

## NATIONWIDE

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## VIEUX - FORT UPGRADE The Southern Renaissance

It's approaching half-past eleven on a damp, overcast Wednesday morning in Vieux Fort. The soggy earth tells the story of overnight rain. And a mass of thick dark cloud in the distance suggests more is on the way.

A familiar vehicle pulls up alongside the fencing of the newly-finished multi-purpose courts next to the Philip Marcellin Grounds. It's Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny Anthony, making the rounds through his Vieux Fort South constituency.

As long as he's on island and doesn't have pressing government business to attend to, Dr. Anthony unfailingly makes it to Vieux Fort every Wednesday. Sometimes, he spends the day at his Martin Luther King Street office addressing the myriad concerns of Vieux Fortians. On other occasions, like today, he's on the road – randomly stopping to chat with passers-by, dropping into homes, checking the progress of various projects.

### Hands-On District Representative

"I like to get involved in the work of my constituency," Dr. Anthony tells *Nationwide* which is accompanying him on the tour today. "Vieux Fortians have felt so isolated from events in the past that they welcome a very direct, hands-on approach to their representation."

The day's agenda is packed, meaning Dr Anthony will be on the road until late evening. He plans a stop, among other places, at the site of the new Vieux Fort station being

constructed opposite the Gablewoods South Shopping Mall. There are also visits to Bacadere, Derriere Morne, and La Ressource whose residents are getting brand new roads, proper drainage, and an opportunity to buy the land on which they live under the Labour government's landmark PROUD initiative.

### From Shanty Town to Bruce Ville

Meantime, Bruce Ville – formerly Shanty Town – is our next stop. Before moving off, Dr. Anthony takes a stroll on the new main road under construction between the Philip Marcellin Grounds, on one side, and the Vieux Fort Primary School, on the other. He pays particular attention to the drainage system under construction.

"I have a responsibility to ensure that the quality of work meets community satisfaction," he says. "I have a penchant for excellence, for neat work... so whether it's a drain, a culvert, whatever, my approach is that it must be properly done."

Not surprisingly, dissatisfaction with some aspects of Bruce Ville's modern drainage system is what's taking Dr. Anthony there today. Chief Engineer in the Ministry of Communications and Works, Dalton Cenac, engineer for the southern region, Len Leon, and the contractor are awaiting his arrival.

First, Dr. Anthony gets a progress report on the new asphalt-paved road running through the centre of Bruce Ville and planned

(see page 4)



Prime Minister and Parliamentary Representative for Vieux-Fort South Dr. Kenny D. Anthony "walking the constituency"



The Vieux Fort multi-purpose courts, built at a cost of almost one million dollars.

"Apart from providing basic amenities, there are several mega-projects: the fisheries complex, the national stadium, the new police station, the free zone complex, the new technical wing at the Vieux Fort Primary School, the new Vieux Fort-Soufriere highway currently under construction". Dr. Kenny D. Anthony

## EDITORIAL

### HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT

The election of Julian Robert Hunte, Minister for External Relations, International Trade and Civil Aviation, as president of the forthcoming 58<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly, is an historic achievement for Saint Lucia and all small nation states.

With his election on June 6<sup>th</sup>, Saint Lucia becomes the smallest ever nation state to preside over the deliberations of this leading global forum which exerts considerable influence on international public opinion. It is a clear reaffirmation of the fundamental UN principle of the equality of all member states, regardless of size.

At a time when the UN's agenda seems dominated by security issues related mainly to international terrorism, Senator Hunte's presidency holds out the promise of returning development issues, especially as they relate to developing countries, back to the front burner. His promise to focus on achieving "full implementation" of various commitments given at UN conferences over the past decade is certainly welcome.

Developing countries stand to benefit particularly from these commitments – financial and otherwise – which remain largely unfulfilled a decade after such high profile events as the 1992 Rio summit on sustainable development and the 1994 UN Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States in Barbados.

Senator Hunte's presidency will do much to raise Saint Lucia's visibility on the world stage during his one-year term. Frequent mention will be made of Saint Lucia whenever reference is made to the chair in news dispatches from the General Assembly. Some media may even choose to run special features on the island home of the General Assembly president.

St Lucia therefore stands to gain a lot of free publicity worldwide which is good news for the tourism industry and Government's attempts to attract more investment to boost the economy. The more positive exposure Saint Lucia can receive in the global marketplace, the better.



"Take ②" - A fifteen minute news review of the week.  
Every Friday at 6.15 p.m. on NTN, Cablevision Channel 2.

### Government Notebook

A fresh news package daily on all local radio stations





# MANAGING DISASTERS

## A call from the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO)

### DEALING WITH TREES

#### It's so simple when you know.

Should a tree branch be hanging over your property you are entitled to trim the branches even if the trunk of the tree is on your neighbour's property.

If the trimming of the tree requires that you must be on your neighbour's property, then you must have the permission of your neighbour to cut the tree.

Should your neighbour refuse to cooperate to allow the trimming of the tree? You may refer your case to the Ministry of Health under the Public Health (Nuisances) Regulations of 1978 or the St. Lucia Criminal Code S. 452.

Should a tree be threatening a line, you may call LUCELEC or Cable and Wireless to enlist their assistance.

Extract from Criminal Code  
OFFENCES AFFECTING PUBLIC COMFORT, CONVENIENCE, HEALTH, SAFETY AND RIGHT OF WAY, AND USE OF PUBLIC PLACES, WATER AND WORKS

Abatement of Nuisances due to Animals, Plants, or other things

452 (2) If any plant overhangs any premises, the owner of such premises, by notice in writing to the owner of the

premises on which such plant is, may require him to cut down such plant, or part thereof.

453 (1) If any notice under the preceding section is not complied with, within five (5) days after it has been given, the person aggrieved may lodge a complaint before the magistrate, who shall investigate the said complaint and make such order thereon as he shall see fit.

(2) Every person named in such order, who fails to obey the same within a time to be named therein, for every week of his disobedience thereof, is guilty of an offence, and liable summarily to a penalty of two hundred and fifty dollars.  
SAINT LUCIA

Extract from the  
PUBLIC HEALTH (NUISANCES) REGULATIONS STATUTORY RULE AND ORDERS, 1978, NO. 10

S. 3. Nuisances. For the purpose of these regulations, the following shall be nuisances:

(viii) any tree or other erection which interferes with the entrance of sunlight into or with free ventilation of any neighboring premises or building which is dangerous to public health and safety;

S. 4. Abatement.  
(1) The Medical Officer (Health) or Public Health Inspector on becoming aware of a

nuisance shall serve on the person committing or permitting same, or upon the owner or occupier of the premises or in respect of which the nuisance exists or is liable to occur, a notice to abate or prevent the same within a specified time and, in addition, to do such things as may be necessary for that purpose.

(2) If for any reason the notice in paragraph (1) of this section be not complied with and in addition to any proceedings which may be instituted against the person liable to conviction, the Medical Officer (Health) or Public Health Inspector shall report the matter to the Public Health Board. The Board shall cause the nuisance to be abated or prevented and may for this purpose authorise any person to enter the premises and do such things as may be necessary.

5. Expenses in connection with abatement.  
All expenses incurred by the Medical Officer (Health) in abating or preventing a nuisance may be recovered by the Board from the person by whose act the nuisance was caused or from the owner or occupier of the premises in which the nuisance existed.

For assistance with cutting branches entangled within power/cable lines call LUCELEC at 452-2165 or Cable and Wireless at 211



NEMO Director - Ms. Dawn French

The public is hereby notified of the following options in law regarding trees. Should a tree branch be hanging over your property you are entitled to trim the branches even if the trunk of the tree is on your neighbour's property.

If the trimming of the tree requires that you must be on your neighbour's property, then you must have the permission of your neighbour to cut the tree. Should your neighbour refuse to cooperate to allow the trimming of the tree? You may refer your case to the Ministry of Health under the Public Health (Nuisances) Regulations of 1978 or the St. Lucia Criminal Code S. 452.

# Double Celebration at Beausejour

## West Indies 75<sup>th</sup> Test Anniversary

June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2003, which falls in the middle of the test match between Sri Lanka and the West Indies, will mark 75 years — to the day — since the very first West Indies team participated in its very first test match. That was way back in 1928.

It was a match featuring the West Indies vs England. Held at Lords, it was played over three days – January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. The West Indies lost the match, but it marked the beginning of the careers of future stars such as George Headley and Learie Constantine.

The West Indies Cricket Board plans to converge on St. Lucia with a series of commemorative activities to mark the historic anniversary. These activities – which will take place under the theme “**Uniting the Region; Exciting the World**” — are expected to include presentation of plaques of appreciation to surviving relatives of team members.

West Indies cricket historian, Dr Hilary Beckles, Pro Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies and Principal of the Cave Hill campus of the UWI, who has written a book to mark the occasion, is also expected to be here to participate in the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities. The book by Dr Beckles, which is entitled “**A Nation Imagined**”, will be launched on June 28th in Jamaica, during the upcoming Caricom Summit. The West Indies Board also plans to host a photographic exhibition during the upcoming Kingston Caricom Summit, highlighting various aspects of West Indies Test history.



Beausejour Cricket Ground - making a bid for cricket world cup 2007.



# SAINT LUCIA MAKES HISTORY

## Smallest state ever to preside over General Assembly

It's official! Saint Lucia will definitely be in the chair when the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly convenes on Tuesday, September 16, at UN Headquarters in New York.

In so doing, this island is making history as the smallest nation state to date to preside over the deliberations of this leading international forum.

At a plenary session of the 57<sup>th</sup> General Assembly held on June 6, Minister for External Affairs, International Trade, and Civil Aviation, Senator Julian R. Hunte, was elected to preside over the 58<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

### A Difficult Task

Senator Hunte, who was nominated by the Government of Saint Lucia and endorsed by the Latin American and Caribbean Group, becomes the second CARICOM national to serve as President of the General Assembly.

Guyana's current Foreign Minister, Rudy Insanally, held the post in 1993 when he was UN Ambassador.

In his acceptance speech, Hunte noted he was assuming the General Assembly presidency at a "most difficult period". He renewed confidence in the UN as a viable mechanism for resolving global problems through multilateral cooperation but cited a need for some changes to be made.

### New challenges for the UN

"While the United Nations remains vital, there is no doubt that it requires some reform," he said. "No institution, created in conditions that existed more than half a century ago, can claim to remain relevant in all its aspects unless it keeps pace with a rapidly changing world."

Hunte added: "We must, therefore, look to the future in determining the role the United Nations will play in the service to humanity – a role that respects the rule of law; that upholds the principles of democracy; that reinforces machinery for curbing violations of human rights; that promotes gender equality; that acts against tyranny, no less than it acts against aggression; and that offers opportunities for the poor to rise out of poverty, even as it ensures economic and social advancement for all peoples."

### Fulfilling the UN mandates

During his year-long tenure, Hunte's focus will be on "the full implementation of the outcomes of more than a decade of United Nations Summits and Conferences and the United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals".



*External Affairs Minister, Senator Julian R. Hunte and Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony share thoughts on the challenges of the new leadership role for Saint Lucia at the United Nations.*

These meetings – for example, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States held in Barbados in 1994 – all produced commitments, financial and otherwise, that are of particular benefit to developing countries in their quest for development.

"..Unless we address critical and pressing issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, the environment and the vulnerability of small states with deeds, not just words, global stability will be a desired but ever elusive ideal, and safety and security will remain imperiled," Hunte warned.

The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ of the United Nations. It is composed of representatives of all Member States, each of which has one vote.

Decisions on important questions, such as those on peace and security, admission

of new Members and budgetary matters, require a two-thirds majority. Decisions on other questions are reached by a simple majority. These decisions may be adopted without a vote, or with a vote, which may be recorded, non-recorded or by roll-call.

While the decisions of the Assembly have no legally binding force for Governments, they carry the weight of world opinion on major international issues, as well as the moral authority of the world community.

The work of the United Nations year-round derives largely from the decisions of the General Assembly—that is to say, the will of the majority of the Members as expressed in resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

That work is carried out:

- by committees and other bodies established by the Assembly to study and report on specific

issues, such as disarmament, outer space, peace-keeping, decolonization and human rights;

- in international conferences called for by the Assembly; and
- by the Secretariat of the United Nations—the Secretary-General and his staff of international civil servants.

Following his election, Hunte received expressions of support from representatives of regional groups of states.

The following states were elected to vice-presidencies of the 58<sup>th</sup> General Assembly: Cape Verde, China, Equatorial Guinea, France, Haiti, Honduras, Iran, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Morocco, Myanmar, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Senegal, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Kingdom, United States, and Yemen.



# VIEUX-FORT UPG

from page 1

improvements. Afterwards, his attention shifts to the extensive drainage system. Stopping at various points, he points out largely minor construction flaws and gets an assurance that corrective work will be done.

Otherwise, the drainage system is working efficiently, ridding the community of waste water as it's supposed to do. It's a striking contrast with what existed before. Bruce Ville was well-known for a large pool of stagnant water which blanketed the community with an awful stench. The pool was cluttered with debris, was a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and posed a major health hazard.

### The Mangue, Bacadere

Bruce Ville isn't the only Vieux Fort inner community with such an ignoble past. Several others - The Mangue, Bacadere, to name a few - have similar stories to tell. From his first day on the job, bringing relief to these marginalized communities and improving their quality of life has been Dr. Anthony's top priority.

"I am really very proud about the transformation we have seen in the last six years," he says. "When I came here in 1997, I was moved by the totally unsanitary conditions and the sheer poverty that existed not just in Bruce Ville but several other places."

### Water, Electricity, Street Lights.

"People felt cheated. They lacked basic facilities. Whenever rain fell, for example, some people had to struggle through mud to get to and from their homes. I felt my first responsibility in the circumstances was the general enhancement of these communities, hence the massive programme of footpaths, drains, roads, water, electricity, street lights and so on."

Government has pumped millions of dollars into giving Vieux Fort a major facelift in the last six years. Apart from providing basic amenities, there are several mega-projects: the fisheries complex, the national stadium,



**As parliamentary representative, Dr. Kenny Anthony has always paid attention to the welfare and education of children and young people in Vieux-Fort and its environs.**

the new police station, the free zone complex, the new technical wing at the Vieux Fort Primary School, the new Vieux Fort-Soufriere highway currently under construction.

Making use of generous tax incentives, including the Special Development Areas Act, the private sector too has chipped in. Just look at the transformation of the area near the roundabout. Quite a few large commercial buildings have gone up there in recent years, with businessman, Brian Daher, playing a pioneering role.

Clarke Street is Dr. Anthony's next stop. He's dropping in on St Lucia's newest centenarian, Leon "Brother Seibert" Joseph. Frail, confined to bed, but as alert as ever, the gentle old man is delighted to receive the visit. Dr

Anthony congratulates him on reaching 100 years old and hands over a small gift to a family member. The two reminisce for a while.

After about 20 minutes, it's on to Bacadere. Dr Anthony is visiting a household of six whose home was burnt down the previous week. He also wants to check the state of a nearby open drain which evokes memories of old Shanty Town. Bacadere is next in line to receive a modern drainage system.

Heading back to his vehicle, Dr. Anthony runs into Community Development Officer, Augustus Cadette. He too is going to check on the fire victims. "How is everything? How's your family?" Dr. Anthony asks. "OK!" he replies.

### Safety of residents.

Cadette reports a successful meeting involving the National Crime Commission and the community. From all indications, he says, it appears there has been a lull in crime inside the town recently. He also mentions a consultation on the status of youth and sports in Vieux Fort that he's planning for June 24.

"Good! Good!" remarks Dr. Anthony. "Keep me posted!"

An excavator is busy clearing the site of the new fire station when Dr. Anthony arrives. He greets everyone, looks around briefly, and is soon off along the St Jude's Highway. On the right is Cedar Heights and on the left is Hewanorra Orchard, a housing development completed three years ago by the former Housing & Urban Development Corporation (HUDC), now the National Housing Corporation (NHC).

### Housing

"There has been an extraordinary boom in housing in Vieux Fort in the last 5 to 6 years," Dr. Anthony points out. "One only has to go to Cedar Heights to understand what I am talking about. And there's Hewanorra Orchard as well."

Government's decision to repave the roads in the original Black Bay development has prompted some owners of vacant lots to start building within the past year. There's going to be even more building activity in Black Bay in the months ahead as the NHC embarks on its latest housing project.

"What all of this means is that the character of Vieux Fort is changing dramatically," Dr. Anthony explains. "There has been a spatial expansion of the town, so much so that already you can distinguish between the old Vieux Fort and a new Vieux Fort."

A brief downpour greets Dr. Anthony on his arrival in La Ressource around 3 p.m., following a 40-minute break for lunch. Some good old cow heel soup! There are signs of construction activity everywhere — roads, kerbs, and drains.

"Are the drains working?" Dr. Anthony, in the company of engineer Len Leon, asks a female resident. "Yes!" she replies. Clearly satisfied with what he has seen after moving around and chatting with residents, Dr Anthony leaves for his final stop. Derriere Morne!

***"I am really very proud about the transformation we have seen in the last six years. When I came here in 1997, I was moved by the totally unsanitary conditions and the sheer poverty that existed not just in Bruce Ville but several other places."***



**A cheerful word from the PM brings a breeze of relief to the residents of Derriere Morne.**

Derriere Morne mirrors the longstanding struggle of landless St Lucians to own a piece of land. In fact, it's the plight of residents, many of whom have been living here for as long as 60 years without tenure, that spawned the PROUD initiative.

Ezekiel Charles and his family have been residents for 52 years. He's excited about the chance PROUD — The Programme for the Regulation of Unplanned Developments — is giving him to finally own the piece of land. "It is a good opportunity and I will not let it go," he says matter-of-factly.

### PROUD Initiatives

Close to 500 Vieux Fortian families, including Bruce Ville residents who were recently added, are expected to become landowners under the PROUD initiative. The land is going at very reasonable, below market prices.

"Things are happening. A lot of things are happening," says Ignatius Harrow, liming with a group of men on the steps of a rum shop. "You can see the change."



**Road improvement in the community of Bacadere.**



# GRADE *The Southern Renaissance*

*...proud about the  
...re seen in the last six  
...re in 1997, I was moved  
...ry conditions and the  
...sted not just in Bruce  
...places.”*

Dr. Kenny D. Anthony



*...ad smile from centenarian Leon Joseph.*

As was evident earlier in Bruce Ville and again here in Derriere Morne, children gravitate spontaneously towards Dr. Anthony. As he engages a group of young men about the performance of their football team, an excited little boy runs into the street, beckoning him to come over.

By the time he does so, a little girl is there too. Dr. Anthony reaches down, they chit-chat and break into laughter. He then walks through a gate to say “hello” to an adult inside – a relative of the children.

Put aside the roads, sports facilities, drains, and the other magnificent pieces of infrastructure, what’s Dr. Anthony’s ultimate goal for Vieux Fort during his tenure as parliamentary representative? He sighs, becomes introspective for a moment.

“I want to see a town that has expanded services and is the centre of commercial activity in the south,” he responds. “In other words, what Castries is to the north, I would like to see Vieux Fort playing that role in the south.”

“The second key dimension for me concerns the Vieux Fortian. I want the people of Vieux Fort to have confidence in themselves, to feel some pride and dignity for their community, to be able to say ‘I am a Vieux Fortian and I am proud of it’.

**“I am Optimistic”**

“Above all else,” he adds, “I want to see a far greater majority of Vieux Fortians employed. It isn’t easy attracting investment but Government is trying very hard to persuade more investors to set up down here, especially in the tourism sector.

“I am optimistic. We as a government have laid the basis for the modernization of Vieux Fort. It’s only a matter of time now before private investors see the wisdom of setting up in Vieux Fort.”

By now, it’s approaching 5.30 p.m. As the setting sun descends behind the mountains in the distance, another productive constituency day in Vieux Fort South is also ending. Soon, Dr. Anthony will begin the long journey back to Castries.



*Hewanorra Orchard: New initiative in housing in the south.*



*Soon-to-be-opened southern division headquarters for the Police.*



*The Vieux-Fort Free Zone: One of the many recent infrastructural projects in the south of St. Lucia.*



# A DIFFERENCE IN QUALITY

## The St. Lucia Bureau of Standards reaches out to the tourism and manufacturing sectors

It's about inspiring confidence, giving St. Lucian consumers an assurance that goods and services they buy, whether local or imported, are of internationally acceptable quality, are safe to use, and that quantity matches price. Value for money, in other words!

In a unique win-win situation, standards also offer some fundamental benefits to St Lucian producers of goods and services. Whether it's in agriculture, manufacturing or tourism, certified standards do help to build consumer confidence which can lead to more business and, of course, more profits.

A decade ago, standardization didn't matter to most St. Lucians. Today, however, there is growing awareness of the benefits both at the level of the consumer and producer. And it's due almost single-handedly to the tireless work of the St. Lucia Bureau of Standards (SLBS).

"With the realization of what globalization is doing to our economy in terms of the competitiveness of our agriculture and manufacturing industries in particular, appreciation of standardization has increased," says SLBS director, Dr. Alison Plummer.

**The SLBS is also responsible for overseeing St Lucia's transition from the old imperial (pounds and inches) to the modern metric (litres and kilos) system of measurement**



Standards will also apply to produce from the agricultural sector.

### WTO Standardisation

"When we were established in the early 90s, one may have asked about a standard where nobody would know it," she adds. "Now, there's a realization that with all the implications of the WTO agreements, standardization is the key."

The WTO – World Trade Organization – is an eight-year-old international organisation promoting the creation of a single global market through the process of trade liberalization. The basis of this emerging global market is the application of a common set of rules by all countries which are WTO signatories, including St Lucia.

So that a St Lucian producer of fruit jams and jellies will be subject to the same basic set of rules as a competitor, say, in China or Thailand. And the same applies to the St Lucian banana farmer vis-à-vis his Latin



**Dr. Alison Plummer**  
Director - St. Lucia Bureau of Standards.

American competitor. Common global standards – for instance, CODEX in the case of food products — represent one example of these rules.

"The WTO agreements call for a total dismantling of protectionist barriers, so right now what countries are using are qualitative

products entering St Lucia comply with compulsory internationally accepted standards.

"Within the first six months, we have been working with importers with products that are identified as not meeting our standards, particularly relating to labelling which we are insisting must be in English," Dr. Plummer says.

"From July 1st, we will be applying all the measures in terms of penalties under the relevant act and we will also be enforcing our market surveillance where we will be moving items off the shelves, particularly as it relates to labelling standards," she adds.

### Compulsory Standards

Established in 1991 under the Standards Act, No.14 of 1990, the SLBS is responsible by law for the development, promotion and implementation of standards relating to goods, services and processes. So far, it has developed some 60 standards, of which 18 are compulsory.

The compulsory standards, to mention a few, relate to the manufacture of rum, ketchup, pasta products, bottled water, as well as the labelling of brewery products, and the labelling of retail packages of pesticides and other toxic materials.

The SLBS is also responsible for overseeing St Lucia's transition from the old imperial (pounds and inches) to the modern metric (litres and kilos) system of measurement. It's responsible too for implementing the Metrology Act, No. 17 of 2000, which gives it the authority to regulate all weights and measures activity on the island.

### Gasolene Pumps

So that when you go shopping for a pound of sugar, or a gallon of gasoline, the SLBS is looking out for your interest by ensuring you get exactly what you pay for. It does so by calibrating and verifying measuring devices, running checks on gas station pumps to see that they're delivering accurate amounts, and

checking the measurement systems used by utility companies to see that they conform to internationally acceptable standards.

"The demands on our services are growing," Dr. Plummer says.

### Increasing Demands

So much so that the SLBS is looking to increase its 14-member staff and to relocate to a bigger office with the aim of bringing all of its operations under one roof. Right now, the main office occupies a section of the Ministry of Commerce, on the fourth floor of the Heraldine Rock Building on the Waterfront. The Metrology unit is on Jeremie Street.

Accepting they have little choice but to compete in the emerging global market and also aware that they're going to be exposed to competition in the domestic market as trade barriers come down, several St Lucian producers are moving to put their house in order.

### WTO Code of Good Practice

The furniture, construction and the ancillary tourism sectors, for example, have sought the SLBS's assistance in developing standards for their respective industries. Even honey producers, for the most part cottage industries, have expressed interest in standardization.

"We develop standards in accordance with the WTO's Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards," Dr. Plummer explains. "It is done through a consultative process. We coordinate the technical committee and we involve the applicants and other stakeholders in the process."

A national standard is normally reviewed and updated every five years in an effort to reflect the latest developments in safety and technology, as well as current realities in the marketplace and consumer demands.

cont'd on page 7



**The SLBS ensures that measuring instruments operate according to international standards.**

### Health and Safety

It's a situation which exposes developing countries in particular, especially those with inadequate resources, to the likelihood of their markets being swamped with cheap, inferior goods. These products can pose a threat not only to the health and safety of consumers but also the very survival of domestic industries through unfair competition.

The SLBS, which has built up capacity in recent years, is going all out to ensure this does not happen here. At the beginning of this year, for example, it introduced an import monitoring programme to ensure that all



# A DIFFERENCE IN QUALITY

from page 6

The SLBS offers other services aimed at helping producers to adjust to the reality of the new marketplace and to compete with confidence. Product certification, launched last year, is one such service. It allows eligible producers to use the SLBS mark of approval on their product. The mark tells consumer that the product is manufactured using a quality system that makes it reproducible.

### Certifying Cottage Industries.

Another service is the issue of certificates of pre-sale, certifying that cottage industry-type operations are producing under acceptable hygienic standards. This certificate is required by many local retailers, including supermarkets, and also for export within the region to Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago.

The SLBS can also assist local companies seeking to implement international quality systems like HACCP – Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point – which applies to food safety, as Baron Foods has done, as well as the ISO 9000 quality management system.

Right now, Sainsburys and other leading UK supermarket chains which buy Windward Islands bananas are requiring that the fruit must be grown using the Good Agricultural Practices or GAPs standard. It's a requirement of the new marketplace which local banana farmers must meet if they wish to stay in the business.

GAPs require, among other things, that farms must have running potable water for washing the fruit. It also establishes guidelines for fruit handling, pesticide use, record keeping, etc. The SLBS is currently building capacity to offer GAPs certification for the banana industry which has already taken some severe body blows from trade liberalization.

“Outside of that, we are working on a stepping-stone programme to help farmers implement the GAPs standards,” Dr. Plummer says.

The SLBS is affiliated to several international standards bodies. Among them, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), the British Standards Institute (BSI), and COPA, Spanish acronym for the Pan American Standards Organization.

### Ensuring Competitiveness

Through these international connections, the SLBS is well-placed to source information on standards, technical regulations, and conformity assessment procedures which obtain globally.

It's a vital service to ensure that the local private sector, exporters, government agencies and the general public are kept abreast with these trends and developments, which can affect their competitiveness.

European Union (EU) financing channelled through the Office for Private Sector Relations (OPSR) and an increased subvention from Government have played a big role in helping the SLBS to build capacity to meet the present challenges.

Established in 1991 under the Standards Act, No.14 of 1990, the St. Lucia Bureau of Standards (SLBS), is responsible by law for the development, promotion and implementation of standards relating to goods, services and processes. So far, it has developed some 60 standards, of which 18 are compulsory.



# FOOD PLANNING FOR A DISASTER

*It's so simple when you know what to do.*

**Most people take an adequate food supply for granted. A disaster or an emergency however can disrupt the food supply at any time. The emergency may be widespread or localised. It may be as large as an earthquake or as small as a blocked road or a power or water main failure.**

**Whatever the emergency, the same stock of food will meet your family's needs and it can consist of preferred, familiar foods you use in daily meals.**

There is no need to rush out and buy large quantities of foods. The canned foods, dry mixes, and other staples on the cupboard shelves in most homes are well suited to emergency food plans.

Familiar foods are important! They can lift morale and give a feeling of security in time of stress.

Prepare an emergency food supply that will last two weeks, even though you probably won't be on your own that long. A two week supply of water and foods can relieve a great deal of inconvenience and uncertainty during the immediate post disaster period and until orderly services and systems are restored.

You may already have a two week supply of food on hand in the cupboard. Maintaining it is a simple matter of use and replacement.

As far as safety is concerned, commercially canned foods will keep almost indefinitely – as long as the cans are not leaking or bulging. Your emergency food supply however should be of the highest quality possible (good colour, flavour and appearance).

**REMEMBER:** It is best if you rotate your food supply once or twice a year.

If the Electricity is off...

- First: Use perishable food and foods from the refrigerator.
- Second: Use foods from the freezer (keep a list of freezer contents on the outside, so you can cut down on opening the door.) Foods in a well-filled, well insulated freezer do not begin to spoil until several days after the power goes off. Usually there will still be ice crystals in the center of the foods (meaning they are safe to eat.) for at least three (3) days after a power failure.
- Third: Begin to use non perishable foods and staples.

**For more information contact:**  
**The Nutrition Department of the Ministry of Health at 452-2859 ext 115 or your local nutritionist through your Health Center.**

# NOTICE

## The Inland Revenue Department

would like to inform all Property Owners (Commercial and Residential) within the City of Castries that payment of Property Taxes can be made at the Castries City Council, between the hours of 8:00 am to 3:00 p.m, Monday to Friday.

Property Owners in arrears are advised to settle their accounts on or before June 30, 2003.

For more information, please contact:-

Inland Revenue Department at  
Telephone number 468-4700  
Or  
Castries City Council at  
Telephone number 452-2121/2

*Comptroller of Inland Revenue*



# GETTING AHEAD IN EDUCATION

## Hundreds of poor children will benefit from early childhood stimulation and development programmes

**As the Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP) administration edges closer towards achieving a key education objective – secondary education for all by 2006 - it's simultaneously working on building capacity for pre and primary schools to develop a better student for entry into the secondary system.**

Partnering in some instances with local and overseas-based agencies, the Ministry of Education is pursuing several initiatives and innovations aimed at expanding learning opportunities for pre-schoolers, raising pre-school education standards, underscoring the importance of reading as a learning tool, and improving the physical conditions of primary schools.

complemented by a parent education programme that will be available to parents island-wide through the National Enrichment and Learning Programme.”

Over the last year, the Ministry of Education consolidated its Early Childhood Education Development Unit. It also collaborated with the largely private operators of pre-schools to improve the overall quality of education through teacher training and the definition of new standards.

At the primary level, a big drive is going to be on over the next five years to get children to develop the habit of reading. This multi-million dollar ‘Reading Centres of Excellence’ initiative falls under a regional

and Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF), the Ministry has carried out repairs at several schools in recent years.

The schools include Piaye Combined, Laborie Girls Primary, La Croix Maingot Combined, Roseau Combined, Methodist Infant, Monchy Combined, Vieux Fort Primary, Morne Dudon Combined, RC Boys Infant, RC Boys Primary, Ave Maria Girls Infant, Balata Combined, Fond St Jacques Primary, Anglican Primary, Camille Henry Memorial Primary, Micoud Primary, Marchand Combined, Saltibus Combined, and Rock Hall Senior Primary.

### Technical Education

The investments in these repairs and renovations run into millions of dollars.

Last year saw the opening of the new \$3.2 million Technical Vocational wing at the Vieux Fort Primary School. Michel says this facility has had a major impact on the primary education sector “by absorbing and creating new opportunities for post Common Entrance students in the south of the island.”

He adds: “This project has brought together all the post Common Entrance students in the Vieux Fort area in a single institution offering them a special curriculum designed to provide them with technical and vocational competencies which would assist them either in gaining employment or in accessing further educational opportunities.”

But perhaps the most exciting primary education project is the construction of the new Union school which will raise the bar on primary education in Saint Lucia and the OECS sub-region to a wider extent. The school, catering to some 1,050 students, boasts the most modern facilities on the island and in the sub-region. It will open in September when the new school year begins.



**Education Minister, Hon. Mario F. Michel.**

With the opening of Union Primary, Michel says, ‘the phenomena of half-day school which afflicted so many primary school children in Castries and the phenomena of packing children like sardines into overcrowded classrooms in the Castries area to make space for children should now both come to a happy end.’

Michel says the position of the Ministry is that it will not force any parent to transfer his/her child to Union. “Far from being a place to which children will be forced to do, we expect that the Union Primary will, on completion, be a place where all primary school age children will wish to go,” he explains.

Currently there are 82 primary schools on the island with an enrolment of 28,975 students. There are 105 pre-schools with an enrolment of 4,288 students.



**\$3 MILLION INVESTMENT: Technical vocational wing at the Vieux Fort Primary School.**

“...Our only hope of achieving significant improvement in education generally is to ensure that children actually learn and learn how to learn from the primary level,” says Minister for Education, Hon. Mario F. Michel.

At the pre-school level, the Ministry of Education is exploring an initiative in association with the Bernard Van Leer Foundation of the Netherlands, to ensure that poverty does not act as barrier to hundreds of pre-school age children getting that critical head start.

### Innovations in Pre-schools

This innovative project is targetting poverty-stricken areas of Gros Islet, Anse-la-Raye, Dennery, and Vieux Fort where no pre-schools currently exist.

“This programme will employ secondary school graduates who will work with clusters of homes of pre-school age children to provide on-site stimulation to the children and training to their parents or care-givers in the continued use of development techniques with children,” Michel explains.

“In this way, we expect that hundreds of poor children will obtain the benefit of early childhood stimulation and development,” Michel adds. “This innovation will also be

programme being financed by the administration of United States President, George W. Bush

“Saint Lucia is one of three Caribbean countries in which this reading initiative will be piloted under which a total of US\$300,000 will be provided every year for the next five years to improve reading in our schools,” says Michel.

To provide technical support for the programme, a reading specialist is to be appointed in the Division of Technical Education of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College (SALCC).

Michel says several other key initiatives, including the development of a strategic framework for improving instruction in primary schools, should lead to a “tremendous improvement” in the delivery of primary education.

Improving the physical conditions of primary schools has been receiving priority attention from the Ministry of Education, considering the rundown state of several schools.

Using resources from its own budgetary allocations and financing provided through the World Bank, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF)



**PRIMARY SHOWPIECE: Nearing completion, the new Union Primary Union will raise the bar of primary education.**