

## CDA, Military Museum head to court today

THE CHAGUARAMAS Development Authority (CDA) said an ex parte order by High Court Justice Devindra Rampersad prohibiting the Authority from evicting the museum on March 7 does not determine the legal position of the CDA or of the Chaguaramas Military History and Aerospace Museum.

'This is a temporary order without any notice to the Chaguaramas Development Authority (CDA) and without the court hearing the CDA,' the Authority stated in a release on Saturday.

The CDA issued an eviction letter to the museum in early February in which the museum was given a deadline to vacate the premises on which it operates on the Western Main Road in Chaguaramas by February 28.

However, according to the museum's vice-president, Brian Mitchell, rights to the land were granted to them by Cabinet and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in 1992 with the promise of a 30-year lease which was supposed to be drawn up by the CDA. Mitchell said the museum is still open to such an arrangement, but such an option has never been presented to it by the CDA.

After failing to vacate the premises by the due date set on the eviction notice the CDA took hold of the property by changing locks on the gates of the property and hanging 'No Trespassing' signs at the entrance of the property.

This led to the start of the legal proceedings in the High Court to which the CDA was prohibited from evicting the museum and, on March 7, members of staff were given access to the property.

In the release on Saturday, the CDA asserted that it 'intends to defend these proceedings and is confident that when the full facts are placed before the court the CDA's legal position will be fully vindicated'.

It added that it 'continues to discharge its statutory obligations in accordance with law and with a view to ensuring that proper revenue is obtained from the public lands within its remit'.