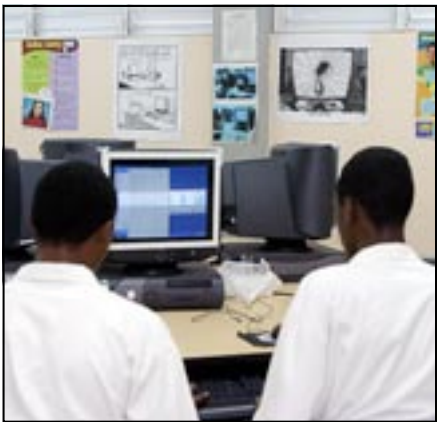




NATIONWIDE



A publication of the Department of Information Services



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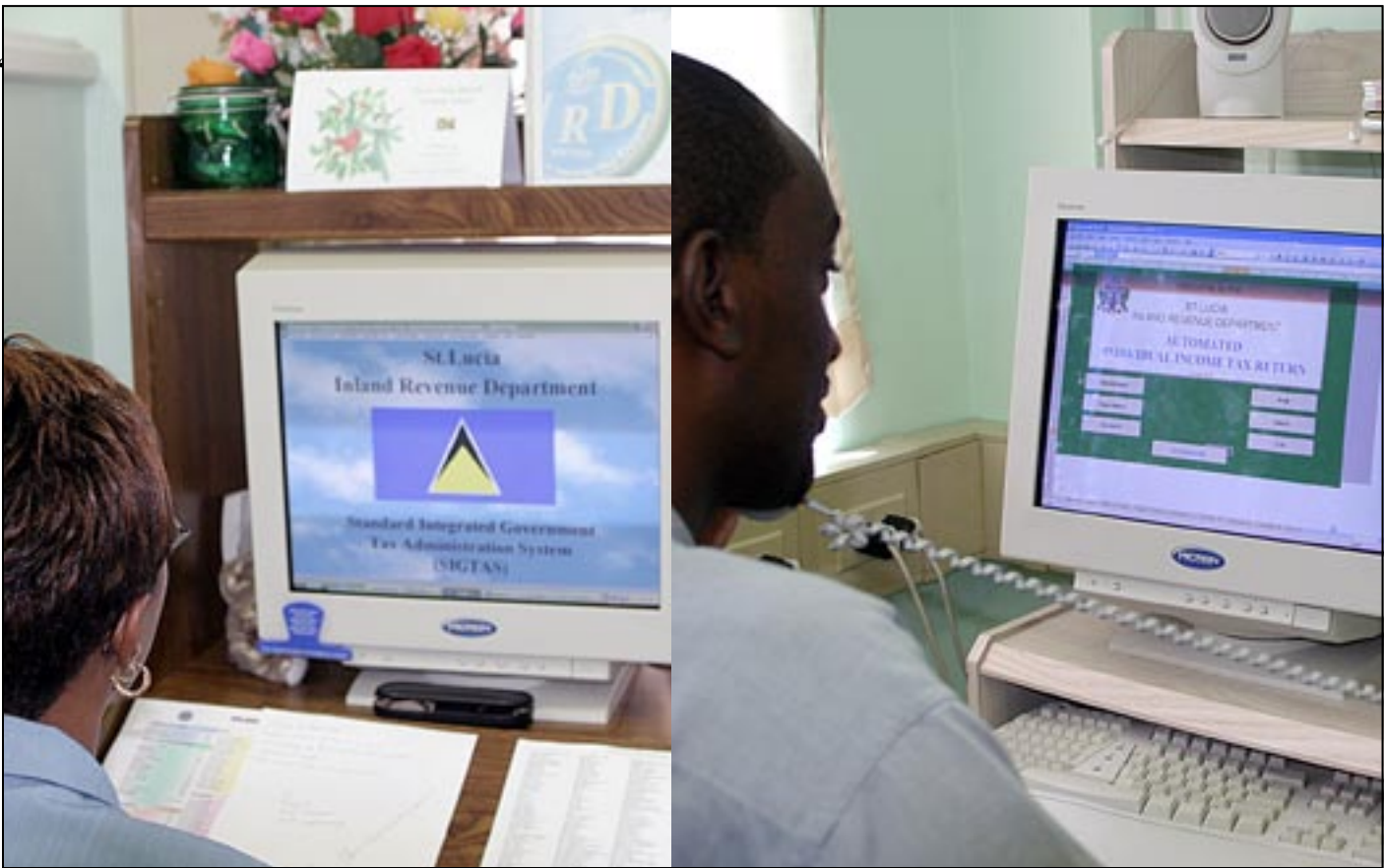


More Investments in Social and Economic Services - pages 4 & 5



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BETTER SERVICES WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY



Specialised Automated Systems for Tax Management in Saint Lucia

Three pieces of legislation on information technology will be among the list of bills to be presented to the Parliament of Saint Lucia during its fifth session which opened on April 19th. Prime Minister and Minister responsible for Finance, International Financial Services, Economic Affairs and Information Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony made the announcement when he presented the 2005 to 2006 budget to Parliament. Dr. Anthony said an enabling legislative and regulatory environment is required to ensure the continuing success of government initiatives in E-Government and the Information Technology sector.

The three bills are: (a) An Electronic Transactions Bill, which will establish the legal basis for the safe, but free conduct of electronic commerce, by making provision for electronic signatures, and rules of evidence for electronic transactions, among other areas; (b) A Privacy and Data Protection Bill, which will safeguard citizens from the

potential abuse of their personal data through Computer systems; and (c) A Computer Misuse Bill, which will protect the rights of the owners of valuable data and computer systems.

Continued on page 2



Construction work of the covered walkway at the George F.L Charles airport is nearing completion. In addition to enhancing security according to international standards, the comfort of the traveller will be improved. The St. Lucia Air and Seaports Authority (SLASPA) will then continue planning for the complete resurfacing of the runway at the airport.

Counterparts and Cooperation



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony and Lelei LeLaulu of Counterpart International

P rime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony has been hailed as one of the leaders of the region reaching out to local and international non-governmental organisations, in an effort to arrive at solutions to the problems of development of the small states. In a recent report from Counterpart International, a global “partnering” organisation, Prime Minister Anthony’s approach to NGO collaboration was given special mention. Counterpart International writes:

“In 2001, Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony of St. Lucia caused quite a stir when he turned up at the United

Nations Climate talks in The Hague - because he attended as part of the Counterpart and not a government delegation.” Prime Minister Anthony is a bold visionary who wanted to declare his intention to make St. Lucia the world’s first ‘Renewable Energy Island’ and the people who helped him make this historic decision were NGOs like the Climate Institute and Counterpart,” said LeLaulu who accompanied the Caribbean leader in the Netherlands. The event may have started a trend, LeLaulu mused. “We are increasingly being approached for our counsel by Presidents and Prime Ministers in the countries where we work.”

BETTER SERVICES WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY



The IT Laboratory of the Ciceron Secondary School

Continued from page 1

In addition to the proposed legislation, government has increased the budgetary allocation to the Electronic Government Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister. “A total of \$1.5 million has been allocated for the project on “Expanding Information Technology (IT) and Electronic Government” for the current financial year, with a total cost of \$8.4 million over the four (4) year period of the project.”

This increased allocation will support the restructuring of the government-owned Computer Centre Limited, which will serve as the central information technology executing agency for the public service, to be done under the aegis of the Electronic Government Unit.

The expansion of the work of the Unit is taking place against the backdrop of several technology driven initiatives which are aimed at improving the efficiency of the public service and making services accessible to the population.

These recent initiatives include: (a) The computerization of the Treasury Department and the accounting functions of all line Ministries; (b) the implementation of a specialized computer system for the Inland Revenue Department (Standard Integrated Government Tax Administration System - SIGTAS); (c) the upgrade of the Customs computer system (Automated Systems for Customs Data - ASYCUDA++); (d) the production of Machine Readable Passports, planned for November of this year, and a comprehensive Immigration Management and Control System; (e) the implementation of a new National Identification System, the key element of which will be a unique number assigned to each individual from cradle to grave, with technology that will allow the card to be swiped through a reader and provide secure access to data and services; (f) the integration of information technology in the education sector. All of the nineteen (19) secondary schools have at

least one fully equipped computer lab and an island-wide computer network for all schools and District Education Offices has been set-up; (g) an island-wide Voice and Data/Frame Relay Network for the Police Department will result in the implementation of several modern systems and software programs for law enforcement.

The Prime Minister further stated “The use of Information Technology in several other areas is well advanced and

will be developed further during this financial year, including the Analysis and Design of Computer Systems for the establishment of Universal Health Care and the new General Hospital; the implementation of a computerized network solution to forecast demand and schedule production in agriculture; and the upgrade and rationalization of the Government’s Wide Area Network Infrastructure, as well as the Online Services and Web Sites in the Public Sector.”

Boom in Cooperative Sector

W ith combined assets of over EC\$200 million and given its vital role and impact on the lives of ordinary St. Lucians, the co-operative sector has been encouraged to continue repositioning itself to facilitate the appropriate strategic reintegration of the rural sector into the broader global movement.

That’s the position being articulated by Minister for Labour Relations, the Public Service and Co-operatives Honourable Velon John. He says the co-operative sector represents one of the most meaningful mechanisms for the alleviation of poverty in rural communities. Minister John says for thousands of St. Lucians, the sector represents a more user friendly aspect of the financial landscape which provides ready access to favourable credit facilities, while allowing for direct participation by democratic means in the conduct of its business.

However he says the rapid expansion of the sector has led to it being a victim of its own success and has created new challenges critical to its sustainability. “As we see it, the grouping must now be equipped with the relevant start-of-the-art technology which will endow their administrations with computerised capability.”, says Minister John, who is also the Member of Parliament for Laborie, home to the island’s second largest credit union

That shift towards modernization he notes, “will facilitate greater collaborate with the umbrella body - Caribbean Confederation of Credit Unions- in operating within a regulatory and supervisory framework, thus ensuring high industry compliance.” The local sector he indicates also needs to establish robust precautionary measures to ensure its safety and soundness.

The Castries based Civil Service Association (CSA) Credit Union leads the way in terms of assets of over EC\$88 million in the last financial year. Among the top five credit unions in the country are the Laborie Co-operative Credit Union with an asset base of EC\$26 million, the St. Lucia Teacher Credit Union with assets of EC\$20 million, the Royal St. Lucia Police Force Credit Union with assets of EC\$18 million and the Choiseul Co-operative with assets of EC\$17 million.

Saint Lucia has 44 co-operative societies with a membership of over 46,000. This includes sixteen credit unions, five transport co-operatives, thirteen fishermen co-operatives, and two arts and craft co-operatives.

The sector recorded saving well over EC\$171 million in 2004. Other achievements recorded in the past financial year were the hosting of the second OECS Credit Union Summit in May and the first Caribbean Union Youth Conference in April 2004.



Hon. Damian Greaves

Parliamentary to discuss HIV/AIDS

A call has been sounded here for leading government officials to do more in terms of highlighting and championing the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS. St. Lucia’s Minister for Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations Honourable Damian Greaves, has mooted the idea for the establishment of a high level Parliamentary Forum to achieve that goal.

According to Minister Greaves, who earlier this month returned home from a CARICOM/PAN Caribbean Partner-

ship observation mission on HIV/AIDS to Brazil, such a parliamentary forum had achieved remarkable success and could have similar results if instituted on the island.

“It suggests to us here on the island that we who are in Parliament, need to really take this issue seriously and from ourselves into a core unit, involved in advocacy and to provide some leadership on the issue,” says Minister Greaves. It must be noted According to him, “That the Honourable Prime Minister has already seized the initia-

tive to do so, he being the Chairman of the National HIV/AIDS Council.” Dr. Anthony has already chaired two meetings of the grouping.

Minister Greaves says that with St. Lucia and by extension the Caribbean society being largely homophobic, much progress can be made at reducing the stigma and discrimination, which continues to pose a challenge to effectively managing the spread of the HIV, if more parliamentarians got involved in the fight against the dreaded disease.

BUSINESS IS GOOD – And getting better!

Report from the Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Business Survey

St. Lucia’s private sector says business is good – and getting better. And the businesses have no plans to dismiss workers already employed. That’s the conclusion from the results of the latest Annual Business Performance Survey of the St. Lucia Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. As Prime Minister of Saint Lucia Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony was presenting his 2005 to 2006 budget to the nation, the Chamber released the findings of the survey for July to December 2004, in which business executives were asked about sales performance and employment.

Asked to assess their sales performance over the last six months of last year (including Christmas) 79% of respondents reported higher sales than in 2003. Similar results were found for

Retailers reporting 86% increase and Other Services reporting an 88% increase in sales.

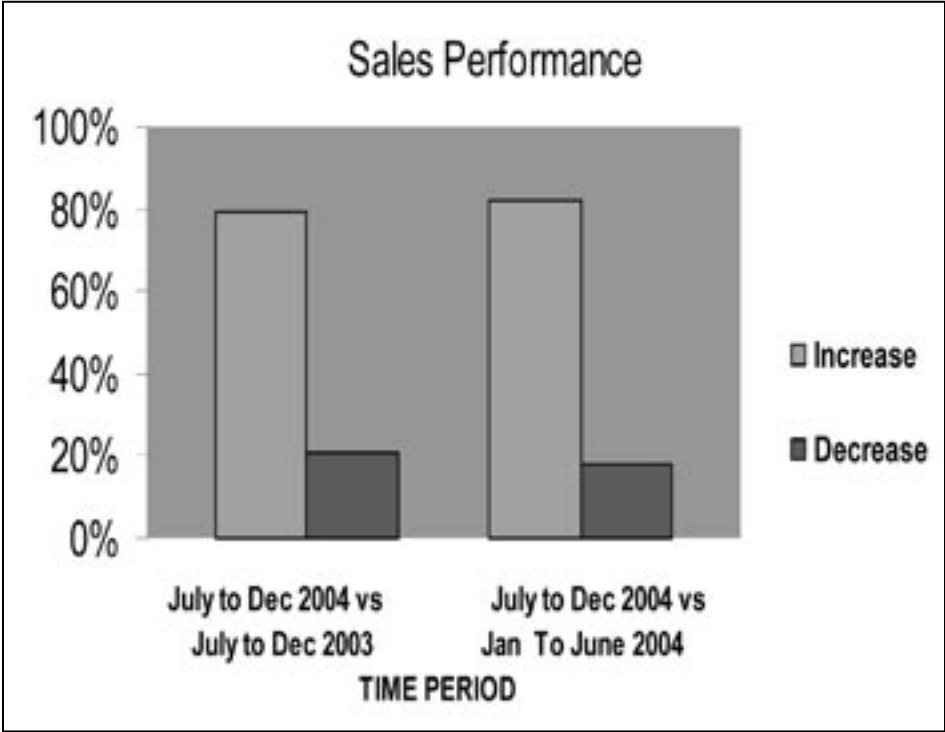
Asked to compare actual sales with projected sales for the second half of last year, 80% of the businesses surveyed by the Chamber reported higher actual sales than what they had initially projected. Firms were also asked to forecast their business growth or decline for the first six months of this year (2005) and 87% predicted they will experience growth for the first six months of this year. Ten percent predicted a decline and 3% predicted there would be no change in their sales.

Over half of the respondents (51%) predicted growth of between 5% and 10% for the first six months of this year, 24% predicted growth of less than 5%, 12% predicted growth of over 10%, while only 5% predicted a

ment, 38% reported increased employment levels, while 7% reported a decrease in employment levels. But with regard to projections, 69% of respondents predict no change in employment levels for the first six months of this year (2005), 21% predict an increase in employment levels and only 10% predict a decrease in employment levels for the first six months of 2005. Asked to evaluate prospects for economic growth in their respective sectors, 10% said prospects for growth were excellent, 73% viewed growth prospects as

was commissioned by the Chamber, indicated overall, that, contrary to the claims of economic stagnation by the Government’s detractors, the island’s business persons are acknowledging that business was good for all of last year – and the vast majority feel business will be even better in the first half of 2005.

The report states “Seventy-four (74%) of respondents in the Retail Sector evaluated growth prospects in the Economy as fair, while 13% evaluated growth prospects as excellent and the

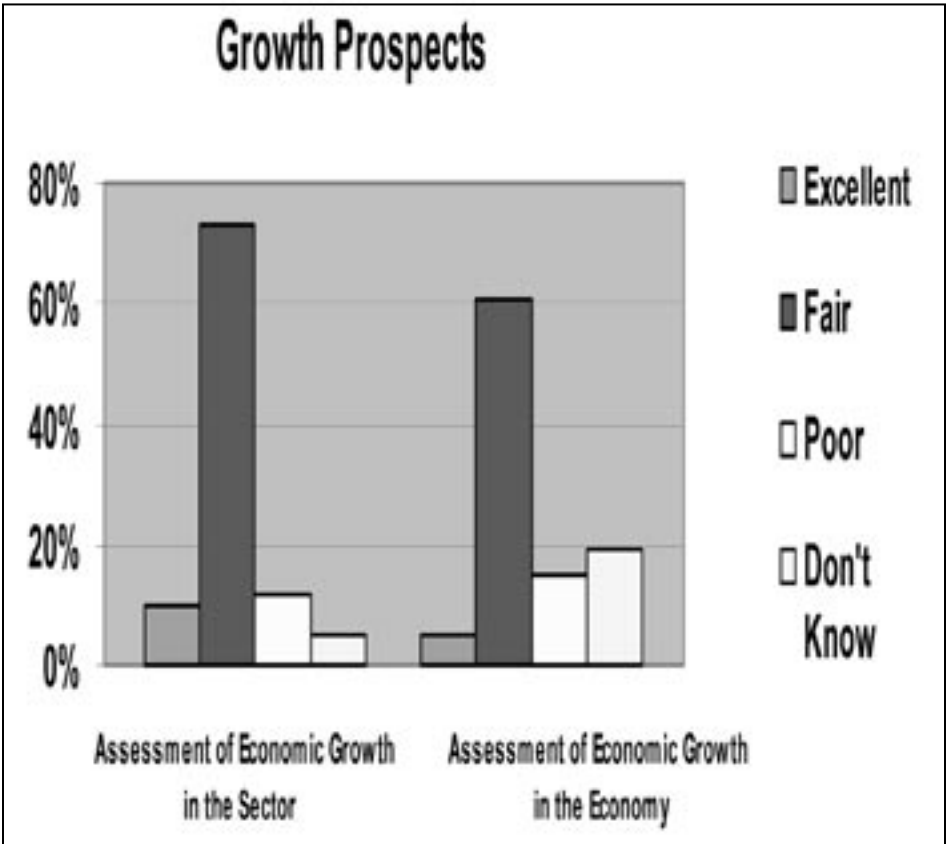


the review period July to December 2004, with 82% of respondents indicating they experienced higher sales in the second half of last year over the first half.

Manufacturing, Distribution, Retail and other services all acknowledged increases in sales for both the first and second halves of 2004, with Manufacturers reporting an 89% increase, Distributors reporting 83% increase,

decline of less than 5%. However, all the respondents from the Manufacturing and Distribution sectors predicted growth, while 90% from Other Services and 75% from the Retail sector predicted growth in the first six months of this year.

With regard to employment, for the second half of last year (2004), 55% of the firms surveyed indicated that they maintained stable levels of employ-



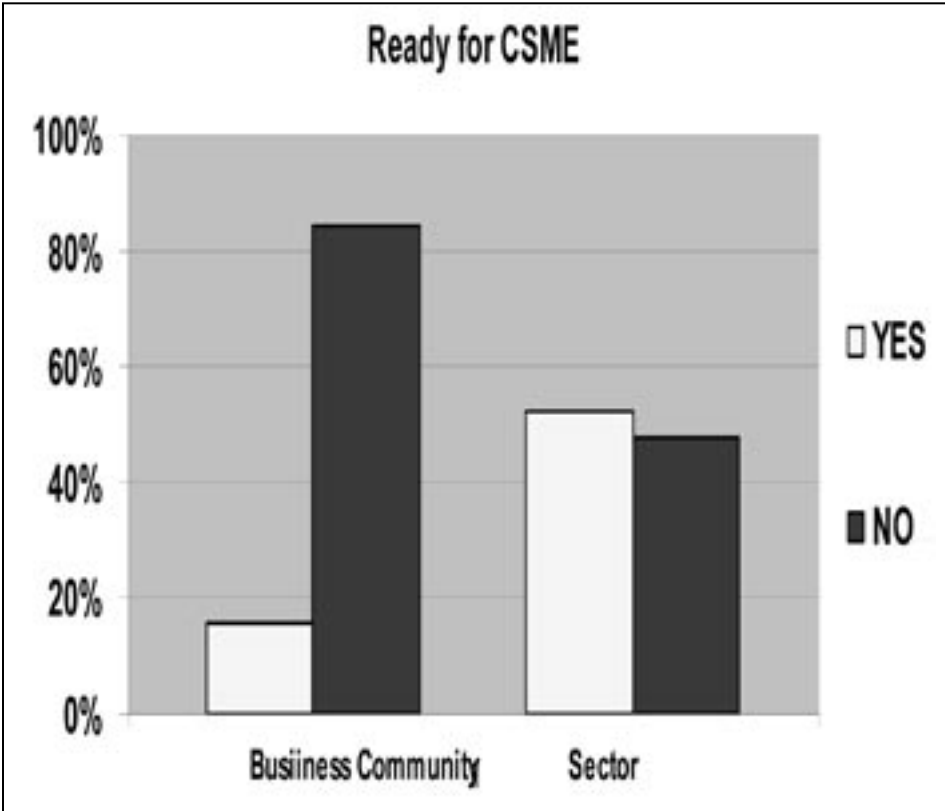
fair and 12% said they saw prospects for growth as poor, with 5% saying they didn’t know.

On the CSME the Chamber reported: “In the special focus section of the survey the Chamber focused its attention on the introduction and impact of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) on the business community. Respondents were asked if they thought the St. Lucian Business Community and in particular their own business organization is ready for the introduction of the CSME. 84% of respondents indicated that the business community was not ready for the introduction of the CSME, while 52% thought that their particular business was ready and 42% thought their particular organization was not ready for the introduction of the CSME.”

A whopping 61% of the respondents indicated that prospects for overall economic growth are fair and 15% viewed prospects as poor. The survey, which

remaining 13% viewed growth prospects in the Economy as poor. 78% of the respondents in the Manufacturing Sector evaluated growth prospects for the Economy as Fair, 11% as Poor and the remaining 11% could not evaluate growth prospects for the Economy. 67% of respondents in the Distribution Sector evaluated growth prospects in the Economy as Fair, the remaining 33% could not evaluate prospects for growth. 10% of respondents in the Services Sector viewed growth prospects in the Economy as Excellent, 50% indicated prospects for growth as Fair, 20% evaluated prospects for growth as Poor and the remaining 20% could not evaluate the prospects for growth in the Economy.”

The survey also silenced the claim that jobs are not being created in the private sector, with most businesses saying they will either employ more workers, or that they do not plan to dismiss any staff for the first six months of 2005.



Business expansion in the city of Castries

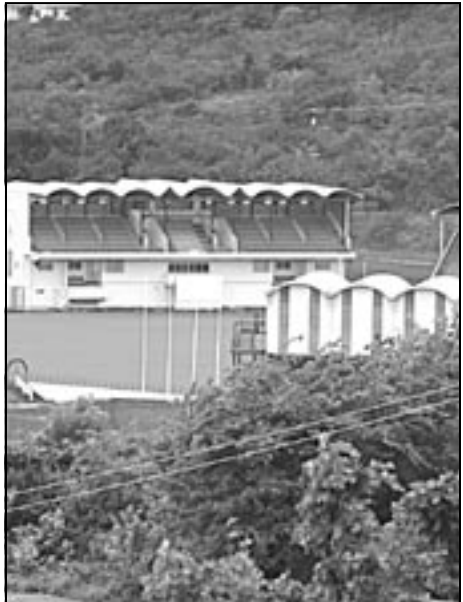
More Investment in Social and Economic Services

More Investment in Social and Economic Services – Budget 2005/2006

Government Estimates of Income and Expenditure was presented to the House of Assembly on April 19th 2005. In his presentation of the country's budget the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, International Financial Services, Economic Affairs and Information Dr. Kenny Anthony announced increases in financial allocation for many social service agencies and investment in major sectors of the economy. The following are extracts from the presentation.

Economic Service Agencies

"I therefore propose to allocate \$547.2 million to the Economic Service Agencies. This represents 57.3% of the total budget, and represents a significant increase of 30.2 percent over the previous year. The allocation to recurrent expenditure is \$331.1 million, of which \$141.9 million is earmarked for debt servicing and \$38.9 million is for retiring benefits."



Upgrading Beasejour Cricket Ground for CWC 2007

Allocation to Cricket World Cup

"In keeping with our objective to increase the rate of economic growth and to meet the infrastructural requirements associated with Cricket World Cup 2007, I have increased the allocation to capital expenditure by \$65.3 million or 43.3 percent to \$216.1 million. Mr. Speaker, you would appreciate that this represents a significant increase. I will therefore provide you with the details of the key areas of investment.

It is no surprise, Mr. Speaker, that Cricket World Cup 2007 is the largest project in our public expenditure programme. The total cost of upgrading and expanding the Beausejour Cricket Ground and other related expenditure is estimated at \$56 million, of which \$34.2 million is projected to be spent in this fiscal year. In order to take advantage of the low interest rate environment, I propose to raise the full funding for this project this year. World interest rates have been rising and rates appear to be inching upwards in the region."

Allocation to Infrastructure

"Last year, Mr. Speaker, we allocated \$59.3 million to the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities, of which \$48.0 million was allocated to road infrastructure.

Honourable Members would appreciate that this represents a significant investment in road infrastructure, accounting for around 2.4% of our GDP at market prices. This year, Mr. Speaker, I propose to allocate \$60.8 million to the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities. Of this amount, the lion's share is again for roads infrastructure - \$44.0 million – a reflection of our firm commitment to rehabilitating our island's road network. This year, I have allocated \$18.0 million to continue our work on the rehabilitation of the East Coast Road and \$7.3 million towards the Castries to Gros Islet Highway Improvement. The rehabilitation works on these roads are projected to be completed next year before Cricket World Cup 2007. A smooth road network running from the north to the south of the island would no doubt boost Saint Lucia's image among the thousands of visitors who are expected to visit our island for the Cricket World Cup. In addition, an allocation of \$8.6 million is provided for the ongoing Tertiary Roads Programme and I have again allocated \$4 million for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of roads."

Flood Mitigation Activities

"The importance of disaster mitigation cannot be overstated, both in social and economic terms. Honourable Members would be aware that this Government has invested heavily in this area over the past few months. This year special attention is given to the Castries and Anse-La-Raye Flood Mitigation Project for which a sum of \$9 million has been allocated."

Safe and Reliable Water Supply

"In my New Year's address to the Nation, I indicated that there is an overriding need to resolve the issue of supplying safe and reliable water to many of our communities. As you heard earlier, this year, we intend to address the water supply concerns in Dennery North and Dennery South. A sum of \$5.3 million has been allocated for the development of water infrastructure in Dennery North and South."

Agriculture Investment Programme

"As mentioned previously, we suffered a major setback in project implementation because of the delayed

receipt of European Union (EU) grant funds. These delays were encountered because the EU had changed their regulations and it took some time to understand and operationalise the new regulations. This hurdle has now been resolved and it is expected that grant funding will flow more freely in this budget cycle.

The capital investment programme of the Ministry of Agriculture is heavily dependent on grant funding from the EU. This year, the Agricultural Diversification Programme is expected to be implemented and I have allocated a sum of \$11.8 million for the Agricultural



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony

ture Diversification Projects. The Agricultural Diversification Agency has been established and will be charged with the responsibility for the implementation of projects.

Mr. Speaker, the move towards tariffication in the EU banana market in 2006 will have implications for our banana industry and it is important that our industry continues the restructuring process to become more efficient. In keeping with this need, a sum of \$7.5 million is allocated to this sector, of which \$3.6 million is for banana commercialisation, which is principally for continuing the irrigation and drainage works and \$3.9 million is for the banana emergency recovery project managed by the Banana Emergency Recovery Unit (BERU)."

Allocation to Tourism

"Last year, I allocated \$21.6 million



Increased Investment in National Security

to the tourism sector, of which \$20.5 million was for tourism marketing. I indicated that there was a need to increase the allocation and that I would do so next year once the economy fully recovers. In keeping with this commitment, I propose to allocate \$23.9 million to the tourism sector, of which \$23 million is earmarked for tourism marketing."

Investment in Physical Development and the Environment

"The Ministry of Physical Development, Environment and Housing shall receive a projected capital allocation of \$32.7 million. The major priority areas of this Ministry this year are disaster mitigation and emergency recovery, water sector reform, housing and settlement and sustainable development and the environment. In the areas of disaster mitigation and emergency recovery, a total of \$10.5 million is allocated, of which \$4.7 million is earmarked for SLASPA for the security works at the air and sea ports. A sum of \$2.4 million is for phase 2 of the World Bank funded Emergency Recovery and Disaster Management Project. The principal component to be funded is the coastal protection works for the Dennery Village.



Resurfacing of George F.L. Charles Airport - One of the Infrastructural Projects

secondary schools will start this year and bring the dream of universal secondary education closer to reality. A total allocation of \$9.9 million is provided for extension, rehabilitation and repairs of schools."

Allocation to the Youth Sector

"Youth skills remain an important component of our training programme. This year, we have allocated \$3.6 million to the National Skills Development Centre, of which \$2.6 million is for the Youth Apprenticeship Programme. I have also allocated a sum of \$2.1 million for sports, of which \$1 million is allocated for the construction of the Soufriere Pavillion."

Investments in Health Care

"Mr. Speaker, it is well known that the escalating cost of health care has posed significant challenges worldwide. Increasing life expectancy and changes in the demographics are factors that are beginning to affect Saint



Programmes to benefit Schools and Students

Allocations of \$6.9 million, \$6.7 million and \$3.8 million respectively are allocated to housing and settlement, sustainable development and the environment and water sector reform."

Social Service Agencies

"Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members will be pleased to know that the Social Service Agencies will receive an increase of \$49.0 million over last year. The total amount allocated is \$274.3 million, of which \$190.7 million is for recurrent expenditure and \$83.6 million is for capital expenditure."

Allocation to Education

"Mr. Speaker, earlier in my presentation, I highlighted the need for preparing our workforce for the needs of the new economy and of the need to develop a workforce that is second to none. Consistent with this position, I have increased the allocation to the Ministry of Education by \$30 million to \$162.7 million. The recurrent budget has been increased by \$2.0 million to \$117.5 million, while the capital budget has been increased by \$28 million to \$45.2 million. The major capital project funded is the Education Development Project, for which an allocation of \$28.4 million is made. It is expected that construction of the two

Expenditure in Social Transformation

"The Ministry of Social Transformation, Culture and Local Government shall receive an increase of \$2.4 million over last year. This agency's total allocation is \$25.6 million, of which \$13.9 million is for recurrent expenditure and \$11.7 million for capital expenditure. The major initiatives to be undertaken this year fall within

the purview of Poverty Reduction and Social Protection. The Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) and the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) are the agencies responsible for implementing the major projects of this Ministry. An allocation of \$4.4 million is made to the PRF, of which \$3.4 million is for ongoing programmes and \$1 million is for the Mossaic Landslide Mitigation Project. The BNTF shall receive \$5 million for the various projects in different communities."

Allocation to the Justice and Security Sectors

"The Justice Sector, which comprises the Attorney General's Chambers, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security, will receive a total of \$73.9 million, 14 percent higher than in the previous year. As is evident by the allocation, the Government will continue its programme of significant investment in this sector.

In keeping with our continued thrust to improve security, I have increased the budget of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security by \$6.7 million to \$59.9 million. A major initiative to be undertaken this year is the introduction of Machine Readable Passports and Border Controls at Immigration. A sum of \$1.4 million is allocated to this initiative. In addition, I propose to allocate \$1.9 million to upgrade the telecommunications network for the police force. This is expected to enhance the overall performance of the police force in dealing with crime.

The allocation to the Ministry of Justice is increased by \$2.7 million to \$11.5 million. This agency will receive an increase of \$1.8 million in its recurrent budget to fund the newly established Crown Prosecution Service, Criminal Division of the High Court and Court Reporting Unit."

Allocation to General Service Agencies

"I propose, Mr. Speaker, to allocate \$50.1 million to the General Service Agencies, of which \$31.3 million is allocated to Office of the Prime Minister and \$18.8 million is allocated to the Ministry of Labour Relations, Public Service and Cooperatives. This year, I have allocated a sum of \$7.3 million to the Office of Privatisation and Pri-



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony

vate Sector Relations to continue our ongoing programme on private sector development. Allocations of \$6.4 million, \$3.2 million and \$2.1 million are made to the Rural Small Business Credit Facility, Low Income Housing and Human Resource Development Credit Facility respectively. All of these projects have been resounding successes and I look forward to their continuation.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the introduction of information technology has improved efficiency in the workplace. We have yet to reap the full benefits in the public sector. In order to ensure that a more focused and targeted approach is taken in reviewing the information technology needs of the public sector, I have allocated \$1.4 million for the Establishment of E-Government. I wish to state for the information of Honourable Members that all of these projects are funded from EU grant resources.

The Office of the Governor General and the agencies of Parliament, namely, the Legislature, the Service Commissions, the Electoral and Audit Departments will receive a total allocation of \$8.7 million, \$3.2 million higher than in 2004/05. Mr. Speaker, I have allocated a total sum of \$3.1 million for a Voter Registration Programme. Of this amount, \$1.3 million is allocated for the Voter Enumeration Project and \$1.8 million is allocated for the National Card Issuance Project."



Flood Mitigation Works in Castries

\$8M for Agricultural Diversification

The Government of Saint Lucia has received a grant of eight million Euros from the European Commission to finance programmes in economic and agricultural diversification and poverty reduction through integrated natural resources management.

A news release from the Ministry of Physical Planning, Housing and the Environment states that the main groups and individuals expected to benefit from these programmes are “farmers, fishers, producer organisations, marginalised farm families, the private sector and other social group-

activities and outputs from the programmes:

Programme Management: The capacity of Ministry of Physical Development Environment and Housing will be strengthened to act as a focal point for the programme.

Legislative and Policy Framework: (1) Undertake or update (as necessary) a nationwide survey on land and water resource use to inform legislative and policy interventions; (2) Review and revise Legislation, Regulations and Policy governing the management of the natural resources; (3) Establish national standards and guidelines in con-

involved in programme implementation (principal among these being the Water Resource Management Agency (WRMA); (4) Support education and curriculum development programmes in Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM); (5) Establish criteria for priority setting among INRM interventions; (6) Establish sectoral integration and harmonization consistent with national long term objectives

Natural Resource Assessment System: (1) Provide support for routine monitoring of the critical parameters required to assess the status of the natural resource on an affordable basis; (2) Undertake or update (as appropriate) analyses of the social, economic and cultural factors impacting natural resource management, including user behaviour, elasticity of demand, valuation of the resource base with particular emphasis on watershed vulnerability assessment and classification, the potential effects of demand management, urban growth and changing land use patterns, etc; (3) Undertake climatological and hydrological monitoring including continued support for the upgrading of agrometeorologic database and stream gauging stations (information system); (4) Establish a land and water resource information system and associated user interface as the basis of a comprehensive Decision Support System (DSS)

Community Participation: (1) Conduct public sensitization and awareness building programmes on INRM; (2) Empower communities nationally to participant more effectively in INRM initiatives, particularly in environmentally sensitive areas; (3) Develop participatory watershed management plans and compliance mechanisms for at least three critical watersheds, selection being based, inter alia, on potential for economic diversification and agriculture development, actual or prior levels of banana production, levels of poverty and the level of risk of environmental degradation. The design of such plans must reflect the needs of the local communities and involve them at every stage of planning, implementation and monitoring; (4) Encourage the formation and facilitate the sustainability of natural resource special interest groups among farmers, local communities, CBOs, etc, to perform an active role in water catchment maintenance (especially erosion and pollution control), waste management and biodiversity conservation



Alleviating Poverty

Environment Management Fund (EMF): (1) Establish the framework including the guidelines and criteria for fund management and operation, including evaluation and selection criteria, mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of initiatives, systems for efficient and timely reporting, etc; (2) Operationalise the fund including deciding upon an appropriate institutional implementation mechanism through wide-ranging consultation with key stakeholders and interested parties; (3) Design and implement a major public sensitization campaign to publicise the new facility and solicit proposals for consideration; (4) Provide support to ongoing and new initiatives in INRM on a demand driven basis, accessible



Alleviating Poverty



Coastal and Watershed Management

ings adversely affected by structural changes in the agricultural sector and the economy generally”

The programmes will provide continued support to initiatives in the commercialisation of the banana sector, general economic diversification efforts through integrated natural resources management.

The Ministry further sated that “Activities under the programme will provide institutional strengthening to the various stakeholders, review, amend and enforce legislation, improve co-ordination among stakeholders, strengthen mechanisms for Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) in St. Lucia, empower communities to become more active participants in natural resource management, and establish a fund to finance INRM initiatives.”

The following are the main list of

formity with national legislation and international conventions; (4) Develop and institute system of controls and enforcement mechanisms based on the legislative and regulatory framework for realizing the optimal use of lands in the interest of soil and water conservation and protection and agriculture production, etc

Effective Planning, Co-ordination and Decision-making System: (1) Access and recommend improvements and mechanisms for increasing co-ordination between key agencies and stakeholders; (2) Determine data and information management requirements and structures for effective co-ordination, including development and update of vulnerability indices; (3) Provide appropriate institutional and technical support to strengthen natural resource management agencies and authorities



Agricultural Diversification to support Banana Farmers

by public, private sector, community and civil society actors. Such initiative might include: reforestation programmes to stabilize vulnerable; areas; watershed improvement interventions derived from watershed master plans; alternative cropping; riverbank stabilization and interventions to reduce flood risk; operationalisation of land bank including compensation mechanisms for land acquired in trust; water supply for potable water and hillside irrigation,; systems for solid and liquid waste management in rural communities especially in upland areas; coastal zone interventions in near shore and marine areas; eco/heritage tourism interventions; technical innovation including inter alia the exploitation of renewable energy sources and groundwater exploration.

The three year programme will commence in 2005 and will be executed by the Ministry of Physical Planning, Housing and the Environment.

\$23Million for new Secondary Schools

Over twenty-three (23) million dollars is to be spent by government in the 2005/06 financial year in an attempt to give a further boost to education on the island. The monies will go toward the construction of two new state-of-the-art secondary schools.

The first school will be built in Masade, Gros-Islet on 8.32 acres of land and will contain 20 classrooms, 3 science laboratories, a computer laboratory, a learning resource centre, an art room, and segregated sick bays for male and female students along with individual offices of the principal, vice principal, school bursar, councillor and a 1000-person capacity auditorium.

According to Minister of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports Hon. Mario Michel, the school will be a four-stream five-form secondary school, designed to accommodate 700 students. The other school will be constructed in Marigot on 10 acres of land and will boast of similar

amenities but will forgo the art room for an agricultural/science laboratory instead.

Minister Michel says the construction of the two new schools under the World Bank funded OECS Education Development Plan (OEDP), is part of further attempts by government at moving towards universal secondary education on the island. The continued improvement in students' performance at all levels of the education system he says, represents money well spent.

As part of his contribution to the 2005/06 debate on the Appropriations Bill, Minister Michel who is the Member of Parliament for Gros-Islet said, "The net result of all of our effort was the continued improvement in the performance of our students as measured by the results of both local and overseas examinations. Again in 2004 as was the case in 2003, there was significant improvement in the performance of our primary school students in the minimum standards test in grade two



Expansion of Secondary School places planned for 2005 - 2006

and grade four and in the Common Entrance Exams in grade six and grade seven."

Secondary school students he noted, recorded an improvement in the CXC exams with the overall pass rate in General and Technical proficiency subjects moving from 70.63% in 2003 to 71.62% in 2004. Meantime 17 out of the 19 secondary schools taking part

in CXC obtained overall pass rates in excess of 50% with five secondary schools obtained pass rates of over 80%.

Government's allocation to the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development Youth and Sports in the 2005/06 financial year was increased by 30 million dollars over the previous year to EC\$162.7 million.

Visa free entry into French Territories



Castries Ferry Terminal - Today a major port of entry

St. Lucia and the Republic of France have signed two agreements which will facilitate the movement of St. Lucian nationals to the French Department of the Americas and the readmission of persons into Saint Lucia who have to meet the conditions for lawful entry into these French departments.

The two agreements signed Saturday 23rd April 2005 are designed to strengthen the visa waiver agreement between the two countries signed in 2000, which allowed St. Lucian National to travel to Martinique for a period not exceeding 15 days without a visa.

The agreements which have been negotiated over a period of more than two years contain mechanisms which, among other things, address the apparent abuse of the existing visa exemption regime. Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs Cosmos Richardson says this underscores mutual efforts between the countries to stamp out criminal activity which violates and the spirit of the previous agreement.

"Our ceremony therefore underscores the two governments' mutual foreign policy objectives of closer co-operation in the deterrence of crime, enhancing security and ensuring bet-

ter implementation of the provisions concerning the movement of persons between St. Lucia and the French overseas department in the Americas," said Mr. Richardson

French Minister for Overseas Brigitte Girardin expressed her government's continued support in strengthening the already close ties with St. Lucia despite the challenges. She also welcomed the island's resolve in dealing with criminal acts being perpetrated by St. Lucians in the French departments, particularly Martinique.

"The provisions which have been retained in the agreement aims to facilitate the circulation of your nationals in the French overseas department which will enable them to avoid all kinds of misuse without trying to be an obstacle to the free movement of St. Lucians who have the confidence of France," said Mrs. Girardin.

Attorney General and Minister for Justice Senator the Honourable Phillip La Corbinere signed both agreements on behalf of St. Lucia. He expressed his satisfaction with provisions in the agreement.

A statement from the Ministry of External Affairs, International trade and Civil Aviation outlined the three main objectives of the agreements as follows:

- (1) To address the apparent issues of abuse of the visa exemption regime;
- (2) To underscore the mutual efforts to stamp out criminal activity which violates the spirit of the previous agreement, and threaten to undermine the prevailing goodwill;
- (3) To facilitate the deportation of persons who are found to have gained illegal entry into each other's territories or remained there illegally.

The signing of the agreements was also witnessed by Minister for Home Affairs and Internal Security Senator the Honourable Calixte George and French Ambassador to St. Lucia, His Excellency Bernard Venzo.



Attorney General Honourable Phillip La Corbinere

Avèk lafòs, kouway épi kopéwasyon, nou kay éwisi

In the throne speech to open the fifth session of the eighth parliament of Saint Lucia, Governor General Her Excellency Dame Pearlette C. Louisy spoke to all St. Lucians. The following is an extract of her speech presented in Kwéyòl.

"Lanné sala osi, Gouvèdman kay mandé Konmité Elèktoral-la pou nètwayé lis elèktoral péyi-a, paski sa yo ni atjwèlman-an ni 26 lanné dépi i fèt. Ou sa byen konpwann ki lis-la ni non moun ki ja mò, sa ki ja émigwé lòt péyi pandan lanné. I ni moun ki ja chanjé wézidans yo ,, mé non yo anwéjistwé toujou an constituency-a koté yo té ka wété avan-an. Konmité-a kay pwan lokasyon sala pou bay tout moun ki anwéjistwé Kat Idantité Nasyonal (ID Kad) néf. Ou kay sa sèvi Kat néf-la pou anchay lot sèvis. Pa ègsanp, ou kay sa sèvi'y pou voyajé an sé lézòt péyi OECS-la ki ka aksèpté Kat Idantité Nasyonal an plas paspò. Pou lègzésis sala nou

ka mandé tout moun ankò pou lakonpwann épi pasyans.

Misyé Pwézidan, Misyé Speaker, nou sé jan Kawaib-la ni pou kontiné fè pwogwé épi dévlope kò nou. Sé pou nou ni konfyans an kò nou. Sé pa paski nou sòti an lèsklavaj, nou pli malfouti ki lézòt. Okontwè, magwé listwa kolonialis épi èsklavajis nou, nou éwisi bati an sosyété épi an kilti kawaibéen ki vivan, ki ka bwiyé; an kilti ki pa fawouch. I ni anchay bagay nou sa moutwé lézòt. E se sa nou kay fè an 2007 pou ICC Cricket World Cup-la. Nou kay moutwé lèstan latè-a ki pititès pa ni maladi, ni péché, ni wézon pou wann kò nou koutja. An 2007 sé péyi Kawaib-la kay ni an lòt wézon pou hosé né yo. Epi Sent Lisi pa kay manchòt nonpli. Konsa annou mété tèt nou ansanm, annou mété lanmen ansanm adan yon gwan koudmen nasyonal pou fè twavay-la nou ni pou fè-a. Nou ja ni on bon fondasyon solid. Avèk lafòs, kouway épi kopéwasyon, nou kay éwisi."



IT reaches the Community

Internet Fiesta was another major success this year with young persons flocking the temporary centres day and night for almost two weeks. Residents of the communities of Ciceron, Marigot and Soufriere, were given the opportunity to surf the net, free of charge, and learn some basic skills in research using the

Internet. The fiesta was organised by the Electronic Government Unit in the Office of the Prime Minister with assistance from a large team of teachers and community workers who volunteered their time to ensure that a wide cross section of persons had access to the Internet. Internet Fiesta 2005 – A success!

GOOD RELATIONS!



Senator Hon. Philip V. La Corbiniere and French Minister for Overseas Brigitte Girardin exchange copies of the agreement which would among other things permit St. Lucian nationals entry into Martinique without a visa for fifteen days. See story on page 7 inside

SAINT LUCIA PREPARES STAYING AHEAD FOR CWC 2007



World Cup Saint Lucia Ltd., the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for Cricket World Cup 2007 has been on the road meeting many communities increasing awareness of the conditions required for

Saint Lucia to host matches in 2007. The staff recently met with residents of Bonne Terre to discuss a wide range of issues such as security, commercial opportunities, ambush marketing and volunteer-

ism. In this photograph, the Operations Officer at World Cup Saint Lucia Ltd., Mrs. Fortune Belrose makes a presentation at the meeting which took place at the Beausejour Cricket Ground.



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. April 30th - Fri. May 6th, 2005

Week of Broadcasting

Budget Debate 2005 Continues

·Budget Debate Presentation by Parliamentary Rep. for Castries Central, Hon. Sarah Flood Beaubrun – Sat. April 30th, 8:00 p.m.

·Budget Debate Presentation by Parliamentary Rep. for Castries East – Hon. Philip J. Pierre – Sun. May 1st, 8:00 p.m.

·Budget Debate Presentation by Parliamentary Rep. for Babonneau, Hon. Felix Finnisterre – Mon. May 2nd, 8:00 p.m.

·Budget Debate Presentation by Parliamentary Rep. for Castries South, Hon. Jon Odum – Tues. May 3rd, 8:00 p.m.

·Budget Debate Presentation by Parliamentary Rep. for Castries South East, Hon. Marius Wilson – Wed. May 4th, 8:00 p.m.

·Budget Debate Presentation by Parliamentary Rep. for Castries North, Hon. Ignatius Jean – Thurs. May 5th, 8:00 p.m.

·Budget Debate Presentation by Parliamentary Rep. for Choiseul, Hon. Ferguson John – Fri. May 6th, 8:00 p.m.

Remember to tune in for:

·GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.

·Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:

·Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm :

·Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 8:00pm (Kweyol Discussion):

·Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. (Min. of Ed. Prog).

Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review)

·Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm - (Week in Review—Kweyol)

For the complete programme guide, log on to our website at www.stlucia.gov.lc and then click on the NTN icon.

www.stlucia.gov.lc

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