

NATIONWIDE

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FIGHTING POVERTY SEVEN YEARS MORE FUNDING FOR B.N.T.F.

Government's islandwide crusade against poverty is getting a welcome boost through an injection of US\$1.76 million in grant funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).



**BNTF Project Manager
Clive Hippolyte.**

These resources, coming through an agreement signed last month by Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, will increase the poverty-fighting budget of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)/ Government of St Lucia-financed Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) over the next seven years.

Under the agreement, the Government of St Lucia is required to provide EC\$425,000 to complement the Canadian contribution to the 5th BNTF programme (BNTF 5) which runs from this year to 2010.

Working under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Transformation and alongside the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) in pursuit

of the same objective, the BNTF has helped government to improve the quality of life, especially in poor rural communities, during the past six years.

"The CIDA funding will augment the CDB funding, bringing the total funding available for BNTF 5 activities to \$14.8 million," says Clive Hippolyte, Project Manager of the BNTF. "For the next number of years, we would have nearly \$15 million to spend on poverty reduction activities."

BNTF has pursued a wide range of interventions in targeted rural and urban communities— from the construction of footpaths to provide better access to homes, to repairing schools to improve the environment for learning, to enhancing the water supply in some districts.

Starting in October, BNTF plans to implement a total of 32 projects during the current financial year.

A condition of the CIDA funding is that not more than 20 per cent of the total resources should be allocated for the construction of rural roads, drains and footpaths. There is an additional requirement that BNTF should place some emphasis on addressing the needs of persons infected with HIV/AIDS, and pursue prevention interventions to combat the spread of this killer disease through education.

"One of our preconditions for the disbursement of funds under BNTF 5 is the preparation of an operations manual, in addition to a poverty reduction plan," Hippolyte also points out. "Under the amendments, we will have to do an environmental assessment for every sub-project and also we will have to do a gender analysis..."

"As to our poverty reduction plan," he explains, "we are hoping to feature a number of components — namely expend 21 per cent of our funds on water projects,

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KIDS ON THE NEW BLOCK

Students at the new Dame Pearlette Louisy Primary School, located at Union, enjoy their first lunch break at the first school day on Monday September 01, 2003. (See story on page 3)

EDITORIAL

ST LUCIAN SUCCESS

Everyone loves success, and whenever something is or appears to be successful, people are naturally eager to try the formula to see if they too will reap similar results.

It may surprise many St. Lucians to learn that a number of bold initiatives taken by government over the last six years, are increasingly being viewed abroad as success stories.

What's ironic is that critics were particularly vocal in berating the Government for pursuing these policies which they claim were taking the country down the wrong path. A good example is the decision to construct the Bordelais Correctional Facility, in the face of overwhelming evidence that the old Bridge Street prison had outlived its usefulness and, more or less, had become a national security risk.

Now, neighbouring St. Vincent and the Grenadines is proceeding with the construction of a new prison. Furthermore, the Government in Kingstown is following the St. Lucia example of a National Crime Commission, having inaugurated a similar body a fortnight ago with assistance from University of the West Indies (UWI) Professor Ramesh Deosaran.

Barbados too is taking the same approach in the quest for effective solutions to the national crime problem. Earlier this week, the National Commission on Law and Order launched a series of island-wide public consultations.

Remember too how St. Lucia's approach to restructuring the banana industry was roundly criticized? Despite this, the other Windward Islands are looking at adopting the same privatization model in which control of the industry was passed from Government to farmers.

There's a powerful lesson in all of this. It's that people are never eager to embrace models, which are regarded as recipes for failure. St. Lucia, therefore, can be justifiably proud that others apparently are seeking to learn from its success.

Government Notebook

A fresh news package daily on all local radio stations



"Take ②" - A fifteen minute news review of the week.

Every Friday at 6.15 p.m. on NTN, Cablevision Channel 2.

REACHING OUT ON HEALTH MATTERS

The Ministry of Health, Human Services and Family Affairs is stepping up its public sensitisation of programmes and new initiatives.

The Ministry of Health, Human Services and Family Affairs is stepping up its public outreach in a bid to sensitize St Lucians and promote better understanding of critical issues affecting the delivery of health care on the island.

"I really think we must come out to the people and speak with them," said Health Minister, Hon. Damian Greaves, as he interacted with listeners as the in-studio guest on Radio St Lucia's *In the Public Interest* (IPI) programme on Monday, August 18.

"We have started community meetings as well," Greaves pointed out, promising health officials would make themselves available for more of this type of interaction with the public during the coming weeks.

The sensitization campaign comes as the six-year-old Labour Government pursues a comprehensive overhaul of St Lucia's health care system. The focus includes construction of new general and psychiatric hospitals, enhancing the service capacity of community health centres, and improving the quality of care in general.

Until these initiatives deliver significant results in the coming years, the Ministry of Health faces the formidable challenge of maintaining an acceptable level of service at the more than 100-year-old Victoria Hospital (VH), considered to have outlived its usefulness long ago.

There have been some successes so far. Compared with the not too distant past, the Accident and Emergency Department today is delivering better service as a result of organizational changes. A few new services have been added like a renal unit with 10 dialysis machines which cost Government some \$3 million to set up.

VH's surroundings today are the cleanest they have been in years, thanks to an extensive clean-up undertaken by the Ministry of Health with help from the National Conservation Authority (NCA), the Ministry of Communications and Works, among others.

Health Services Improving

Most importantly, as Greaves found out for himself during several recent visits to VH, most patients, based on what they told the minister, seem generally satisfied with the quality of care from doctors and nurses.

"It just takes one person to come on the radio and talk about treatment they are dissatisfied with and then everything is blown out of proportion," he observed.

"Basically, our health services are improving," Greaves said. "There are a lot of things that we can improve even our management at the Ministry of Health ... and that is what the business of health sector reform is all about."

By far, the biggest health challenge facing Government relates to financing. There is



New Emergency Water Supply System: a recent improvement at VH

the perennial problem, existing not only in St Lucia but most other developing countries and in some developed countries as well, of limited resources in relation to needs.

What compounds the challenge is the fact that Government is expected to shoulder the financing burden very much on its own because of a widespread belief among the population that it is Government's responsibility to take care of citizens' health care needs.

This viewpoint is reflected in a general reluctance by the public to pay for health

care at Government-run institutions. VH, for example, is currently owed over \$1.8 million by the public for medical services rendered, including dialysis treatment which costs \$150 per session, per patient.

"Health is certainly a main priority of the Government but we have to acknowledge our difficulty in terms of the financial resources available," Greaves explained. "Happily we are now looking at ... national health insurance which we think is an important area of development for us..."

However, the minister issued this caveat: "I want people to understand that national health insurance is not the panacea. ...It is not the be all and end all of everything. There will have to be a mix of mechanisms ... in order to be able to deal with the problem effectively and efficiently."

Sharing Costs and Services

As Government strives to deliver an acceptable standard of care within the prevailing constraints, it also faces a situation where public expectations of the local health care system are rising because citizens are continuously exposed, mainly through cable television, to what obtains in developed countries.

Ironically, health care in the United States, the developed country which dominates cable television here, is a predominantly private sector-driven activity. To get the best available care in the United States, citizens accept they must dig deep into their pockets if their health insurance doesn't provide adequate coverage.

Because it will not be economically feasible for St Lucia to provide all the specialist medical services needed by citizens, Greaves said Government is seeking a solution through the possibility of sharing certain types of services with



Victoria Hospital: patients generally seem satisfied with service

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GOOD START TO SCHOOL YEAR

Despite a few hitches here and there, the 2003-2004 academic year started "on a fairly good note" when schools reopened for classes last Monday, September 1, following the long summer holidays.

Minister of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports, Hon. Mario F. Michel, gave this assessment in the House of Assembly the following day in a detailed briefing for lawmakers and the general public.

The start of the new school year coincided with some notable achievements by the Ministry of Education. Topping the list was the official end to the 'shift system' which restricted hundreds of St Lucians who attended the Ave Maria Girls Primary and the RC Boys Primary to a half-day of schooling over the past 25 years.

"That was supposed to be a temporary arrangement established in 1978 when the two schools were put on the shift system

Built to accommodate 525 students, there were just over 300 students in the classroom at Ciceron on Monday. They are in forms 1 to 3. Forms 4 and 5 have not yet been filled.

In other changes, what up to last term was the technical wing of the Vieux Fort Primary School is now an independent education institution going by the name of the Vieux Fort Technical Institute.

The institute will continue to cater to students from the south of the island who have exhausted their chances to gain a secondary school place through the Common Entrance Examination. The institute offers these students training in various vocational and technical subjects.

A number of schools have also been disestablished, amalgamated or consolidated. Among them is the new Reunion Primary in Choiseul, created through an amalgamation of the former Choiseul Infants and Primary Schools.

Built at a cost of EC\$8 million, the Union-based primary school was named after the island's incumbent Governor-General, who is an outstanding educator. There were 918 students on the register, 132 short of full capacity. It's the most modern school in the Eastern Caribbean.

The measure, which will see infants attending school during the morning and primary students in the afternoon, is for two months. Saying this move had taken "some of the joy" he felt over the end of the shift system in Castries, Michel vowed to ensure the measure does not exceed the timeframe.

Three schools did not open on Monday because construction work was not completed on time. Workmen at the Ave Maria Girls Primary and the Ave Maria Girls Infants were allowed Monday and Tuesday to clean up the premises so that classes could begin on Wednesday.

In the case of the Ti Rocher Combined School, classes are scheduled to begin next Monday, September 8. The additional week is to allow completion of a new roof.

Michel disclosed that some schools started the year without principals. Where appointments can be made, he said the Ministry would proceed with identifying and putting people in place "in the next few weeks".



A teacher prepares students for the post-lunch classes at the new school.

allegedly to correct a temporary problem that was occurring in the Castries area," Michel remarked.

"It went on for 25 years and it has now been formally brought to an end by the establishment of the new Dame Pearllette Louisy Primary School," he added.

Built at a cost of EC\$8 million, the Union-based school named after the island's incumbent Governor-General, who is an outstanding educator, opened its doors for the first time on Monday. There were 918 students on the register, 132 short of full capacity. It's the most modern primary school in the Eastern Caribbean.

Also opening its doors for the first time was the new Ciceron Secondary School, bringing the six-year-old Labour Government a step closer towards its ambitious goal of universal secondary education for all by the year 2006. Construction of two additional schools over the next few years will realize the goal.

The Babonneau Infants has been disestablished and amalgamated with Babonneau Primary to form one institution. The Laborie Infants Schools too was disestablished. Girls from the school are now attending the Laborie Girls Primary and the boys, the Laborie Boys Primary.

The Entrepot Infants Schools too was disestablished. Teachers and students have been transferred to the new Dame Pearllette Louisy Primary School and the former school premises are now part of the Entrepot Secondary School.

"...the programme of amalgamating and consolidating is an effort by the Ministry to ensure that we rationalize the management and leadership of the various schools in St Lucia," Michel explained.

"In some cases, you have these schools located on the same compound, an infant school and a primary school, with, in some cases, diminishing school population as we increase the intake of students into secondary schools," the minister added.

Minister of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports, Hon. Mario F. Michel

"In some cases, the population of the primary school, in fact, decreased and what we are seeking to do, where it is considered appropriate, is to amalgamate and consolidate various education institutions so as to make the best use of the resources available to use."

The Fond St Jacques Infants and Primary Schools were earmarked for amalgamation. However, because necessary construction work has not finished in time for the start of the new school, a temporary shift system has had to be introduced at these two schools to facilitate the work to take place.

VACANCY NOTICE POST OF TOURISM OFFICER I

Applicants should possess A Bachelor's Degree in Tourism Management, Hospital Management, Economics or related field plus 2 years experience in a post at Grade 10 and above; a Bachelor's Degree in Tourism Management, Hospitality Management, Economics or related field plus 8 years total experience in a post at Grade 7 and above; a Diploma in Tourism Management, Hospitality Management, Economics or related field plus 3 years experience in a post at Grade 10

Duties and Responsibilities include:

- (1) Assisting in the processing of fiscal incentives to the tourism sector including the appraisal of applications and monitoring of beneficiaries;
- (2) Preparing technical reports and projects proposals for projects in the tourism sector;
- (3) Analysing tourism statistics and keep Government informed of the performance of the sector on the basis of systematic appraisal of the performance criteria;
- (4) monitor relevant developments in tourism whether at a national or international level and advising on the implications and any consequent desirable reactions of Government;

Salary

Salary is in the range of \$40,145.41 - \$42,387.40 per annum (grade 12)

Applications on the prescribed form along with certified copies of all documents pertaining to qualifications should be submitted to:

**The Secretary
Public Service Commission
Block A
Waterfront
Castries**

to reach her no later than **September 26, 2003.**

Note: Please be advised that unsuitable applications will not be acknowledged.

BUILDING FOR PEOPLE

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE SOUTH AND SOUTH WEST OF THE ISLAND

Whenever Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, goes on tour around the island, it often means a long day on the road with a series of stops at communities along the way, and lively discussions with residents.

For journalists who accompanied the Prime Minister and other government officials on a Tuesday, August 19 tour of multi-million-dollar capital projects either in progress or recently completed in the south and southwest of the island, the experience was no different.

At 9.38 a.m., a bus transporting media representatives from DBS, GIS/NTN, Nationwide, Radio St Lucia, One Caribbean, and St Lucia OneStop.com departed from in front of the Graeham Louisy Administrative Building on the Waterfront, for the eight-hour-long journey.

"It is a substantial investment and it is part of Government's initiative really to just provide the right level of infrastructure at the various communities so that we can have good quality fish not only sold to our local population but also the tourism market which is required to maintain very good standards in the quality of the food they offer," said Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer, Sarah George.

As Prime Minister Anthony mingled with the fishermen who eagerly engaged him in conversation, journalists were given an extensive tour of the sprawling waterfront facility boasting everything you'd expect to find in a modern fisheries complex anywhere in the world.

From an ice-making plant, lockers and showers for the fishermen, an administrative bloc, a shop where fishermen can purchase equipment and



Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer, Sarah George, describes features of the complex.



The breakwater (on the right) at the new fishery shield against flooding.



Hand-over of new computer to Edward Mongroo, president of the Soufriere Fishermen's Cooperative. MP Walter Francois applauds.

After an hour-long ride along the winding west coast road which passes through the Roseau Valley, Anse-la-Rayé and Canaries, the bus pulled up just before 11 a.m. at the first stop of the tour — the brand new Soufriere Fisheries Complex which the Government of Japan officially handed over to the Government of St Lucia a few months ago.

Following the completion of fuel storage facilities and the installation of a fuel pump the previous week, the Soufriere Fishermen's Cooperative was busy putting everything else in place for its members to move in within the following week. The Cooperative will be responsible for managing the EC\$7 million complex.

other supplies before heading out to sea, facilities for boat repairs, and covered stalls for the hygienic preparation of fish and other sea food for sale to the public.

"We are proud of this facility. We will be optimizing this facility," remarked Hon. Walter Francois, Member of Parliament for Soufriere, outlining plans for its use as the centerpiece of an integrated approach, involving the development of the surrounding area as a commercial centre for the sale of vegetables, meat, etc.

To assist the Soufriere Fishermen's Cooperative to effectively manage the property, Dr. Anthony handed over an IBM Netvista computer, complete with printer,

to the president, Edward Mongroo, who welcomed the gift from Government.

In brief remarks, Dr. Anthony pointed to the growing contribution of fishing to St Lucia's economy. Noting that modernization of the sector has been "one of the great thrusts" of his six-year-old Labour administration, Dr. Anthony reiterated that Canaries and Anse-la-Rayé are next in line to receive modern fishing facilities under a development cooperation programme with the Government of Japan.

More Dollars from Fishing

"The returns from the fishing industry are significant," he pointed out. "I can tell you that the economy of Vieux Fort is largely sustained by the weekly earnings of the fishermen. True enough, fishermen never like to tell us how much they earn, but I can tell you from discussions with them that the amounts are very, very respectable."

After a sumptuous buffet lunch at the world-renowned Ladera Resort, it was on to the second stop — the new Choiseul Fisheries Complex. Visible signs everywhere along the bumpy route told the story that the new Vieux Fort to Soufriere highway is taking shape and that road users are experiencing some discomfort, as expected in these situations.

The Choiseul complex was also handed over by the Government of Japan to the Government of St Lucia at the same time as the Soufriere complex. To understand the giant leap into modernity which Choiseul fishermen will make when they

move in, you only have to look across the street at the rundown facilities which served as the base of their operations for the past several years.

The facility, however, means much more to Choiseul than providing a vastly improved environment for fishing. Through a breakwater in the sea, the complex offers the community much welcomed protection from recurring flooding, especially during stormy weather when the choppy sea furiously rushes ashore.

"When the assessment was done for building a facility in this location, this was one of the areas where the Government was very interested in trying to address in having a product that could build a substantial structure that would protect



The old base of operation

LE AND THE FUTURE

Canaries and Anse-la-Raye are next in line to receive modern fishing facilities under a development cooperation programme with the Government of Japan.



Canaries complex in Choiseul, provides a welcome

not only the fishing vessels and the operations of the fishermen but also the waterfront area of the community," Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer, Sarah George, explained.

"We hope that Choiseul will be well protected should we experience any rough seas during this year and years to come," she added. "Apart from that, most of the actual structures that are on the facility are actually very similar to what we saw in Soufriere but with a bit more capacity."

The complex was the first significant development project that Choiseul has received from Government in over 30 years. The Choiseul Fishermen's Cooperative, through president Eusebe James, also received a gift of an IBM

Netvista computer from Dr. Anthony to assist in the effective management of the facility.

The \$43 million Highway

Departing from the complex around 3 p.m., the focus of the tour next shifted to road improvement with a 10-minute stop near the Choiseul cemetery. It was to allow Dr. Anthony and the media to see how a new earth-retaining technology is facilitating major widening of the road at the top of the hill nearby, as part of the \$47 million Vieux Fort to Soufriere highway.

"It is a new system brought to St Lucia. It is tensile technology for retaining walls," explained Tam Smith, resident manager of Lagan Holdings, the Irish contractor executing the project. "The wall is built up

telecommunications cable in particular, to challenges presented by the earth that prompted a redesign of sections of the road in some instances. However, the good news was that project to date is running well within budget.

"What we encountered right at the beginning of the job was a massive increase in the amount of utilities work that we had to do," explained Derek Farr, resident manager of Diwi Consult, an international firm managing the project for the Government of St Lucia.

"Take the telecommunications ducts," he added. "We initially expected to put in around 24 ½ thousand metres of telecommunications ducts. That's now risen to about 78,000 metres ... three times the amount of work we originally envisaged."



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony discusses some issues related to protection from erosion with Senator Calixte George and officials of the construction company.

in layers using reinforced plastic mesh and there is a free draining system at the front."

He added: "We brought some people down from America, they trained some of the Lucians, and then we handed over to them on a subcontract. This is as good as you'll get anywhere in the world and the quality is excellent. We have got about 30 to 35 walls to complete and this was the first one done."

Minutes later, at Lagan's headquarters in La Fargue, project officials confirmed what almost everyone had expected to hear. That the new highway could not be completed in the 18-month period ending December, as originally projected.

The reason: a variety of problems ranging from an unexpectedly large amount of utilities-related work involving



Tam Smith, Lagan Holdings' resident manager

Making it clear he was not defending anyone, Agriculture Minister, Senator Hon. Calixte George, agreed that the unique type of volcanic soil found in St Lucia presented challenges for road construction that would not be experienced elsewhere. As an experienced agriculturist, the former Communications and Works Minister is very knowledgeable about soil types on the island.

"I just want the press to appreciate something and that is unlike other areas of the world where you have uniformed (soil) conditions, you may find that it may cost more to build a road in St Lucia than other places," he explained. "In the case of St Lucia, you'd be surprised to know there are about 52 different types of conditions in the soils arising out of the geology and these change within very short distances."

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is for Choiseul fishermen.



Prime Minister Anthony, gets the full attention of two Soufriere fishermen.

THE HIGHWAY REPORT

The following report was prepared by Diwi Consult, an international company managing the road project for the Government of St Lucia, and distributed to the news media during the Prime Minister's tour on Tuesday, August 19, 2003.

The Contract.

Contract RDP 001/2 - Soufriere to Black Bay - comprises the reconstruction of approximately 28 km of the existing Primary Road between the town of Soufriere and the village of Black Bay, passing through Choiseul. The route forms the main trunk road for traffic traveling along the south west coast of St. Lucia and is the access to many tourist attractions and hotels. The works include vertical and horizontal alignment improvements, drainage improvements and the upgrading and replacement of major structures.

This contract was originally issued for tender in May 2001, following which bids were received on 19th July 2001. Subsequently, the bidding and appraisal procedure was aborted by the Government of St. Lucia and tender documents were re-issued in September 2001. At this time, bids were invited for two separate contracts, RDP 001 Soufriere to Choiseul and RDP 002 Choiseul to Black Bay. These were opened at the office of the Central Tenders Board on 12th November 2001.

Seven contractors submitted separate eligible bids for both contracts RDP 001 and RDP 002 and five included an offer of discount conditional on the award of both contracts. The award was made to Lagan Holdings Ltd and was based on their discounted offer. At the time of the award, it was agreed by the Government of St. Lucia and the contractor to enter into a single contract that comprises both projects RDP 001 and RDP 002. The name of this combined contract is "Contract RDP 001/2".



Earth-retaining wall built using new technology

Vital Statistics.

Name of Contract: "RDP 001/2, Soufriere to Black Bay"

Contract Description: The reconstruction of 28 km of roadway between Soufriere and Black Bay through Choiseul.

Contractor: Lagan Holdings Ltd, 1 9 Clarendon Road, Belfast BT1 3BG, Northern Ireland

Employer: Government of St. Lucia through the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities

Consultant: DIWI Consult International GmbH

Financial Assistance: The Caribbean Development Bank - Loan No. 12/OR/-STL

Contract Price: EC\$43,750,000.00.

Contract Signed on: 6th June 2002

Start Date: 1st July 2002.



The old Riviere Doree bridge has outlived its capacity to manage the overflows during heavy rainfall.

Progress to end of July 2003

Mobilization by the contractor is complete for this stage of works. Additional plant and labour resources will be mobilized for road pavement works.

The project manager's and the contractor's site offices and laboratories were fully operational.

Mobilisation of the contractor's expatriate staff is complete. Employment of local labour is ongoing. A substantial amount of plant and equipment is on site.

Surveying and setting out operations were ongoing.

RDP001: Soufriere to Choiseul Clearing and grubbing operations continued on RDP 001 and, at the end of the month, approximately 90% of the bush clearing and 85% of grubbing of the length of RDP 001 is complete.

Bulk earthworks continued near Soufriere working from Chainage 0+400 towards Myers Bridge and Victoria. Earthworks

were suspended at CH 0+650 at the intervention of a landowner who queried the extent of the earthworks and the related land take. The issue had not been resolved by the end of the month. Cut to spoil quantities reached 95% of the billed quantities at the end of the month. Major fill operations are complete, remaining fill operations continued around Chainage 6+500 and Chainage 11+000.

Construction of Myers Bridge is nearly complete except for the outlet structure, which requires, prior to construction, services to be relocated and the existing box culvert to be demolished.

Construction of gabion walls from Chainage 1+000 to 1+360 and from 7+250 to 7+750 is complete. A masonry retaining wall has been completed at Choiseul and works



Derek Farr, project manager of Diwi Consultants

continued on two masonry walls at Ch 0+900 and Ch 0+100. Excavation for a reinforced earth retaining wall near Soufriere, Ch 0+170, commenced. Construction of pipe culverts continued on RDP001 between Chainage 0+000 and 6+000. The contractor continued with construction of Type 1 road side drains from Ch 0+700 to Ch 3+500 and around Ch 12+000

Approximately 85% of electrical poles and overhead cables had been relocated on RDP001 at the end of the month. Telecommunication line plant relocation on this section reached 85% by the end of the month.

The contractor continued relocation of telecommunication works with trenching and the laying of new ducting on RDP001 near Myers Bridge, working towards Soufriere.

Water works commenced on RDP001 at the end of the month with production and placing of valve boxes.

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Approximately 85% of electrical poles and overhead cables had been relocated on RDP001 at the end of the month. Telecommunication line plant relocation on this section reached 85% by the end of the month.



The new Rivier Doree bridge under construction will ensure smooth communications in all seasons

BUILDING FOR PEOPLE AND THE FUTURE

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With a significant portion of preparatory work now out of the way, actual construction of the highway will finally get going during the coming month following the arrival of Lagan's asphalt plant on the island. The first stretch of road to be paved runs from Black Bay to the Wilrock Quarry site in Laborie. Afterwards, work shifts to the Soufriere end and will advance towards conclusion at Wilrock which is supplying stone for the project.

Vieux Fort Fire Station

Lagan Holdings is promising to deliver a quality road that will be safe and will stand up for at least 30 years. Dr. Anthony urged the contractor to reduce the discomfort for motorists and other road users in the meantime by ensuring that by-pass roads are at least "passable" so that an alternative route is available.

"I think that will lessen the complaints considerably....," he said. Following a quick stop at the new River Doree bridge, it was on to the site of the new Vieux Fort Fire Station which had reached the foundation stage. After 10 minutes there, the touring party made its way to the new Vieux Fort multi-purpose sports courts which were scheduled to be officially opened the following day.

A newsman from HTS joined the touring party at this point. Speaking with reporters there, Dr. Anthony expressed satisfaction with general improvements in Vieux Fort



Sergeant Burke explains features of the new Vieux Fort police station.

during his six years as parliamentary representative. He pointed, among other things, to improved drainage, construction of new roads, and signs of increased business confidence reflected in the construction of a number of new commercial buildings.

Afterwards, Dawn French, director of the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO), took reporters to see a new warehouse NEMO is building close to the Community College compound, to store first aid kits, hard hats, and other supplies for use in the event of an emergency in Vieux Fort.

Under a World Bank-financed project, eight other warehouses are going up in other parts of the island at a cost of approximately \$80,000 each. NEMO plans

eventually to have a warehouse to serve each of the 18 disaster management committees on the island.

"We will be putting these under the control of the district committees," Miss French said. At the final stop, just after 5 p.m., Sergeant Kennedy Burt took the media on a tour through the almost completed Vieux Fort Police Station, an impressive edifice built by a team of young contractors.

Equipped, among other things, with bullet proof glass to protect officers in the reception area, a private interview room for rape victims and facilities that allow identification parades to be conducted where members of the public can point out suspects without the suspects seeing them, the Vieux Fort station clearly sets a new standard on the island. The tour ended at 7.30 p.m.

Warehouses for emergency supplies are being constructed all over the island.



NEMO's warehouse under construction

THE HIGHWAY REPORT

from page 6

RDP 002: Choiseul to Black Bay: Clearing and grubbing operations continued on remaining short sections which were previously left out. By the end of the month, approximately 95% of clearing and grubbing was complete on RDP 002.

Bulk earthworks, with reference to cut to spoil and fill operations for widening the existing road and for improvements of the alignment, are nearly complete with cut to spoil reaching about 70% of the billed quantities for RDP 002. The remaining earthworks will include the removal and excavation of the existing bituminous surface and existing pavement to the required level.

Fill operations resumed on RDP 002, with fill in offline sections between Laborie and Black Bay. Backfill around and above completed culverts continued. The amount of cut fill reached about 40% of the billed quantities for RDP002 at the end of the month. However, excavation of the existing road pavement has not yet commenced.

Construction of two masonry retaining walls at Laborie is complete.

Reinforced earth retaining walls at Ch 0+300 and Ch 13+000 were completed. Construction of a reinforced earth retaining wall at Ch 0+100 near Choiseul continued and excavation and preparations for the construction of retaining walls at River Doree and at Laborie were ongoing.

Construction of 900mm, 1200mm and 1500mm diameter pipe culverts and box culverts continued. Twenty-nine pipe culverts and three box culverts were substantially completed by the end of July and construction of several other culverts had commenced.

The contractor continued construction of Type 1 road side drains at several locations at the LHS and RHS of the road.

Works on River Doree Bridge continued with the construction of the structural screed across the bridge deck and the parapet upstands. Backfill behind abutments commenced.

Trenching and ducting for telecommunication works continued and, at the end of the month, approximately 10 300 metres were complete and the precast junction boxes were placed on site. Cabling and commissioning works were completed by Cable and Wireless at the Laborie Bypass.

Water works continued with laying of pipes, installation of valves, fire hydrants and house connections. The construction of valve chambers continued. At the end of the month, approximately 10 500 metres of water pipes had been completed. Pressure tests of new water pipe sections were carried out at La Fargue and at the Laborie Bypass. By the end of the month, WASCO had not accepted any section of the new water pipe line.

The two approved traffic diversions were operational during the whole month of July 2003. These were from Black Bay to Augier junction and the closure of the Laborie Bypass with traffic diverted through Laborie Village.

Works for reinstating pedestrian and vehicular accesses continued.

Relocation of fences, hedges and walls and crop compensation procedures continued along the new road alignment on both RDP 002 and RDP 001.

Payments

At the end of July 2003, the certified cumulative value of work done, excluding the Advance Payment amounts to approximately EC\$15.1 million which is 34% of the contract price.

Personnel

The contractor advised that the following staff were employed on site on the last day of July 2003. Local Personnel - 289; Expatriate Personnel: 25

During the month of July 2003, the contractor had subcontracted work to 14 local subcontractors for construction of gabions, masonry walls, valve chambers, bridge and box culvert construction, earth retaining walls and road side drains.

Contractor's Plant and Equipment

A substantial amount of plant and equipment is now on site, including two concrete plants. The asphalt plant has not been mobilized to date.

At the end of July 2003, the following 'local' equipment was on hire:

- 19 (nineteen) tipper trucks
- 2 (two) water trucks
- 7 (seven) excavators
- 2 (two) wheel loaders
- 3 (three) dozer
- 5 (five) backhoes
- 2 (two) rollers
- 2 (two) cranes

Project Experts

The Project Manager's staff employed on site at the end of July 2003 is summarized as:

One Resident Engineer
Two Assistant Resident Engineers
Two Engineer's Technical Assistants
One Senior Laboratory Technician
Four Technicians
Three Laboratory Technicians.

The following staff were employed on site on the last day of July 2003. Local Personnel - 289; Expatriate Personnel: 25

AWARENESS ON HEALTH MATTERS

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other countries in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

Discussions have been taking place at the level of Ministers of Health.

Here's what's envisaged, supposing that St Lucia decides to set up an oncology centre for the treatment of cancer. Under the sharing of medical services proposal, the centre will provide the best available treatment in the OECS and will cater to citizens from throughout the sub-region.

The same would apply in the case where another country decides to focus on treating heart disease and so on, and so on.

As Government looks towards the opening of the brand new general hospital in another five years or so, it's already taking steps to address the critical issue of staffing, especially in medicine where there is a fairly rapid turn-over.

At present, a record 135 St Lucians are studying medicine in Cuba, at the University of the West Indies and at the St George's University in Grenada. Because

there are not enough openings for these doctors to be employed in the public sector as general practitioners when they graduate, Government is encouraging them to go on to specialize in areas such as nephrology, cardiology and pediatric surgery.

Such expertise will be needed at the new \$67 million hospital which the European Union (EU) is financing.

Greaves met recently with some final year medical students to discuss an incentive related to the proposal. "I have been given the mandate by Cabinet to offer them a waiver of their bonds to pursue specialist areas that are direly needed now and will be direly needed in the future," he said.

Greaves also dealt with the vexing issue of acquiring equipment for use at VH – a topic that has been very much in the news lately. The first thing citizens must understand, he explained, is that it takes more than the purchase of equipment to provide an effective solution.

Among key considerations are the availability of trained staff to operate and

maintain the equipment, appropriate facilities for housing the said equipment, and the ready availability of spare parts from the manufacturers.

"You may decide 'OK I want to buy this piece of equipment!' but there are other ancillary costs that one may not necessarily take into account or anticipate that you have to do it now to optimize the use of the equipment," Greaves explained.

"Nobody wants to purchase equipment which cannot be maintained, where you do not put certain things in place and then it sits there as a white elephant," he added. "We want to ensure that we carefully utilize the public funds."

"We do not want a situation as obtained in the past where pieces of equipment are acquired and then for some reason they remain in the store room and cannot be used."

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FIGHTING POVERTY

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18 per cent on educational projects – rural schools, secondary, primary schools and day care centres, 16 per cent on health projects, namely repairs to health centres and other health facilities, 10 per cent on access roads, 10 per cent on the physical wealth of vulnerable persons, seven per cent on skills training and six per cent on sanitation."

Projects earmarked for implementation during the 2003-2004 period include the replacement of the asbestos roof on the CDC housing estate in Soufriere, construction of a \$500,000 community market in Laborie near the Rudy John park, and construction of a building in Roseau for use by the Mill-a-Ray women's group which is launching an agro-tourism project.

"We are hoping to derive a high impact in terms of reducing poverty not necessarily in terms of provision of footpaths and drains, but skills training, water enhancement projects, the enhancement of public facilities," Hippolyte says.

THE NEW FIRE STATION UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN VIEUX-FORT. THE MODERNISATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTH OF THE ISLAND INCLUDES A WAREHOUSE FOR THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (NEMO) AND A NEW POLICE STATION.



New Vieux Fort Fire Station starts to take shape.



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Highlights: Week of Sept. 8-13, 2003

Young Leaders Debating Competition SMC vs. Corinth Monday at 8:30 pm.
Special Lecture: The Social & Economic Significance of Men's Participation in Society. Wednesday at 8:30 pm.

Tune in Weekly For:

Regional News & Sports with GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.
Issues & Answers (Discussion Programme) Mondays at 8:00pm
Interview/ Tuesdays at 6:15pm
Konsit Kweyol/ Tuesdays at 6:15pm (Kweyol Discussion)
Your Right to Know/ Thursdays at 6:15pm
Take 2/ Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review - English)
Weflechi/ Fridays at 6:40pm (Week in Review - Kweyol)
KiddiCrew.com/ Saturdays at 9:30 am

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

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