



MEDIA STATEMENT

September 18, 2024

Dear Editor / Head of Department,

St. George's College Continues to Receive Infrastructural Repair and Increased Administrative Guidance from the MOE

The Ministry of Education notes the curious and baseless attempt to conflate an isolated flooding incident, caused by high levels of run off after torrential rains at St. George's College yesterday, with the extensive work done on the school's roof, ceiling and electricals.

Flooding was experienced yesterday throughout the Barataria area, caused by heavier than usual rainfall. St. George's College, being located in Barataria, experienced flooding as well. Run-off water rose in the school's courtyard and corridors during the height of the rain, and subsequently ran off.

The flooding experienced yesterday, during continuous, heavy rain, has no connection to the extensive repair done on the school's roof and ceiling; and the attempts to draw this connection are linked to the ongoing agenda to resist the return of the school to Barataria.

St. George's College will continue to receive both the administrative and infrastructural attention it requires at this time. While the infrastructural upgrade to the 70 year old school has made steady advancement, the school's internal operation also requires, and is receiving the MOE's attention. The much-needed school infrastructural upgrade at St. George's is taking place on a phased basis.

Phase 1 required the school to be relocated, and roofing, ceiling, electrical works, AC repair, and repainting works were completed at a cost of approximately 10Mn.

The school was resettled, and Phase 2 works, which do not require relocation, are currently progressing. The scope includes the installation of wall fans and associated electrical works, flooring, windows, PA system, AC servicing, fence repair, and other miscellaneous works, at a cost of 1.6Mn.

However, the deeper issue troubling St. George's College, for a few years now, is a lack of internal unity and collaboration towards a shared vision of success. When the Principal, Staff, Local School Board, PTA and Alumni Associations are collaborating positively, the benefits to the school are meaningful; the situation is completely different when they are not.

For example, the MOE has received reports that 80 fans supplied to the school by the Alumni are unaccounted for. This is being investigated. In addition, the Ministry has received reports that approaches made by various stakeholder bodies to assist the school with infrastructural improvement have been met with resistance. There have also been several complaints from parents about less than positive interactions of staff with students. These are all symptoms which point to the need for even closer supervision and guidance of the school, its operations and stakeholder interactions; and the School Supervisor has been assigned to work very closely with the administration and stakeholders to improve this situation. Ministry officials will also directly manage offers of assistance to the school, to ensure that they are accepted and progressed, to the benefit of the students.

The MOE will continue to monitor this school very closely, as its internal rumblings have much more potential to disrupt the continued success of its students than an isolated flooding incident. The MOE will not allow the proud history of this institution to be marred, and its potential for future success impacted.

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