveling. ●

Reference: Federal Trade Commission-Consumer Information, <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0216-protecting-against-credit-card-fraud> [Accessed 1st November 2015]



*"Health is a state of complete harmony of the body, mind and spirit." -BKS Iyengar*

## Weighing the Claims in Diet Ads

Whether it's a pill, patch, or cream, there's no shortage of ads promising quick and easy weight loss without diet or exercise. While it could be nice to lose weight simply by taking a pill, wearing a patch, or rubbing in a cream—some of these claims just aren't true. Doctors, dieticians, and other experts agree that the best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and be more active. That's true even for people taking FDA-approved pills to help them lose weight. For most people, a reasonable goal is to lose about a pound a week, which means:

Cutting about 500 calories a day from your diet, eating a variety of nutritious foods and exercising regularly!

Some of these diet methods may claim the following:

### **Lose weight permanently! Never diet again!**

Even if you're successful in taking weight off, permanent weight loss requires permanent lifestyle changes. Don't trust any product that promises once-and-for-all results without ongoing maintenance.

### **Just take a pill!**

Doctors, dieticians, and other experts agree that there's simply

no magic way to lose weight without diet or exercise. Even pills approved by FDA to block the absorption of fat or help you eat less and feel full are to be taken with a low-calorie, low-fat diet and regular exercise.

### **Lose 30 pounds in 30 days!**

Losing weight at the rate of a pound or two a week is the most effective way to take it off and keep it off. At best, products promising lightning-fast weight loss are a scam. At worst, they can ruin your health.

### **Everybody will lose weight!**

Your habits and health concerns are unique. There is no one-size-fits-all product guaranteed to work for everyone. Team up with your health care provider to design a nutrition and exercise program suited to your lifestyle and metabolism.

### **Lose weight with our miracle diet patch or cream!**

You've seen the ads for diet patches or creams that claim to melt away the pounds. Don't believe them. There's nothing you can wear or apply to

your skin that will cause you to lose weight.

Take a pass on any product that promises miraculous results without the effort. The only thing you'll lose is money. Lose weight no matter how much you eat of your favorite foods! Beware of any product that claims that you can eat all the high-calorie food you want and still lose weight. Losing weight requires sensible food choices. Filling up on healthy vegetables and fruits can make it easier to say no to fattening sweets and snacks.



## Upcoming Staff Events

Fun Aerobics Burnout – January 29th 2015  
 International Women’s Day – TBA  
 Health Fair - TBA



## New Years Word Search Puzzle

S U C B O R E D C E S S F U S  
 E L J A N U A R Y F I R S T E  
 S N E D W Y E E A R D S R N T  
 I T E H S W G O L U E T I E G  
 C H E A T O N D I E T O E M O  
 R G N B T R A T S W E N R T A  
 E I S I M K H U S T R B U N L  
 X R E T S O C P E C M I L I S  
 E T R S F U I C M E I A I O S  
 U A E R E T A L A U N N A P B  
 L E S W I L L P O W E R F P E  
 A T O T A I N A B L D T E A R  
 E A L L O S E I N T E R E S T  
 G I V E U P L I S T I C A I N  
 R A E Y W E N D T I M E D D D

### New Year’s Resolutions Word List

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| Annual         | Failure       |
| Bad Habits     | Give up       |
| Bored          | January first |
| Change         | Lose interest |
| Cheat on diet  | New start     |
| Determined     | New year      |
| Diet           | Resolve       |
| Disappointment | Set goals     |
| Eat right      | Will power    |
| Exercise       | Workout       |

**EDITOR:**  
 Kavita Sookram

**CONTRIBUTORS:**  
 Avalon Jules, Candace Porter, Corey Taylor, Nikita Boyce,  
 Alicia Charles, Ann Ross, Karen Seebaran-Timothy, Denise  
 Ramsawak, Heather Baldwin-McDowell.

A publication of  
 the Ministry of Finance  
 and the Economy  
[www.finance.gov.tt](http://www.finance.gov.tt)



The Finance News is a quarterly of the Ministry of Finance and the Economy

We would like to receive your comments and any questions that you have! To have your event featured please contact the Communications Unit at 627-9700 ext: 2805-9 or email: [comm.finance@gov.tt](mailto:comm.finance@gov.tt).

Persons interested in contributing articles please contact us. We reserve the right to edit articles based on space constraints.

