



PRESS RELEASE

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CULTURAL JAMBOREE TO HIGHLIGHT BVI ARTS AND CRAFT FESTIVAL

Monday, December 5 – A grand cultural jamboree will be the feature of the second annual BVI Arts and Craft Festival, Government officials announced today at a press conference.

The event is slated to take place from February 20 to 23 at the Festival Village Site, Road Town, and from February 24 to 25 at the Yacht Harbour Marina on Virgin Gorda.

Coordinated jointly by the Trade Promotion Unit, the Department of Education and Culture, the BVI Tourist Board and the BVI Visual Arts Society and Craft Alive Village, the event is being promoted as the premier cultural exhibition in the Territory.

Assistant Secretary in the Chief Minister's Office Ms. Lizette George told reporters the main goal of the exhibition is to further integrate BVI culture with trade and tourism. She said this is in keeping with Government's commitment to provide more opportunities in the small business sector for BVI Islanders to have a bigger stake in the economy by competing locally, regionally and internationally.

Ms. George said the locally made arts and craft items will be on display, adding that new markets will be sought for these products in a bid to promote the work of local artists.

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She praised the efforts of representatives from the various agencies which have pooled their resources together to organise such an event, saying this is a significant example of public and private sector cooperation, which ultimately helps to improve efficiency and reduce duplication.

Ms. George pointed out that working together and focusing on the shared goals of ministries and departments in Government is a meaningful way to enhance the continued development of the Territory.

Education Officer for Culture Mrs. Luce Hodge-Smith said plans for the event are already underway and added that registration forms will be ready by the end of this month.

Mrs. Hodge-Smith said events such as these help to preserve the BVI's heritage, as there are no limits to the range of local cultural items which participants will be allowed to display. She these include arts and craft items, cultural wear, foods, music, books, poetry and wooden carvings.

The exhibition was first held last year July at the Sir Rupert Briercliffe Hall, and Mrs. Hodge-Smith said one of the aims is to make the event an appropriate time for the people of the BVI to be reminded of the Territory's rich, diversified cultural heritage.

Mrs. Hodge-Smith is heading a committee spearheading the organising of the event and this time it will be taken to Virgin Gorda for two of the five days. The Head of the Trade Promotion Unit is also on the committee, along with representatives from the BVI Tourist Board and the BVI Visual Arts Society and Craft Alive Village.

Interested persons may contact Clerical Officer Ms. Jeanelle George at the Trade Promotion Unit, 468-3701 extension 5057, for further details about the event.

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Notes to Editors:

1. Photograph with caption attached.
2. Copy of audio cd of press conference available.