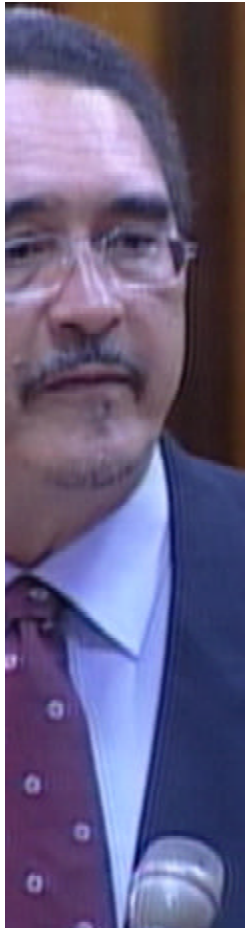


BUDGET FOR ALL

EDITC

EMPOWERI



Dr. Kenny D. Anthony
Budget for 2003 - 2004.

Government is proposing to invest millions of dollars in major infrastructure projects over the coming year to propel the economy further along the current path to recovery and to support the key objective of poverty alleviation.

“We will be concentrating primarily on the construction,” Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, told the House of Assembly on Tuesday, April 8, as he presented an expansionary \$861.3 million budget for the 2003-2004 fiscal year.

“Our focus will be on housing and road construction as these are significant employment generating sectors,” the Prime Minister added. “Our goal will be to spread these employment opportunities island-wide.”

After the steep decline of 2001 when output fell by 4.6 per cent as

a direct consequence of a global recession and the September terrorist attacks on America, the economy bounced back last year with a modest but encouraging 0.1 per cent growth.

The turn-around was driven primarily by a recovery in banana production, significant expansion in manufacturing and communications, and a modest recovery in tourist arrivals.

Against a backdrop of “caution and uncertainty” in the global economy which has a profound impact on St Lucia, Dr Anthony said Government has a responsibility to take the lead role in stimulating economic activity “in periods of turbulence and uncertainty”.

The capital side of the budget – totalling \$348.8 million which is primarily going towards developing the infrastructure – represents a

Life, so the saying is you make it. Success basically boils down to choices at the right

Through two exciting being financed by the (EU) through its programme, Government ordinary St. Lucians opportunity to make respect to two basic employment.

Imagine receiving repayment obligation the first decisive step a roof over your head similar amount with to help you establish to provide for yours

It's an unprecedented probably sounds to But that's exactly every St. Lucian un Housing Facility and Programme.

The full \$30 million another component further build the capacity private sector to assist of “engine of growth

These initiatives, in history of St. Lucia about the empowerment Lucians, especially longing for to make lives. EU Ambassador Caloghirou, has praised of St. Lucia for its bold initiatives.

“The Government is in place mechanism major role in providing opportunity and the their own ideas businesses, and create for themselves and for them,” he says.

In the final analysis effective government



ing is receiving
ion. Government is
oming year to launch
igle largest housing
dertaken in St Lucia.

Estate involves the
omes on an 89 acre
housing Corporation.
e set aside for public
rested in acquiring a
, the NHC will be
oject at Black Bay,
126 housing lots will
.

Labour Government
g on “what is perhaps
and comprehensive
programme ever
aken in St Lucia.”

in Road Development
y underway and to be
ases, repaving of the
x Fort highway -
ioel Street to Cul-de-
Sac to Barre de L’isle
year.

ench-funded Tertiary
project, under which
d will be rehabilitated
cost of \$33 million.
d south of the island



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony announced that Government will be embarking on a very ambitious and comprehensive road development programme for St Lucia.

economic strategy, in
cost containment, dir
to stimulate ca
programmes, ma
collection, contain
significantly reduc
Anthony explained.

He made it clear:
predicated on the
changes to the cu
international situati
adverse change
circumstances, it will
to review our strateg
adjustments.”

Other highlights of th
announcement that r
taken on an Eastern
Bank-linked proposa
of a Value Added Ta
reduction in corporati
over the next three y
excise tax on motor
increase per year in

In addition, St Lu
pensions from local s
have to pay land and
Arrears Payment Pla
for another year, an
introduced for a dep
bottles which are
environmental proble

POSITIONS AT BORDELAIS

ited from suitably qualified persons for appointment to the fol
Bordelais Correctional Facility, Ministry of Home Affairs and

ADJUTANT I

include: Day to day maintenance of the books of accounts and
the Bordelais Correctional Facility; Ensuring that accurate records
counting records are kept in order to provide timely financial data;
ity's accounts with Treasury and makes necessary adjustments;
r-to-day operations of purchases, payments by controlling pay-
ers, contractors bills and utilities.

ge of \$25,852.73 - \$27,814.57 per annum (Grade 7)

KL

include: Maintain balanced accounts on all items of revenue
a monthly, quarterly and yearly basis; Processes salaries paid
other paid employees; Maintain the Facility's imperest and staff
system; Assist in the preparation of Estimates of Revenue and
Bordelais Correctional Facility.

ge of \$14,082.37 - \$16,184.32 per annum (Grade 3)
will be determined by the applicant's qualifications and experi-

MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN II, I

Duties and tasks include.

General supervision and maintenance of the Bordelais Correctiona
and maintenance of the mechanical, electrical and plumbing ;
building with a view to ensuring its continued operational effecti
recommendations for improvement where necessary; Ensurin
adequate supply of oil and diesel for the generators.

Salary ranges are as follows:

Maintenance Technician II - \$28,515.09 - \$30,476.88 per annum

Maintenance Technician I - \$22,209.60 - \$24,661.78 per annum

The point of entry will be determined by the officer's qualification

INDUSTRIES MANAGER

Duties and tasks include

Generating contract work for the laundry and workshops with appropriate prici
etc. Maintains contact with customers to ensure the smooth running of contract a
accounting procedures for each work area, including internal invoicing for
Engineering Shop for use in the Prison. Ensuring appropriate adherence to securit
to tools and equipment, end of shift building searches, materials control, prison
movement both receipt and delivery; Supervision of workforce and application of
measures where necessary; Prepares compatible work plans to ensure workflow
performance during daily activities.

Salary is in the range \$45 890 49 - \$47 782 15 per annum (Grac

votes during the on legislation to Privy Council as the of appeal.

so expect speedier ce, especially in ninal cases, as duces a series of i to increase the urt system.

ation” is coming to rights as St Lucia bserve the year er 20, which is the f Child, as the Year aim is to heighten of children’s issues c action.

ler Excellency Dame /, made these Tuesday, April 8, as r-long Throne Speech e House of Assembly ally open the Second n Parliament.

COM and Economy

ormal effect to the justice (CCJ) as the St t, will be brought to al early in the present J, to which most ly (CARICOM) states critical institution for ng of the soon-to-be- M Single Market and

earlette pointed out, bility as small states ve, and even thrive, odating international



Governor General Dame Pearlette Louisy delivering the throne speech .

Government plans to enact other laws supporting the CSME. They relate, among other things, to consumer protection, fair trading, aliens licensing, dumping and countervailing duties, and domestic financial services laws.

Establishment of a Criminal Division of the High Court, fundamental reform of the magistrates court system, and the use of Justices of the Peace (JPs) to resolve certain types of cases, are among proposals for improving the administration of justice.

Meantime, work is going on to modernize the island’s civil law. A new Civil Code is expected to be drafted next year.

With the establishment of a Criminal Division, the High Court will be in a position

to try criminal cases throughout the year, instead of three times a year at the Assizes as is currently the case.

“Naturally, this initiative will require proper planning and adjustments on the part of all parties in the system but my Government is convinced that the merits of this approach will be appreciated and a vigorous effort will be made by all to implement this valuable initiative,” Dame Pearlette said.

St Lucia was hoping to pursue judicial reform in conjunction with other members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) with which it shares a common court system. However, lack of action has prompted the Government to proceed on its own.

Accountable Magistracy

“Constitutional responsibility for the management of the affairs of the District Court rests with the Executive and in obedience to its duties under our Constitution, my Government will continue to redouble its efforts to provide the people of St Lucia with a Magistrates Court that can deliver justice freely, fairly and in an efficient manner,” Dame Pearlette said.

“My Government believes it is critical at this juncture that the District Courts Ordinance be reviewed with a view to its

Government believ assist in dispensing ju of cases. For examj uncontested traffi obscene language; etc.

Dame Pearlette anno relating to the Royal i will also be enacted parliamentary sessi continues its far-rea initiative.

Among the laws are i Bill, expected to be discussion before Parliament, and polic to discipline, governa

With regard to chil Pearlette noted tha expressed concern al treated in St Lucia however, that the ca children is “at once collective responsibil with Government pla

“A society can itself civilized decency and does not take to ensure pro of the most vl midst. Amor vulnerable are

Government is using experienced legal dr region to come up wi laws to enhance the p Laws related to adop will also be examinec

“A society cannot co or lay claim to decer does not take every proper protection of tl its midst. Among the our children,” the Gov

The current parliamee see the introductio enhance St Lucia’s c against international to prevent anyone fr



al banana farmers of calling it quits. of the past decade, ing uncertainty ustry's future, were toll.

happened which ope to the farming eral. The St. Lucia latest of a series of tiatives since 1997 s making a strategic ar investment to he industry.

itiative would be on jstry to survive in the t that was emerging. apt to an environment l depend increasingly the efficiency and farms, rather than il treatment extended

ir after the launch of ergency Recovery , farmers who were are making a steady ds. It's a remarkable wed confidence in the t single-handedly was modernization of St.

f our existence, the is climbed from about r to about 2,000 and time," says Hilary manager of the Cul- nana Emergency J).

"Farmers are beginning to expand and to rehabilitate their fields because there is a general confidence that they have regained in the industry," adds La Force, whose unit is responsible for implementing the EC\$11 million redevelopment programme, being financed jointly by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Government of St. Lucia.

The BERP incorporates recommendations of a Banana Industry Strategy Task Force, which conducted a detailed analysis of sector for the Government. The programme will run for three years in the first instance and has the following among its key objectives:

- Ensuring the long-term survival and international competitiveness of St. Lucia's banana industry, especially after 2008 when current European Union (EU) preferences come to an end;
- Restoring farmer confidence and improving their competencies in production, including through the use of the best available technology to achieve consistent fruit quality;
- Bringing back up production levels to satisfy current export market requirements; and
- Increasing revenue for farmers and the five existing banana companies.

While the present challenges are undoubtedly the toughest in the 40-year history of banana production in St. Lucia, it's certainly not the first time that the industry has found itself in a bind. A cursory glance through the industry's history clearly shows a recurring pattern of highs and lows down through the years.



Hilary LaForce: overseeing the transformation of bananas as head of BERU.

After peaking in the 1960s when there were some 14,000 active farmers, the 1970s saw the industry slip into a worrying decline which prompted serious discussion on the need to switch to alternative cash crops. However, just as the proposal was starting to gain momentum in the early 1980s, a saviour, happenstance, came to the rescue of the industry.

New Entrants in to Industry

The value of the British Pound – the currency in which the Windward Islands are paid for their banana exports – was soaring against other major international currencies. As a result, there was an unexpected cash windfall for farmers and the island as a whole, even though Windwards bananas at the time were not fetching the best prices on the British market.

Driven by the hope of making big money, scores of new entrants got into banana

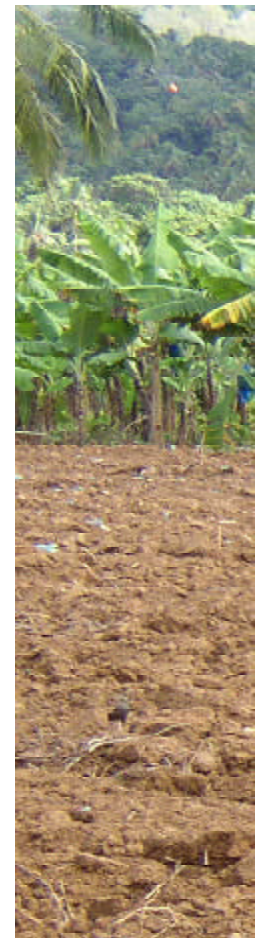
"With lower prices no have taken place in seriously consider be more efficient if we wis future," says LaForce Recovery Unit has co that regard."

LaForce adds: "Corr liberalization of the BERU is seeking to i need to become r independent and to d can be more produ influence the price of in terms of production

Banana Emerg

It's a theme Ministe Calixte George, also opening of the BEI launching of BERU m era in banana prod greater productivity a the sector," he saic globalisation and m production has to e emphasizes increasi and greater capture c

Latin American 'dollar Lucia's main compet



average of 20 tonnes
6 to 8 tonnes for St.
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er have – access to
labour for as low as

asing our yields from
r acre,” says LaForce.
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an achieve a bigger

-pronged strategy to
Having succeeded to
farmer confidence in
s pressing ahead with
gy, which ensures top
elds in the quest for

rmers have improved
hat there is optimum
agro-ecological zones
Mabouya, Canelles,
griculture experts say
e island for growing

; heart of the Cul-de-
will see a massive off-
r construction. A river
water from this source
banana farmlands so



Damming works: An off-field irrigation system in the making to give farmers a ready supply of water for their fields.

that farmers can make on-farm connections. “In effect, farmers will have access to irrigation which will contribute immensely to improving their production and productivity,” says LaForce.

The EU is contributing more than EC\$5 million towards this project, which involves the construction of similar systems in the other top banana producing regions. BERU is helping farmers to get hooked-up by



footing 50 per cent of the bill and providing a loan to cover the remaining 50 per cent.

To improve the quality of banana plants, BERU is bringing in tissue culture from Israel. Close to a quarter million plants of the Williams, Valery and new Jaffa varieties will be distributed among 100-odd farmers in the coming months at the heavily subsidized price of \$1 per plant.

Some farmers are already tilling their lands – compliments of BERU — in anticipation of the arrival of the tissue culture. Tissue culture is a superior planting material, which is developed under strictly controlled conditions to allow banana plants to reach maturity in a disease-free environment.

The Williams and Valery varieties have proven to do very well under local conditions. Jaffa, which is a newly developed variety, is being introduced on an experimental basis to see the results. Just 12,000 Jaffa plants will be brought in.

BERU’s first big assignment after being launched was helping with post-Tropical Storm Lilli rehabilitation of banana farms. The storm, which struck last September, wiped out about 25 per cent of the crop, which has had an adverse impact on this year’s exports.

BERU has paid out over EC\$400,000 to farmers – at the rate of \$100 per acre – to assist with clearing and replanting of fields which were damaged. By the middle of this year, these fields should again be producing fruit for the market.



An On-Farm Connection: 50 per cent of the cost is covered by the government, leaving farmers to cover the remaining 50 per cent.

an export market for
question we face is wh
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Despite the setbacks
St. Lucia has retained
leading Windwards
important point ofte
general debate abou
backbone of the su
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consequences for the

BERU believes St. Lucia should consider diversification to reduce the heavy dependence on banana exports, especially seeing that the market will open up in the future. BERU believes the effort should be made at home.

“We have well over 100 years of banana production here,” LaForce observes. “We eat one banana a day and an average of 2 000 boxes of bananas are exported from here. It is almost 70 tonnes of bananas per acre. It is a sizable market for the farmers.”

“There is potential to increase exports,” LaForce adds. “Just recently, the Ministry of Agriculture asked the International Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture to do a study of the regional banana market. The preliminary report indicates a potential in the region of Antigua, Trinidad. We are looking at the area and also the tourism market.”

BERU is planning a banana festival this year. It’s a major event for the island.

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Facility, launched
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ladies who want to
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St. Lucia's EU aid

iled explanation of the
arch 21, at a public
at the Greenfields Inn,

Dennerly. The first three beneficiaries – all
women from Laborie – signed their
agreements before a large crowd which
turned up to learn about the exciting
opportunity.

Here's how the facility works. First, you
have to get a business plan prepared,
detailing the relevant particulars about the
enterprise you wish to set up. When that
is done, you go to any participating
financial institution, put in an application
for a loan, get the business plan evaluated,
and wait for an answer.

"If the (institution) approves your business
plan, automatically you are eligible for a
grant up to maximum of \$25,000," says
Harel. "Let's take an example. You are a
fisherman. You want to purchase a new
engine, nets and things like that....

"If the institution approves your business
which is for \$40,000, you will have a grant
of \$20,000 and a loan of \$20,000. It means
you will have to pay interest and reimburse
only \$20,000," Harel explains.

The purpose of the grant is to pay for the
preparation of the business plan, fees and
other expenses related to the business
loan application. If any funds remain after
these expenses have been met, the
balance goes to pay for, let's say it's the
fisherman, fishing equipment and other
things he needs.

"We really believe this can be a good help
when you are starting," says Harel. "If the

loan is approved, it means you have a viable
business.

The Rural Credit Facility, seen as another
avenue to help displaced banana farmers
find a new source of income, came out of
discussions Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D.
Anthony held with the EU in St. Vincent
and the Grenadines last year.

A low-income housing facility and a plan to
support the development of the private sector
also form part of a total development
assistance package of over EC\$30 million

Medium size enterprises can also benefit
under the Rural Credit Facility being
managed by the St. Lucia Credit Union
League, credit unions, the National
Research and Development Foundation,
and the Bank of St. Lucia. Other banks have
expressed interest in participating and may
join the list soon.

The first three beneficiaries, who belong to
the Laborie Credit Union, are getting
assistance to launch a pre-school, a
bookstore, and an aquaculture (fresh water
fish and shrimp) project.

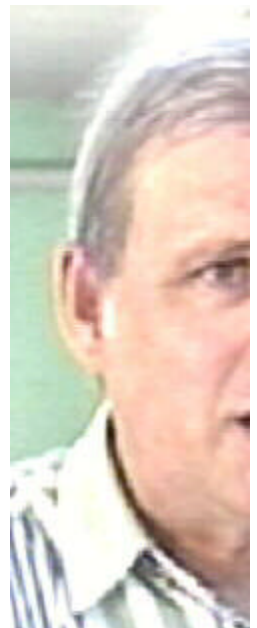
Parliamentary representative for Dennerly
South, Health Minister Damian Greaves, is
lauding the Office of the National Accounting
Officer – which falls under the Prime
Minister's Office — for going into
communities around the island to inform
residents about the opportunities.



**Member of Parliament
Hon. Damian Greaves**

"This is what govern-
says. "Not staying
expecting people to a
do certain things but (i
these, you need to co
the people...."

"It is a timely exercise,
is an opportunity f
unemployed, who a
begin some activity o
expand their self-em



growing list of areas leading the way in this time, it's in the consumer rights

for who ultimately decide in determining any business. Indeed, any company, which can provide solid consumer goods or services it can. Yet, ironically, the same is taken for granted.

Despite growing public concern about quality and safety issues on the market, the advent of globalisation, Government is bringing to Parliament a Consumer Protection Bill for passage.

Consumer Protection Commission will be established as a type of watchdog government agency to enforce the legal rights of consumers. The Commission, among other things, will carry out investigations on behalf of consumers who believe they were adversely affected through the sale of goods and provision of services.

Product Safety

The purpose of such investigations will be to determine whether the goods or services complained of, were sold or provided in contravention of the Consumer Protection Act.

The Director of Consumer Affairs is given power by the legislation to publish, with the approval of the St. Lucia Bureau of Standards, warning notices in newspapers relating to product safety, product

"Consumers are the largest economic group anywhere in the world, and they make an important contribution to social and economic development," Pierre points out. "Business, trade and commerce cannot be successful if consumers are not in a position to utilize the goods and services produced."

"The views, opinions, concerns and rights of consumers must be considered at all levels of economic and commercial activity and at trade negotiations," he adds.

The present heightened level of consumer awareness in St. Lucia is largely the result of efforts by Government, led by the Consumer Affairs Department, to sensitize the public about their rights in this unfolding era of globalisation and trade liberalization.

A spin-off of these efforts has been the establishment, about a year ago, of the

**Hon. Philip
Minister of Commerce**

With the establishment of the East Caribbean Community Authority (ECTEL), the regulator is "to superintend this sector in a transparent manner so as to allow for all and particularly

The theme for this year's World Consumer Rights Day is "Corporate Control of GM Link". The choice of this international debate reflects the modified (GM) food safety for human consumption concerns about a pesticide and other serious dis



working to ensure quality and safety

Telecommunications services: consumers are starting to reap benefits

before Cabinet for a decision on a draft prepared for the Caribbean Community, member states which have adopted harmonized standards, in the context of the Caribbean single market.

Bill," explains Minister of Commerce, Philip J. Pierre, "is to provide a notion and protection of consumers' rights in relation to the quality and safety of the services to ensure the health and safety of the consumer."

have taken a greater

standards, product information, and the recall of goods.

Another key provision of the Consumer Protection Bill is the imposition of obligations on the vendors of goods and the providers of services in St. Lucia.

"For example, a vendor or provider is under an obligation in reasonable circumstances to provide information on the origin, price, care and other terms of goods being sold," Pierre explains.

"The vendor or provider is also under an obligation to provide receipts and warranties," he adds. "The Bill also prohibits a vendor or provider from

National Consumer Association, which has been waging a highly vocal and visible campaign for a better deal for consumers. The Consumer Affairs Department facilitated the establishment of this independent body.

Telecommunications Services

The determined crusade by OECS countries, spearheaded by Senator Calixte George, for telecommunications liberalization to secure a better deal for consumers, also did a lot to raise awareness here and the rest of the sub-region about consumer rights and issues.

Consumers, in fact, are today reaping the

"Recently, the market has demonstrated to the detriment of consumers that certain practices could affect the general public and the general public," Pierre says. "Safety precautions observed through processing and distribution of consumer confidence

As the debate on genetic engineering continues, the position of St. Lucia, as spelled out by the Minister of Consumer Affairs, should exercise caution in the products that are available

Meantime, the St. Lucia Bureau of Standards is stepping up the safety of food and

consultants to come up with a suitable
ty, which is to be constructed on a site off
ghway, not far away from the Victoria

it is not going to be constructed but it is well
ilfred Pierre, National Accounting Officer for
) development assistance.

the Government has to go and look for funds
ospital. We have EC\$67 million that is available
l, state-of-the-art hospital can be built," Pierre

roject is coming from the EU development
ne to the island.

led an update on the project – the centrepiece
plan for St Lucia's health care sector — as he
development initiatives that stand to bring great

onstructing a new psychiatric hospital in Marigot
ope, which has outlived its usefulness.

opening of the new general hospital, Pierre
ucians are currently attending medical school
ork as doctors at the facility on their return

*The Victoria Hospital has continued to serve
as the major health care institution in St. Lucia*

RIGHTS

sumers to continue
educate themselves
d privileges in all
re financial sector
ween several recent
arious charges and

certain local banks,
our Prime Minister,
interest rates to
mortgage loans.
of bank charges is
re concern, and we
f the inquiry to be
Eastern Caribbean
minister says.

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tering into contracts
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ask questions and
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THANK YOU!



decision by the French
Saint Lucians to visit
visas. Initially Ambass
role in facilitating that i
his effort and his supp
able to travel to Mar
initially, on an experim
now we have to make
sound and proper foot
finalising certain adju

Mr. Vidal was also inst
French Embassy to a
Lucia Police Force
equipment. Dr. Anthon
also contributed
infrastructural develop

"One of the projects th
the Road Rehabilita
enhance our eco-touris
year we announce
Francaise de Deve
available a very gener
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grateful but what is r
that that loan is going
Saint Lucians partici
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Ambassador Henry Vic
to develop there mus