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# "Best in the West" Makes St. Lucia Proud



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# US \$30M Investment Breaks Ground



## Discovery at Marigot Bay ready for Construction

**Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony on Tuesday, April 27 performed the traditional sod-turning ceremony to signal the commencement of construction of Discovery, a US\$30 million five-star apartment hotel and marina resort on the site of the old Hurricane Hole at Marigot Bay. The following is the full text of his address.**

Today marks the first phase of the future of this project. Discovery at Marigot Bay represents a significant investment with much potential for the development of the entire Marigot Bay area. It is a well-thought-out project with several components that seek to integrate the various operations in this pristine corner of our coastline.

It is not an all-inclusive resort and as such it does not seek to close the bay to its traditional users or inhabitants. Instead, as we understand it, the plan is to attract high-end business into Marigot, which will be good for everyone, creating jobs, raising standards and greatly increasing the profile of Marigot (and, by extension, St. Lucia, in the eyes of the rest of the Caribbean).

As with every other major development project over the years, this project has had its fair share and mix of praise and criticism. The critics have voiced concern about exclusion and other possible departures from what has existed up to now. It is expected that the voices of all stakeholders would have been heard and that the developers would have been guided by their concerns in coming to conclusions. At the same time, we have learned – like everyone else – that nothing remains static and that there are times when the opportunity has to be seized to take things from one point to a next. Marigot Bay is at exactly such a phase.

Best known as a sheltered harbour and a so-called “hurricane Hole” it has also brought us fame and history as the location for the filming of Rex Harrison’s “Dr Dolittle” – (and here I mean the first Dr. Dolittle, not the second starring Eddie Murphy). That history and fame we have to be ever thankful for. However, social and economic conditions often demand departures from the norm in the interest of national development. This, we feel is one of those occasions when we have to

move on, but not without being careful about how we move on and what we do when we do move on.

What is taking place here is the unveiling of a comprehensive plan which helps bring a new dimension to our tourism product. It is clear that with the state of agriculture and tourism, today, we have had to embark on various aspects of diversification of these sectors. In the tourism sector, we have had to take a deliberate look at the development of the marine and yachting

sector. As such, we have been welcoming investments in various aspects of the marine industries, including the development of yacht marinas and integrated marine and land-based projects.

Here, your project is a US \$30 million investment involving a five-star apartment hotel and marina resort on the site of the old Hurricane Hole here at Marigot Bay. My understanding is that more than half of the 57 brand new apartments have already been sold. The project is expected to generate over 140 hotel rooms and suites, luxury spa, fitness centre, quality restaurants, bars, pools, a state of the art marina and restored beaches. It is also expected that the project will generate over 200 jobs for St. Lucians during the construction phase and over 150 jobs when in operation. A similar project is also being undertaken at Rodney Bay within the context of development of the yachting sector, with the development of a project called ‘The Harbour’ at Rodney Bay. Undertaken by a local company called Tropical Homes Ltd, it involves the building of 20 waterfront condominium units and a restaurant, among other amenities for yachtsmen in search of a home in these parts. That US\$20 million project has potential for employment of some 80

persons and the investment capital is all local.

A third project proposal is also being looked at by our Ministries of Tourism and Planning for yet another site, this time north of Rodney Bay. And all of these follow the recent launching of the Marine Industries Association of St. Lucia, which is expected to assist in the development of industries such as these that have to do with our seas, harbours and marinas.

In breaking ground for construction today, we are opening the way for the transformation of this area into, not a beehive of noise, hustle and bustle but one of employment generation, community participation and sharing of opportunities. It is to be hoped that the residents of the area will have begun to benefit by way of employment opportunities and guarantees of opportunities for participation in the development of this project.

It is our sincere hope that the developers will stick to their promise of seeking to work with other guest houses, restaurants, bars, water sports providers, vendors and others to create a clean, safe and attractive environment that will become a desirable destination for tourists and residents alike. With this in mind I hereby take pleasure in breaking the soil and declaring the construction phase of this project open.

## Economy Very Strong, Stable for Foreign Investment

By Virnet St. Omer-Fontenelle

**S**teven Baker, President and CEO of United Network of the Eastern Caribbean (UNEC), a geothermal exploration company says St. Lucia has the right conditions for investment.

Speaking on Tuesday, April 27 at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government for work on finding alternative energy source in Soufriere, Mr. Baker said, “One of the reasons we came to St. Lucia and what attracted us is that the economy here is very strong, it’s very stable, it is a developing economy”, pointing out that from what they had seen, all the right conditions were in place in St. Lucia to enable them to have a good working future. The US\$10-million project is to begin in 6 months and will last for a period of three years.

Mr. Baker also praised the Office of Private Sector Relations (OPSR) in the Prime Minister’s Office for facilitating the process, which had led to Tuesday’s signing. He says the fact that such an agency exists as a go-between to do the ground work for setting up shop in Saint Lucia is invaluable.

The project is expected to create employment in the construction sector as well as employment within the plant.

UNEC has pledged to transfer the technology within five years of operations

in Saint Lucia, with a number of openings to be created in the field of Engineering.

Prime Minister Dr Kenny Anthony says his government is committed to the success of the project and thanked UNEC for bearing all the risk and cost of a project

with tremendous economic benefits for St. Lucia.

The benefits include a reduction in the cost of electricity, a lowering in harmful carbon emissions, and a reduction in the country’s dependence on imported fuel.



Prime Minister and Steven Baker signing Memorandum of Understanding

# BOSLI is no Fly-by-Night Initiative - PM

**G**overnor General, Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy on April 29, cut the ribbon to launch Bank of Saint Lucia International (BOSLI) Limited in Rodney Bay Village, Gros Islet. Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony delivered the feature address. Among those present were the chairman and senior management of the East Caribbean Financial Holding Company (ECFH) and Bank of Saint Lucia. In his address, Dr. Anthony said that BOSLI was no fly-by-night initiative. What follows is the full text of his address.

Since 1999, the Government of St. Lucia has been proactively refining its financial services legislation in anticipation of the frequently changing needs of international investors. These changing needs are a result of increased pressures applied by international non-governmental organizations, such as the OECD, whose policies regarding international financial services have sought to decimate the financial services industries of tax friendly jurisdictions outside of the G7.

In a move that perturbed industry players, St. Lucia in 1999, at the height of the OECD initiative to eliminate tax competition, took a bold but necessary leap into international financial services. Many commentators saw our move as a 'fly by night' attempt to diversify St. Lucia's economic base and compared it to selling the same fruit or spices as the other vendors in a city market. Coupled with those considerations were the international banking failures in many other jurisdictions, particularly the failures in the sub region, which put in question the credibility and viability of our international financial services sectors.

The prospects for St. Lucia in this industry seemed bleak, given the impediments to market access at the time and the dilemma we faced in the fiercely competitive financial services arena. For us, the key question became; how do we succeed in a market of established sellers?

## THE VALUE OF ANALYZING PREVIOUS MODELS

Despite our disadvantaged position at the time of entering such a competitive market, we were afforded the luxury of analyzing existing models which thrived and failed during the volatile period of the late 1990's and early 2000's.

St. Lucia took a cautious yet innovative approach to structuring the legislative, regulatory, and promotional framework of its international financial services sector, keeping in mind, unlike many failed financial services jurisdictions, the objective of attracting quality, long-term sustainable international business. To this end, we have employed a dynamic and proactive approach to developing the international financial services industry in



Front row (L-R): Prime Minister and Governor General among guests at the Launch of BOSLI

St. Lucia, which is centered around three pillars that buttress our framework: legislation, regulation, and promotion.

## THREE PILLARS FOR SUCCESS

With respect to the legislative pillar, for example, our International Business Companies Act which was enacted in 1999 has never allowed the issuance of bearer shares. Remarkably, there has been a recent industry wide shift away from the recognition of bearer shares because of their uses for illegitimate purposes.

Our International Mutual Fund Act has been praised and is being considered as a model by one of our established neighboring competitors because of the Act's simplified approach to fund registration and regulation.

Our money laundering prevention legislation meets, and in some respects, exceeds the recommendations of regional and international bodies in the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

With respect to the regulatory pillar, the Financial Services Supervision Unit (FSSU) was established as a department dedicated specifically to the regulation of the international financial services sector. The unit is fully staffed with highly competent specialists in areas such as risk, banking, funds, and insurance.

It is important to note that the FSSU together with the Ministry of International Financial Services has not repeated the mistakes of other regulatory bodies in adopting a volume driven approach to approving licensed entities, but rather, takes the time to conduct rigorous and comprehensive due diligence on potential investors to ensure that St. Lucia gets quality international business.

We have recently established a Financial Intelligence Authority which is responsible for investigating suspicions of money laundering and terrorist financing activity.

arduously in preserving our reputation as a clean jurisdiction and keeping St. Lucia off the black lists of jurisdictions. These efforts have resulted in St. Lucia being perceived as one of the new frontiers for sustainable business in the global marketplace for international financial services.

## CAPITALIZING ON OPPORTUNITIES

However, we must not rest on our laurels, for in order to preserve St. Lucia's reputation and build upon the financial services framework, it is imperative that the private sector identify the need for diversification and capitalize on the opportunities that government has provided through the establishment of this new industry.

Foreign investment is now more readily accessible and the potential benefits can be enormous as long as service providers dedicate the effort and resources required to develop business and provide world-class products and services. The East Caribbean Financial Holding Company is one such company that has identified the opportunities and provided the resources required.

I am confident that the addition of Bank of Saint Lucia International Limited to the group's portfolio of companies will prove to be a most fruitful venture to the ECFH shareholders and to this country. I certainly hope that other private sector entities follow suit and recognize, not only the potential for profit gains, but also that economic diversification through services is the only hope for our economy and, thus, for the sustainability of our private sector.

I would, therefore, like to thank the ECFH for its unwavering dedication to investing in St. Lucia's future and wish the Bank of Saint Lucia International Limited all the best in its growth into a model for international private banking. I thank you.

## St. Lucia Establishes Diplomatic Relations with the Russian Federation

**T**he Government of Saint Lucia and the Russian Federation on April 19, 2004 formally established diplomatic relations between the two countries.

At a brief ceremony in New York, a Joint Declaration on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between St. Lucia and the Russian Federation was signed by the respective Heads of Missions of the two countries, H.E. Mr. Anthony B. Severin, Permanent Representative of Saint to the United Nations, and Mr. Gennady Galilov, Charge d'Affairs in the Permanent Mission of the Russian Fed-

eration to the United Nations.

The Joint Declaration confirms the agreement of the two countries "to establish diplomatic relations and designate ambassadors" with the intention of "developing and strengthening relations between the two countries ... on the basis of mutual respect for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, principles of non-interference, non-use of force or threat of force, peaceful settlement of disputes, and other universally recognized principles and norms of international law that are enshrined in particular, in the Charter of the United Nations".

# Critical Functions of Land in Development

**The Ministry of Physical Development, Environment and Housing has embarked on the formulation of a National Land Policy. This new Policy will provide guidance on land use, land markets, land management and land administration in the country. It will be an important policy statement that will impact on all sectors of society and economy, and that will lead to important changes in the way we use and manage land in Saint Lucia. This article is the fifth in a series of six articles that present the rationale for this National Land Policy, and the main issues that it seeks to address.**

Land is essential to national development, and it is needed to provide basic social services and to support economic activities in all sectors. Earlier in this series, we have discussed the importance of land for agriculture, and we have highlighted the intimate relationship between land management and environmental conservation. In this article, we look at some of the other critical functions of land in development.

One of the very primary uses of land in any country and society is to provide space for housing. In a small island, the availability of land for housing, and especially for the benefit of low-income households, is a priority concern. This concern is reflected in a number of recent government initiatives, including the Programme for the Regularisation of Unplanned Development (PROUD), which was established in April 2000 for an initial period of five years. The Programme seeks to upgrade existing squatter settlements on public lands, to

transfer land title to occupants whenever possible, and to build entrepreneurship within target communities.

In addition to the implementation of the PROUD programme, the Ministry of Physical Development, Environment and Housing, is involved in the development of housing policies and programmes. It is within this policy framework that the National Housing Corporation (NHC) has been established, as the amalgamation of three previous entities, namely the Saint Lucia Housing Authority, Nationwide Properties Limited and the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, and as an expression of greater public sector commitment to housing development. The NHC is implementing a number of housing projects.

Housing has direct and significant impacts on land use. For the purpose of land management, it is important to realise that policies and practices in the housing sector are driven by economic factors, but also and perhaps even more so, by social and cultural factors. The choices that people and families make are largely determined by social patterns – for example the structure and size of the family – and by cultural attitudes – such as taste and values. Housing policy is therefore determined, to some extent, by cultural and social policy, not only because housing is a primary social need, but also because it is in social and cultural change that new patterns of housing development, and consequently land use, are developed, promoted and implemented.

The growth of tourism in Saint Lucia in recent years has created new demands for land, especially in coastal areas,



**Land cleared for Choc Gardens Housing Development**

generating conflicts in land use and impacting significantly on prices, land markets and land speculation. There has been a geographic concentration of tourism activity in the north-west corridor and in the Soufriere area, resulting in the absence of opportunities for many people and communities in the island to participate in and benefit from the sector. The tourism sector generates high demands for water, solid waste management, and other environmental resources and services. Sustainable tourism development could be threatened by the general degradation of landscape and seascape quality caused by poorly-designed urbanisation, deforestation, erosion and ineffective waste management.

The industrial, commercial and communications sectors place specific demands on land resources, especially for industrial zones and plants. The location

of industrial developments places demands on waste management services. There are potential conflicts between industrial and commercial uses on the one hand, and other uses on the other. Industrial development requires that special attention be paid to environmental impacts, especially with respect to waste management. Another environmental concern relates to mining activities, as quarries may impact negatively on landscapes, and on aquifers and coastal waters through sedimentation. Experience however shows that these impacts can be reduced and mitigated, and that quarrying activities can be carried out without significant damage to the environment.

Air and sea ports require land infrastructure and the use of prime lands, all in the coastal zone. With two main airports and two main sea ports, as well as one energy port at Cul de Sac and several Ports of Call along the west coast, there is now a need to rationalise air and sea ports in the country. Such a rationalisation process would have to take into account current and future trends in air and sea transportation (e.g. security requirements, the need for longer airport runways, the implications of technological change on land use around airports) and in energy production (e.g. the need for efficient energy ports that are linked to electricity plants, and the demands for storage space for fuel).

This overview helps us realise that one of the primary purposes of a national land policy must be to maintain some harmony between these various uses, and to avoid or minimise the conflicts that impact negatively on land resources and on social and economic development.

Ideas, views, questions and information related to land policy should be sent to [landpolicy@planning.gov.lc](mailto:landpolicy@planning.gov.lc) or National Land Policy Sustainable Development Section, Ministry of Physical development, Environment and Housing, Graeham Louisy Administrative Building, Waterfront, Castries.

## Caribbean Microfinance Holds 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Roundtable Talks

By Primus Hutchinson

Representatives of donor agencies, the private sector, including banking, and government are meeting at the Cara Suite Hotel for the final day of a 2-day Round Table discussion on microfinance in the Caribbean.

The discussion, which started on Monday, May 3 is sponsored by Caribbean Microfinance Limited, Development Finance limited, Microfin St. Lucia and the European Development Fund. It is the third annual Microfinance Roundtable, which this year is being held under the theme, "Facing Challenges and Creating Solutions."

The principal objective of Caribbean Microfinance is to make profitable use of financial and human capital to create and expand viable, private business enterprises in Caribbean countries, by supporting entrepreneurship and sound business practices at all levels.

Microfin Caribbean Holdings Limited is the holding company for microfinance subsidiaries in Grenada, St. Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago. Each of the subsidiaries operates independently with its own board and management, and is supported by specialist services from Development Finance Limited (DFL) Caribbean.

Head of the of Caribbean/Pacific Division of the European Investment Bank, David Crush says the delivering mechanism differs considerably with microfinance institutions in comparison to large banking institutions. He added however, that there were some key indicators for success of micro finance institutions, as well as some key dangers to look out for.

"Banks are looking at what is going on in the microfinance sector, seeing some success stories and looking to see whether there isn't a market there, a very large

market, which they could develop, new areas, broad markets and they are starting to look at ways in which they can enter into this very interesting and very useful sector". Mr. Crush said.

According to Mr. Crush, a good management information system is among some of the essential factors in realising success in micro financing. He indicated that data collection, the use of the internet, public access for logging system and a good portfolio management system were among some of the initiatives that are absolutely essential to be able to monitor risk correctly.

It is hoped that the sharing and exchanging of knowledge and experience will enhance the provision of microfinance in the Caribbean, thereby building and strengthening critical linkages to better serve low-income and micro entrepreneurs, and achieve governmental and regional developmental goals.

# National Land Policy Issues

**The Ministry of Physical Development, Environment and Housing has embarked on the formulation of a National Land Policy. This new Policy will provide guidance on land use, land markets, land management and land administration in the country. It will be an important policy statement that will impact on all sectors of society and economy, and that will lead to important changes in the way we use and manage land in Saint Lucia. This article is the sixth and last in a series that sought to present the rationale for this National Land Policy, and the main issues that it aims to address.**

While there is no single statement of national policy with respect to land management and development in Saint Lucia, there are of course many policy instruments that already govern land use, management and development in the country. In order to implement these policies, there are a number of public sector agencies involved in various aspects of land management. Over the past few years, there have been important processes of rationalisation and capacity-building within and among these various agencies. In several key areas of land management, the Government of Saint Lucia has established sophisticated management systems and procedures, and has allocated significant human, technical and financial resources towards their implementation and operation.

While there have been these significant improvements in recent years, land management systems remain somewhat inefficient, resulting in the distortion of property markets, the degradation of land resources, and the failure of some land development schemes to live up to the expectations of developers and users. Land speculation, land ownership structure, conflicts created by family lands and the absence of tenure individualisation,

and the frequent absence of physical demarcation are among the many issues that need to be addressed through improved land administration systems. The importance of these issues is reflected in the current escalation in the number of disputes, and in the negative impacts that conflicts often have on land development.

A key obstacle to effective land management in Saint Lucia is the lack of enforcement of existing legislation, and the frequent disregard for established procedures. Land issues require the commitment of all sectors of society, especially policy makers and enforcement agencies. Such a commitment demands that these agencies be equipped with adequate resources and capacities. One of the emphases of the new policy will be on the development of such capacity, and on the rationalisation of institutional arrangements and responsibilities.

One of the most essential instruments of land management is physical planning, which is governed by the Physical Planning and Development Act of 2001. Planning is needed at various levels and scales. In areas with existing or potential land use conflicts, planning instruments must provide solutions at the micro level. The example of a highly developed area such as Rodney Bay, where some tourism uses conflict with other tourism activities, illustrates the need for local level planning that can distinguish between land uses within the same economic sector.

In the field of protected area planning and management, there are scattered management responsibilities, with five agencies legally and formally vested with planning and management responsibility for national parks, reserves and other protected areas in the country, but without any formal co-ordinating framework or mechanism among these agencies. A national System of Protected Areas was prepared by a range of organisations involved in physical planning and natural

resource management over ten years ago, and it has been used by many as a planning guide, but it has not been formally approved by the government.

The new National Land Policy will look at institutional arrangements and capacities, but it will also give consideration to other instruments, notably the role that taxation can play in land management and development. Beyond its function as a source of fiscal revenue, taxation serves as a means to protect and legitimise ownership, and it should help to achieve land management objectives. There is

and other facilities), housing (types of housing, human settlements, utilities), mining (conditions of exploitation, restoration of mining sites) and transportation (public versus private, types of transports, location and extent of facilities).

As processes of globalisation and regionalisation accelerate, international policies and policy instruments, for example the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), will have direct implications on land development and



**Government Building housing Ministry of Physical Development, Environment & Housing**

therefore a need for a review of current taxation policies, with a view to turn them into instruments of land management and development. This implies that land development and management objectives, and not simply land value, should become one of the bases of taxation.

At the same time, land policy cannot be isolated from policy in all social and economic sectors. In particular, there is a need to articulate land policy with national policy in those sectors and areas that have direct implications for infrastructural development, namely: energy (type of energy sources, location of power plants

management, and especially on land markets. National land policy must be informed by this reality, and must put in place, to the maximum extent possible, the mechanisms that will allow Saint Lucia to participate in regional and global institutions, while preserving national interest.

Land management and administration can only be effective if it is served by accurate, reliable and up-to-date information. At present, information required for land management is not readily available to relevant agencies, for example the information on infrastructures and reserves that would be needed from utility companies. There is also an urgent and critical need for up-to-date digital maps that can serve as a base for updated land ownership and land use data. At the same time, there is a need for integrated information management systems that allow for the much-needed sharing of information among agencies in an effective and efficient manner.

Land management is extremely complex, especially in a small island where land uses are many and often competing. The new National Land Policy will integrate all these existing instruments and provide a coherent framework for the sustainable use, management and development of one of our most precious resources: our land.

Ideas, views, questions and information related to land policy should be sent to: [landpolicy@planning.gov.lc](mailto:landpolicy@planning.gov.lc) or National Land Policy, Sustainable Development Section, Ministry of Physical development, Environment and Housing, Graeham Louisy Administrative Building, Waterfront, Castries.

## Essay Competition to give Taxation a Friendly Face

By Claudia Monlouis

**The month of May will see scores of students taking up the challenge of participating in the Schools Essay Competition based on the Theme: "The Human Side of Taxation".**

The Caribbean Organisation of Tax Administrators (COTA), is taking a very

non traditional approach to creating public awareness among students about a topic that traditionally, students do not feel concern them.

At the recent launch of the competition, Tax Payer Relations Supervisor, Lisa Goodman explained that COTA regarded students as the future workforce of the

country, which makes it very relevant for them to become involved in activities that will increase their knowledge and understanding about Taxation.

"We hope that by the end of this competition, our objective to improve voluntary compliance is achieved," commented Ms. Goodman.

Comptroller of the Inland Revenue, James Charles says for quite some time discussions about Taxation has been left out of the normal channels of public education. He points to the ongoing budget debate as an example of how taxation is the cornerstone to the governance of the country.

Participants of this competition stand to win individual prizes, as well as prizes for their school, including a trip to the Bahamas in July to attend the Caribbean Organisation of Tax Administrators' 18<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, which will go to the first place winner.



**Tax Administrators and Students at Launch of the Essay Competition**

# Ministry to Make Maximum Use of Scarce Resources - Minister Michel

Minister for Education, Human Resources Development Youth and Sports, Honourable Mario Michel says his ministry will continue its efforts at maximising the use of scarce resources to educational advancement.

Making his contribution to this year's Budget Debate, Minister Michel informed that this goal would be realized by eliminating waste, insisting on good quality work from contractors and suppliers, employing stricter procurement methods, and discontinuing practices and procedures that have placed severe stresses and strains on finances.

He says some of the measures have proven to be unpopular but are necessary,

if the ministry is to achieve a more rational utilization of limited resources. Academic performance on the island, he says continues to improve largely as a result of the initiatives which are beginning to bear fruit, along with the tireless



Honourable Mario Michel

efforts of teachers. Despite the many highpoints, Minister Michel says there are some vexing issues to be dealt with.

"We have seen incidents of student violence; we have seen the absence of sufficient anger management;

and we have seen a slew of new misbehaviours within the system. We are in the process of putting in place, various measures which we expect, taken collectively will make a difference to the school environment," he said.

The Minister points to several initiatives which are currently being undertaken, including the establishment of a students' welfare services designed to bring special education, students' social services and counselling services under one umbrella; appointment of a special needs assessor to work as part of a multi-disciplinary team charged with undertaking assessments of students; and appointment of district education counsellors.

## Budget Supports National Youth Policy

Government has answered questions about a timetable for the financing and implementation of recommendations in the National Youth Policy, with the tabling of the estimates of revenue and expenditure in the House of Assembly on Tuesday April 20, 2004, thereby setting the stage for the execution phase.

The youth policy is a statement of principles and general guidelines and the Budget came on the heels of its acceptance by Parliament. Through the announcement of a number of programmes of support for youth development, the Government has given life to a number of the recommendations in the policy.

A plan of action to tackle issues of education, employment and sports was articulated in the 2004-2005 Budget address. Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny Anthony outlined a plan, which would make it easier for young persons to raise money to finance tertiary education. "I propose to establish a Human Resource Development Credit Facility", the Prime Minister announced, explaining that the facility would consist of a loan from financial institutions and a grant from the Government of Saint Lucia. Grant support of 50 percent of the loan, up to a maximum of EC\$25,000 will be provided to persons desirous of pursuing tertiary education.

The National Youth Policy, which places a high value on youth employment for economic participation and social wellbeing makes recommendations for skills training and entrepreneurial programmes, including a youth apprenticeship programme, employment tax credit for employers who retain apprentices, and a youth enterprise development fund amounting to \$94,000.

The financial support for the Youth Enterprise Development Fund is to come from the Commonwealth Youth Programme. Dr Anthony says it will have the effect of creating "more opportunities for disadvantaged youth to create their own enterprises and acquire new skills. They will

be so empowered as to be able to participate in more social, economic and political activities." He added that "as more young persons gain the experience of running successful enterprises, it will mean more young people becoming economic leaders in their communities."

This year's pledge by Government to support positive youth development in sport promotes and encourages private sector participation in the financing of clubs. The Prime Minister explained that the Income Tax Act would be amended to allow for an

allowance equal to 150 per cent of the actual expenditure incurred in respect of contributions to recognised clubs on the promotion or sponsorship of sporting

activities or events, or sportsmen. The allowance will be restricted to actual expenditure of \$50,000 in any given financial year.



Youthful Crowd

## Government Focuses on Health Care



Honourable Damien Greaves

Health and Human Services Minister, Honourable Damien Greaves has come out in strong support of government's heavy emphasis on health care for the 2004/05 fiscal year. Minister Greaves, who also has responsibility for Gender Relations and Family affairs, says such an approach is warranted, given the increasing economic and social strain brought to bear as a result of lifestyles and communicable diseases most noticeably, HIV/AIDS.

He said now was the time for the powers that be to critically examine strategies and programmes directed at prevention and health promotion, as components of a

comprehensive programme of care. That comprehensive programme will in itself incorporate national, regional and international stakeholders involved in health.

"We need to partner one ministry to the next," Minister Greaves said, adding, "we need to partner with the various agencies in and out of the country. There is need to form partnerships to get the message across and we need to utilize every possible and available resource in order to build alliances."

The 2004/05 fiscal year will see much emphasis being placed on the main components of the health sector reform initiative namely financing, institutional strengthening, human resource planning, the development of health information systems, and establishment of quality improvement systems.

Minister Greaves noted that St. Lucia was well on its way to meeting its obligations in relation to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals as outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO). He informed the nation, during his contribution to the 2004/05 Budget debate, that the Millennium Development Goals included eight broad objectives, along with eighteen specific targets. Seven of the eight objectives he said, fell directly under his

prevue and had begun receiving attention through the Ministry's primary health care programmes.

"Mr. Speaker, Honourable members, health has to be placed at the centre of our nation's social and economic development. The achievement of Millennium Development Goals will require sustained increases in the share of public expenditure in the health sector, which we have already started under this budget of 2004/05", explained Minister Greaves.

The eight broad objectives under the W.H.O's Millennium Development Goals initiative are, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; achievement of universal primary education; promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women; reduction of child mortality; improvement in maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability, and the establishment of a global partnership for development.

He says the heavy emphasis on health care as outlined by Prime Minister, Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony for the 2004/05 fiscal year, will go a long way in ensuring that St. Lucia remains on target, as it seeks to implement the millennium development goals.

# EDITORIAL

## PM Right about Cricket World Cup Challenge

Now that we have seen some of the problems, which we have to fix, if we are to host Cricket World Cup 2007, we should not have any difficulty agreeing with Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony when he said that he could not promise an unconditional yes to hosting such a huge event.

The fact that the Beausejour Cricket Ground has been dubbed 'the best in the Caribbean' this is small fries in terms of qualifying as a host nation for the games. Yes this is an edge, but we have much to do in order to qualify – traffic arrangements, additional seats, upgrade of certain facilities and a host of others – all of which will cost money, and lots of it.

Let us recall what Dr. Anthony said during his 2004/05 budget presentation on Tuesday, April 20, 2004: "...while the ICC Cricket World Cup will undoubtedly be the biggest and greatest event ever to be held in the region, if Saint Lucia is to be chosen as a venue, it will be the most challenging and demanding enterprise ever to be undertaken".



Beausejour Cricket Ground during last week's One Day International matches

Dr. Anthony said he was totally committed to Saint Lucia successfully bidding for the prestigious cricketing event. However, he was also equally responsible for ensuring that Saint Lucia's best interest was protected.

He noted that as part of the negotiating process, the West Indies Cricket Board must offer a profit distribution that is more favourable than the one being proposed. "It is unacceptable", Prime Minister Anthony said, "that governments are expected to provide millions of dollars to

meet the requirements of the Cricket World Cup without adequate financial compensation". He also added that while the local cricket authorities and the West Indies Cricket Board are not financing or guaranteeing any financial expenditure, they will gain millions of dollars in profit.

Among the many requirements for hosting of the Cricket World Cup in St. Lucia, are improved accessibility to the Beausejour Cricket Ground, enhanced amenities at the stadium to provide for an additional 8,000 seats, temporary facilities

for a large media and TV/Radio broadcast contingent, and VIP hospitality. Dr. Anthony said particular attention will also have to be paid to security, disaster preparedness and the organisation of a national volunteer programme.

"I want to be able to assure the Saint Lucian public that we can meet all of our obligations, that we can raise the financing required without adversely affecting our country's fiscal rating, and very importantly, that we can recover the expenses to our satisfaction," Dr. Anthony said.

He also advocated for the World Cup to be a national exercise, whereby every Saint Lucian can benefit from the event. If successful in staging the matches, an estimated 1.4 billion television viewers will be focused on Saint Lucia, while 15 thousand visitors are expected to be here for the event in 2007. Hotel room capacity will have to be increased significantly from 4,500 currently, to approximately 7,500, along with seating capacity at the Beausejour Cricket Ground, which is expected to grow to 21,000 by 2007.

The Cricket World Cup is the third largest sporting event in the world, and the Prime Minister is appealing to all St. Lucians to embrace the opportunity to reap as much rewards as possible from such a mammoth international event.

## Castries-East Footballers to see Manchester United in Action.

By Primus Hutchinson

**Four players from the Castries-East Football League are to be the guests of tour operating company, Virgin Holidays at a Manchester United game in the United Kingdom.**

That initiative from Virgin Holidays came about as a result of the performance of some exceptional players during a three month football tournament, involving teams from the Castries-East Constituency sponsored by that tour operating company.

Parliamentary Representative for the Castries-East constituency and Minister for Tourism, Honourable Philip J. Pierre, who presented the recipients with their airline return tickets to London on Wednesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004 at a ceremony at the Government Information Service (GIS), says this should serve as a catalyst to spur on youths of the Castries-East community.

"I really want to thank Virgin Holidays and thank the organisation that put the tournament together. This shows that there are rewards available when you do your

best and you strive for the top." Minister Pierre said.

The four exceptional players coming out of the Castries-East Football Tournament to travel to London for the Manchester United game are, Rafferty Noelien, who was selected as the most valuable player during the tournament; Ryan Esnard, best goal keeper; Hilary Charles, the most disciplined player; and Julian Nacisse, who scored the most goals.

The Castries East Football Tournament was won by the Tou-Rouge Community.

published his first book "At the Rainbow's Edge." Director of Library Services Ms. Brenda Paul says her department felt it was important to show appreciation for local literary artistes and moreover, for supporters of the arts in general.

"You will recall that the Prime Minister recently joined the ranks of local authors and will no doubt be featured in our local writers' exhibition next year," Mrs. Paul told the large turn out of poets, actors and writers, adding that, "Literary Night was designed specifically to showcase the talent and creativity of our local authors, writers and poets."

The Director said that this year, the Department of Library Services shifted its focus to the print media, as a valuable resource for Libraries, as reflected by the theme "You and your public library, in appreciation of the print media."

Literary Night formed part of Library Week activities and also tied in with the observance of World Book and Copyright Day, which was universally observed on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

This year the Director General of UNESCO, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura in his address to mark World Book and Copyright Day called on policy makers, economic operators and civil society to promote public awareness of the unique role of the book and of the need to uphold copyright respect.

## Local Artistes and Writers Headlined Literary Night

By Claudia Monlouis

**An outpouring of local poets, actors and writers characterized Literary Night, which was hosted by the Department of Library Services and held at the Central Library in Castries on Tuesday, April 27th.**

The event was conducted under the patronage of Honourable Dr Kenny Anthony, himself an author having recently



Prime Minister (left) at Literary Night

# May his Soul Rest in Peace

**The Cabinet of Ministers on Monday, May 3, 2004 expressed sincere condolences to the family of the late Desmond Skeete, former Chairman of the Saint Lucia Tourist Board, who passed away on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2004.**

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, the Prime Minister said: "Mr. Skeete was more than just a Chairman of a statutory organization, he was a driving force behind Saint Lucia Jazz, the Double Wicket Cricket Competition, the hosting of

international cricket in Saint Lucia, and the preparation of Saint Lucia's bid to host matches during the 2007 Cricket World Cup. His was a relentless pursuit of excellence and a constant striving to make

Saint Lucia a truly World Class destination".

"Desmond has always put St. Lucia first, above self. He was a remarkable individual, incapable of rancour, anger and ill will. Truly, he was a consummate diplomat. We all will miss Desmond's enthusiasm, his dedication, thoroughness and most of all his professionalism. It is rare to find in one individual such a sophisticated combination of skills".

"Personally, I will miss his trusted counsel and his most genuine friendship".

"May his soul rest in peace".



Tourism icon, Demond Skeete

## Minister Reflects on Challenges of Construction Industry

By Claudia Monlouis

**Construction industry professionals have come to the close of a two day seminar on Managing Construction Risks, which was hosted by the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities. The workshop covered the entire spectrum of issues relating to the sector and was conducted by property developer and qualified quantity**

**surveyor, Martyn Bould and attorney at law, Gerald Katz.**

Minister for Communications and Works, Honourable Felix Finisterre says construction professionals must use foresight, if they are to effectively mitigate construction risks. In addition, he says they must be proactive in coming up with practical solutions whenever challenges arise, as the industry by its very nature is vulnerable to many factors, including the vagaries of the weather. The Minister says for government and his Ministry,

successful implementation of projects have been no less challenging compared to others in the business, with many projects suffering cost overruns due to unforeseen circumstances.

Project management was another area the Minister cited as critical to the realm of risks management. However, Minister Finisterre remained confident that the professionals who attended the seminar from April 28<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> were now better equipped to anticipate, plan and mitigate construction risks.

### NTN THIS WEEK ON NTN

Highlights: Week of May 10 - May 16, 2004

Fon d'Or Jazz 2003 - Monday 10<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 p.m.

- On Konsit Kweyol, the GIS speaks with business administrators on the CSME - Monday, 8:00 p.m.
- St. Lucia Jazz Festival 2000 - Monday May 10<sup>th</sup> 9:00 p.m.
- Highlights - Trade and Services Exhibition - Tues. May 11<sup>th</sup>, 7:10 p.m.
- On Issues and Answers, the GIS speaks with members of the Soufriere Action Theatre - Tues. May 11<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 p.m.
- Educational Change: Meeting the Challenges - Wed. May 12, 7:10 p.m.
- St. Lucia Jazz Festival 2001 - Wed. May 12, 9:00 p.m.
- Junior Panorama 2004 - Thursday May 13, 7:10 p.m.
- KiddiCrew.com - Thursday May 13, 8:00 p.m.
- The Fire's Shadows - Thursday May 13, - 8:30 p.m.
- Highlights of H.R.H. Prince Andrew, Duke of York's Visit to St. Lucia - Friday May 14<sup>th</sup> 8:00 p.m.
- Inside the Bahamas - Sat. May 15<sup>th</sup> - 7:10 p.m.
- St. Lucia Jazz 2001 - Sun. May 15<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 p.m.

Remember to tune in for:

- GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.
- Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:
- Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm :
- Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 8:00pm (Kweyol Discussion):
- Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. (Min. of Ed. Prog).
- Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review)
- Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm - (Week in Review—Kweyol)

For the complete programme guide, log on to our website at [www.stlucia.gov.lc](http://www.stlucia.gov.lc) and then click on the NTN icon.

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