



## CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

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### **MEDIA RELEASE** (For immediate release)

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### **CCJ DISMISSES APPEAL AND AWARDS COSTS FOR NON-PAYMENT OF DEBT**

**Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.** On Tuesday, 20 May 2025, the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) dismissed the appeal in the case of GY/A/CV2024/002 *Hardat Singh v Ann Narine* against the judgment of the Court of Appeal of Guyana regarding the non-payment of a debt to Ann Narine by Hardat Singh.

At the High Court, Ms Narine claimed against Mr Singh the sum of USD 300,000 which he promised to pay in a document claimed to be a promissory note. At the hearing, the Honourable Mme Justice Roxane George-Wiltshire, Chief Justice (Ag), decided the document was not a promissory note but accepted it as evidence of a contract to pay Ms Narine. The judge awarded Ms Narine the amount claimed. The Court of Appeal, like the Full Court in Guyana, had refused to reverse the judgment against Mr Singh and allow him to file a defence.

A major issue that arose in the matter was that Mr Singh, who was duly served out of the jurisdiction, failed to appear at trial or file a defence in the matter. Without applying to set aside judgment in accordance with Rule 39.07 of the Civil Procedure Rules, Mr Singh appealed to the Full Court and Court of Appeal in Guyana, both which upheld the lower court's judgment.

At the CCJ, the Court commented that in failing to apply to set aside the judgment, Mr Singh attempted to sidestep the requirement of giving a good reason for his nonappearance at trial and sought to avoid judgment altogether. The Court identified this as an abuse of process. The Court also was unconvinced that Mr Singh had been forthright in his conduct of the matter. The Court dismissed the appeal and awarded the relevant costs to be paid by Mr Singh to Ms Narine.

The matter was heard before the Honourable Justices Anderson, Rajnauth-Lee, Barrow, Jamadar, and Ononaiwu. The Appellant was represented by Mr Devindra Kissoon and the Respondent by Mr Sanjeev J. Datadin.

The full decision of the Court is available via [www.ccj.org](http://www.ccj.org).

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### About the Caribbean Court of Justice

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) was inaugurated in Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago on 16 April 2005 and presently has a Bench of seven judges presided over by CCJ President, the Honourable Mr Justice Adrian Saunders. The CCJ has an Original and an Appellate Jurisdiction and is effectively, therefore, two courts in one. In its Original Jurisdiction, it is an international court with exclusive jurisdiction to interpret and apply the rules set out in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC) and to decide disputes arising under it. The RTC established the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). In its Original Jurisdiction, the CCJ is critical to the CSME and all 12 Member States which belong to the CSME (including their citizens, businesses, and governments) can access the Court's Original Jurisdiction to protect their rights under the RTC. In its Appellate Jurisdiction, the CCJ is the final court of appeal for criminal and civil matters for those countries in the Caribbean that alter their national Constitutions to enable the CCJ to perform that role. At present, five states access the Court in its Appellate Jurisdiction, these being Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, and Saint Lucia. However, by signing and ratifying the Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Court of Justice, Member States of the Community have demonstrated a commitment to making the CCJ their final court of appeal. The Court is the realisation of a vision of our ancestors, an expression of independence and a signal of the region's coming of age.

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