



A publication of the Department of Information Services



# Government's Road Programme Proceeds in High Gear

## Fifty-Five Pieces of Tertiary Roads to be Rehabilitated

In addition to the south of the island, communities throughout the country will benefit from the Tertiary Roads Rehabilitation Project, involving 55 pieces of roads.

The works include drainage earthworks base, pot hole and edge repairs, asphalt pavement/bituminous surface, retaining walls and ancillary road works.

The contract for the road works amounting to approximately EC\$9.52 million was signed on May 24, 2004 and work commenced on July 8, 2004, with different roads having different starting dates. The overall time frame of approximately 14 months has been established for completion for the entire project. One of the roads involved is the Bois d'Orange – Winjammer Road, works on which is scheduled to start in September, 2005, and is to last approximately 40 days.

According to the contractors, some disruptions are inevitable whenever road works are being undertaken, but that the disruptions endured by communities due to road works, are ultimately replaced with a welcome measure of relief, once such roads are completed.

The Tertiary Roads Rehabilitation Project is a product of regional co-operation, between the member states of the OECS and the French overseas departments. The purpose of the project is to enhance the economic and social development of the interior of St. Lucia by paying special attention to zones with potential economic activities, in particular those linked to eco-tourism, which are important, but which are limited by the difficulties of road access.

More specifically, the objectives are to rehabilitate on a sustainable basis, the tertiary access roads network in these zones in order to make them usable in all seasons, with cost and travel times adapted to the relevant economic activities; and to promote the implantation of new activities, in particular, activities linked to tourism,

and providing for maximum participation of the communities adjacent to the roads to be rehabilitated.

Meanwhile, despite the setbacks, the Government's Road Development Programme (RDP), which is being managed by construction firm, Consolidated Contractors International (UK) Limited is progressing steadily towards completion by early next year.

The RDP project involves the rehabilitation of Approximately 12.5 kilometres of roads and includes the construction of seven bridges, rubble walls, drainage, placement of culverts, and laying of new water main lines. The overall RDP project is estimated to cost close to EC\$30 million.

Currently, the RDP is 60% complete and is expected to be completed as planned. The project will benefit the communities of Grande Riviere, Mornier, Trois Piton, Deglos, Grande Ravine, Derniere Riviere, La- Ressource

and the Mabouya Valley.

Work is progressing on four different roads.

On the Grande Riveire to La Croix road, works on culverts, subsoil drains, retaining walls and water main line have been completed, and construction of concrete side drains and the processing of pavement layer works are in progress, including works on the Grande Riviere Bridge.

On the Deglos to Trois Piton road, culverts, subsoil drain, and retaining walls are being completed, while works on the main water line are about 90% complete. Concrete side drains and earth works are in progress, while the Deglos Bridge will be completed within nine months.

From Richfond to Grande Riviere, two bridges have been completed and will be open for traffic as soon as the safety precautions are completed. Also,

works on culverts, concrete side drains and water line are in progress and retaining walls are almost complete.

In the La Ressource to Derniere Riviere segment, culvert installation is in an advanced stage and the La Ressource Bridge will be completed within one month.

Project Engineer, Bassel Hilal said that while much is being done on the bridges, all other components were receiving significant attention, in order to meet the completion date. For his part, Project Manager, Walid Jabara said that many residents were benefiting from the project.

"For example we have hired three hundred and thirty employees to assure prompt completion of the project and also to provide a means of employment for residents in the various communities where the project is being carried out," Mr. Jabara said.

Road Name	Appox. start date	Road Name	Appox. start date
Marquis Bougis	July 8, 2004	Esperance-Raveneau	March 25, 2005
Desbarra Road	July 15, 2004	Fond St. Jacques-	
Paix Bouche Boigis	July 22, 2004	Migny	March 29, 2005
La Crois Desbarra	September 2, 2004	Belevdere-Anse La	
Fond Assau Chassin	September 30, 2004	Liberte	May 2, 2005
Guesneau Forestierre	October 28, 2004	Chateau Belair	May 23, 2005
Monchy Desrameau	December 9, 2004	Canaries Valley Road	July 21, 2005
La Bonne	January 6, 2005	Fond St. Jacques-	
Bois D'Orange-		Soufriere	August 17, 2005
Windjammer Road	September 30, 2005	Dennery-St Joseph-	
Eastwinds Road	February 17, 2005	Errand	June 24, 2004
Rodney Bay Main		Mamicoud Loop	July 21, 2004
Road	February 17, 2005	Voilet-Mahaut	August 19, 2004
Millet Venus	February 24, 2005	Mahout Six Lieu	September 29, 2004
Millet Tete Chemin	March 3, 2005	Mahaut-Calypso	November 10, 2004
Anse La Raye Venus	March 31, 2005	Grace-Augier	December 16, 2004
Cas En Bar extension	April 28, 2005	Grace-Joyeau-Belle	
St. Lawrence Estate	April 28, 2005	Vue	January 24, 2005
Victoria-Martin-		Vieux Fort Moule a	
Mongouge	July 12, 2004	ChiqueMain	March 7, 2005
Delcer-La Pointe-		Des Cartier (Road to	
Le riche	August 19, 2004	rainforest)	April 20, 2005
Etangs-Union Vale-		Bois Canor Road	June 2, 2005
Delcer	September 28, 2004	Morne Panache	June 14, 2005



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# Road Programme Proceeds in High Gear

## Vieux-Fort to Soufriere Highway to be Completed by December, 2004

**A**s the Government continues to meet its commitment to provide St. Lucia with a network of motorable roads, the news is that all road works in the south of the island linking Vieux-Fort to Soufriere will be completed by the end of this year, bringing to an end, the inconvenience to the public caused by road conditions from the reconstruction of the highway.

"Upon completion, the highway will be a well deserved Christmas gift to the people of the South and indeed all St. Lucians", said Assistant Project Manager of DIWI Consultant International GmbH, Mr John Freezer.

The extensive road project in the South linking Vieux-Fort to Soufriere has had its fair share of challenges, but the contractors say the end is insight. DIWI, the consultants representing

Government's interest have said that barring the soggy conditions, which have plagued road works during the rainy season they are aiming for a December finish.

In addition to the disruptions caused by the rainy season, the contractors said that there have been enormous delays to do the kind of attention called for, especially, as it relates to the laying of water and cable lines along the route.

Meanwhile, Laborie residents are already enjoying the relief and increased efficiency of the upgraded road. In this regard, Government officials are eager to have the good feelings in Laborie spread throughout the South, to a people they say, have been through much discomfort, but have been quite patient, particularly the people of Choiseul and Soufriere.



Vieux Fort to Laborie Highway

## EC \$2M Carellie Link Road Coming



Carellie Link Road

**T**he Ministry of Physical Development, Environment and Housing will commence work on the construction of a road linking the two access routes of the Carellie Lands, which were recently developed for the relocation of residents, who were affected by the land slippage in Black Mallet/Maynard Hill. The road will also offer an alternative access to Bocage and North-East Castries, thus providing an additional link to the city.

The works, which are estimated to cost EC\$2 million, have been broken up into two sections, and awarded to two contractors, Skelly's Construction Services Limited and Irwin Gajadhar Construction and Equipment Limited. The engineers for the project are from ECMC Ltd. and the works will be monitored and inspected by the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities.

Works are scheduled to get underway by August 16th, 2004 and will last approximately five months.

Carellie residents will benefit from this improvement in the road network, while the access through Morne Du Don will benefit residents of Morne Du Don, Bocage and Agard who need rapid access to the north of the island.

The co-operation and understanding of residents of Carellie are being solicited, as they may have to undergo some level of inconvenience during the construction period. Persons building homes are particularly requested to remove all construction materials along the roads to facilitate the smooth progress of the works.

# WIBDECO Improving Efficiency across the Board

**T**he Windward Islands Banana Development and Exporting Company Limited (WIBDECO), is presently engaged in implementing various adjustments, towards improving its own efficiency regionally and in the United Kingdom.

According to Agriculture Minister, Honourable Ignatius Jean, recent reports reaching his Ministry indicate that WIBDECO had acquired some 26 "Refer Containers." The containers are expected to significantly assist the efforts of banana farmers in getting better harvesting days for their bananas, thereby reducing to a great extent, the time it takes for Windward Islands bananas to get to the UK.

Mr. Jean, who spoke at Tuesday's August 10, 2004, House of Assembly session, stated that the introduction of the IRDC'S has also facilitated considerably, the transition from what obtained previously during banana harvesting days. The Agriculture Minister added that the introduction of the additional refrigerated containers would make it possible for fruits to arrive in the UK on a Monday instead of the usual Sunday, thereby reducing extensively, the cost usually incurred for the Sunday operations.

Currently, the vessel arrives at the UK port on a Sunday, thereby increasing the costs to WIBDECO, because works

have to be paid double time and triple time. However, when the Vessel will arrive on a Monday, it will help to reduce some of that (Sunday) cost, and those savings will translate to improving WIBDECO's own efficiency. In addition, the fruit from the boats will

then be able to be delivered directly to the ripening room on a Monday. Also, within the same week, most of the Supermarkets will be able to receive fresh fruits out of the Windward Islands, Minister Jean informed.

"As a result, the transition for the new harvesting days will take effect in the coming three weeks, which will be on Mondays and Tuesdays, using those refrigerated containers", he said, adding, "Under control temperature, it may well be possible now to harvest on a Sunday, and as soon as the vessel gets in on the Tuesday or the Monday, you can begin the loading. That will reduce

the time that the fruit spends out of the control temperature so that we should be able to bring in much better quality fruit and to be able to secure better prices."

During Tuesday's House of Assembly session, the House authorised the Minister of Finance to guarantee a loan of US\$10 million from the Citibank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited by WIBDECO for the purpose of refinancing existing debts.

WIBDECO has been on the move, educating farmers in the region with "Banana Bits", a live radio and TV programme from the studios of the Government Information Service (GIS).



Hosts of Banana Bits at GIS, Bernard Frampton (R) and Theresa Jn. Baptiste with guest Stephen Shingleton-Smith, Purchasing Officer, WIBDECO

## Royal St. Lucia Police Force Public Notice

The following list of Police applicants is being processed for possible selection into the Royal St. Lucia Police Force. In an effort to determine the suitability of these

persons, members of the public are requested to communicate any information they may possess, which may impinge on the applicants' character and suitability for enlistment. All in-

formation must be submitted before August 30th, 2004.

Any information communicated will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Such information can be com-

municated to the Commissioner of Police, Police Headquarters, Bridge Street Castries, Telephone No. 452-2851 or email at cop@rslpf.com. Ausbert Regis, Commissioner of Police

### Proposed Candidates for enlistment into the Royal St. Lucia Police Force

Name	Address
Herby Nathan Bernard	La Caye, Dennery
Claude Charlemagne	Augier, Vieux Fort
Katia Mitchel	Industry, Choiseul
Jayson Luncheon	Hospital Road, Castries
Aron Niah Charlery	Victoria, Choiseul
Ulric Junior Joseph	15 New Extension, Micoud
Ron Chicot	Bexon, Castries
Stephanie Tamara Henry	Balata, Castries
Ted Donelly	Belle Vue, Vieux Fort
Rawley Austin	Mon Repos, Micoud
Bradley Blanchard	Union, Castries
Raymond Ubaldus Regis	18 Victoria Street, Soufriere
Linus Charles	Ti Rocher, Micoud
Anne Marie Thomas	Mome Sion, Choiseul
Barry Blanchard	Union, Castries
Lucien Natalie Donatiens	Jetrin, Saltibus
Malan Richard Leonce	39 New Row, Micoud
Jesse Kilian Fevrier	Mon Repos, Micoud
Melissa Christal Edwards	Bois D'Orange, Gros Islet
Junior Norbert Williams	Balata, Castries
Norbert Placide	Le Blanc Rd., Laborie
Sheldon Andre Leon	Zeñon, Soufriere
Tabitha Mathurin	Tabor Hill, Anse La Raye
Tana Mon Louis	La Ressource, Dennery
Ansel Lenn Edole	Mabouya Valley, Dennery
Orley Julien	Millet, Anse La Raye
Randy Stanislaus	Roblot, Choiseul
Raymond Auguste	Morne Ciseaux, Anse La Raye
Rene Emanus Edward	Ti Rocher, Micoud
Kimran Emmanuel	Corinth, Gros Islet

Name	Address
Simmons Jules	Grande Riviere, Dennery
Davis Philip	Piaye, Vieux Fort
Kerlin Kesma St. Jean	Mome Lizard, Choiseul
Elias Francois	Fond Cacao, Babonneau
Melissa Joseph	Calvary, Castries
Dervin Wilson	Montette, Choiseul
Dayne Warren Williams	Massade, Gros Islet
Urius Sereiux	Mon Repos, Micoud
39. Jadel Clement	Palmiste Area, Soufriere
Irving Travis Charlery	Victoria, Choiseul
Gervin Rickson Auguste	La Croix Rd., Laborie
Mandy Joim La Cobiniere	Au Picon, Vieux Fort
Nadia Descartes	Mon Repos, Micoud
Adan Kerr Pierre	Mon Repos, Micoud
Julianus Felix	Balata, Castries
Terry Chedy	Belle Vue, Vieux Fort
Meinrad Lovence	Millet, Anse La Raye
Ishmael Manasseh Narcisse	High Street, Canaries
Rubinia Joseph	Mole Road, Dennery
Tavius Peter Mathurin	La Pointe Road, Dennery
Marcian Pascal	Belle Vue, Choiseul
Jarrod Jean-Miel St. Croix	Hospital Road, Castries
Christopher Joseph	Morne Du Don, Castries
Trudy Etienne	Black Bay, Vieux Fort
Azariah Francois	Corinth, Gros Islet
Ava Starline Julien	Millet, Anse La Raye
Alexander Haig Victorin	Flora Villa, Canaries
Isaac Gustave	Rose Hill, Castries
Shaneau Augustin	La Fargue, Choiseul
Yvette Antonia Augustin	Ti Rocher, Micoud



New Recruits

# CWC 2007: A Great Opportunity

## Ahead-PM tells Nation in “Conversation...”

**With the carnival season behind us, I want to urge you to turn your minds towards what can be deemed the greatest event ever to come to Caribbean shores.**

By now, every St. Lucian knows that our country is one of the nations selected to host Cricket World Cup, 2007. Not only were we awarded matches, but we have a special role of hosting the English team, which travels with supporters numbering in the thousands.

It was indeed a proud moment for me, and I'm sure for all of you, as I sat there in front of my television set witnessing the unveiling of one of St. Lucia's greatest opportunities. No sooner had the announcement been made, a young local businessman called me on the telephone and shouted ecstatically: "Chief, we did it!" I knew exactly how he felt. And just when I thought it could not get better, the big news was announced: St Lucia was awarded one of the two semi-final matches, as well as first round matches.

St. Lucia got exactly what we asked for: host to England and its huge entourage, early matches and a semi-final game.

### IMPACT OF THE ENGLISH TEAM

The English too are looking forward to being here in 2007. Following the announcement, the London Times had a story headlined "English Team Gets Dream Island" – referring, of course, to St. Lucia playing host to England. Already, St. Lucia is getting great publicity in one of our key tourism markets for an event two and a half years away.

It is estimated that between 12 and 15 thousand English visitors will come to our shores to watch their team play in the opening round matches. We hope that we can so impress them with our warmth, hospitality and facilities that they will make St. Lucia their base for the entire tournament and simply commute to whatever island in which England's matches are being played in the second round. We have to prepare our island and our people to be the focus of the estimated 1.4 billion television audience that will watch the Cricket World Cup.

But we can only benefit from this "once in a lifetime" event if we, as individuals and communities join forces -- from businesses to the Public Officers to private citizens. We have been reminded by the ICC that although the Beausejour Cricket ground is the location for the matches, St. Lucia is the venue. Therefore, our preparation for the World Cup has to be a truly nation-

al approach.

However, now is not the time for us to pat ourselves on the shoulder; the hard work has only just started. We have to get our country ready. St. Lucia has to prepare.



**Beausejour Cricket Ground**

numbers of visitors; increased business for our taxi drivers, car rental companies and minibus operators; and an unprecedented volume of clientele for restaurants and entertainment providers. However, this only scratches the

the country of Sir Arthur Lewis and the Honourable Derek Walcott; it is the little island that holds the Presidency of the United Nations.

We have been blessed with a talent and ability that allow us, not only to succeed, but to excel. Let us harness our collective abilities and talents and make Cricket World Cup 2007 in St. Lucia the best ever in what by then will be the 32-year history of the tournament.

### GET ON BOARD

Over the coming months we will be actively engaged with all sectors of society to share our plans and programmes at all levels, with a view to making this event successful for all of us. We are also eager to hear from you as we partner to make this World Cup even better.

**We have adopted a local theme under which banner World Cup 2007 would be planned. It is dubbed, "A Nation Prepares." It serves as a rallying call uniting us for a single purpose, regardless of our political affiliation. The preparation for the World Cup has to be a daily undertaking by everyone.**

The work of the various committees which worked tirelessly and selflessly to prepare our successful bid cannot go unrecognized. These dedicated men and women of different political complexities volunteered precious time to prepare the bid book. The rest is history. We are in the process of arranging an appropriate occasion to honour all those who contributed to this effort.

We will continue to need the help of volunteers in various fields, from first aid to security, from vending to the intricate planning process. It requires all hands on deck! This is a rare opportunity in the life of our nation – our actions will determine how much we benefit from it. If you are ready to serve your country, Cricket World Cup 2007 provides the perfect platform. Let's get on board!

The investment which we make for this World Cup will prove to the world that St. Lucia has exactly what it takes to host any international event. It must also mean to us that we have laid all building blocks to continue developing ourselves, our services and our infrastructure. I am excited about what is about to happen for St. Lucia as I know you are too.

I will be giving many more radio addresses on World Cup 2007, which you should not miss. So, until next Monday, take care of yourselves and have a wonderful week.

God Bless!



**Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony**

### NEW CHALLENGES WILL UNFOLD

Our local organizing committee, World Cup St. Lucia, has a huge task on its hands, but the burden of preparing our country really falls on all of us. There will be challenges to overcome in transportation, security, accommodation, food supply, solid waste disposal, water supply and environmental enhancement, to name but a few areas. I know that much thought and planning has already gone into developing solutions to these challenges and I expect that the local organizing committee will soon engage in wide-ranging discussions and public education programmes to discuss and explain the ways in which we can overcome all obstacles.

With challenges, however, also come opportunities. I am hoping that many will take advantage of the entrepreneurial activities that will develop around the World Cup. Some of them are obvious – such as Bed and Breakfast-type accommodation; the potential for our farmers to sell significantly more produce as we seek to feed large

surface. In Sydney, the capital of Australia, the benefits of the 2000 Olympics on tourism are still being felt, while it was also found that several large companies commenced operations in Australia following the Olympic Games. Our country, our people, our services and our product offering will be on display for the world to see and it is up to us to decide what sort of image we will portray.

### THE LEGACY

If we portray an image of St. Lucia as a beautiful island, with a friendly, hospitable and industrious people, efficiently-run services, a clean and sustainable environment, a diversified tourism product, an investor-friendly business climate, a facilitating public service and a dynamic and pro-active private sector, then the world is our oyster – in other words, the sky is the limit.

I know that St. Lucians can and will rise to the challenge. I have faith in our ability to reach the highest levels of human achievement. This, after all, is the country with the majestic and towering World Heritage acclaimed Pitons; it is

# Agreement Signed for Youth Enterprise Development Fund

## PM Calls for Establishment of Global Fund for Youth Development

**P**rime Minister, Dr Kenny D. Anthony has challenged the Commonwealth Secretariat to establish a global fund for youth development.

The call came as the Prime Minister addressed a signing ceremony on Monday (August 9) for formal agreements for establishment of the Youth Enterprise Development Fund.

The Youth Enterprise Development Fund was first announced in the Prime Minister's Budget Address earlier this year, and this morning marked the formal signing of a Memorandum of Understanding and a Financial Agreement between the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Government of St. Lucia, for the transfer of funds for establishment of the fund.

Speaking on behalf of the Commonwealth Secretariat, Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Mrs Florence Mugasha, acknowledged what she described as the sound stewardship, leadership, inspiration and vision of the St. Lucia Prime Minister and his demonstrated interest in the future of young people.

Mrs Mugasha said Prime Minister Anthony was well known at the Commonwealth Secretariat for his interest in ensuring that youth perspectives are brought to the fore.

The Deputy Secretary General noted that between 1996 and 1998, St. Lucia had the highest rate of unemployment among youth, and said it was therefore, commendable that the initiative was being launched at this time, to enable young persons to contribute successfully to their own development.

For his part, Prime Minister Anthony noted that unemployment in St. Lucia was worsened by the steep decline in the fortunes of the banana industry, as well as by the ravages of global competition and its effects on the manufacturing sector.



**P**rime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony exchanges the signed agreement with Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Mrs. Florence Mugasha. Looking on (from left) are, Marcellus Joseph, General Manager of BELfund; Armstrong Alexis, Regional Director of the Commonwealth Youth Development Fund; and Hon. Menissa Rambally, Minister for Social Transformation, Culture and Local Government.

He recalled that in its search for opportunities and alternatives for youth employment and development, the Government of St. Lucia had taken several early initiatives, including the establishment the James Belgrave Enterprise Development Fund (BELfund) and the National Skills Development Centre (NSDC). He also cited the Youth Apprenticeship Programme (YAP) identified in the last Budget Address, and work towards which is already under way.

Prime Minister Anthony noted that it was impossible for any government to create or provide jobs for all unemployed persons, and in this regard, the Government of St. Lucia had decided that one way to go was to provide opportunities for those interested in self-employment.

The Prime Minister said the \$100,000 to be made available to the Youth Enterprise Development Fund through the Commonwealth Youth Programme was quite welcome. He said this seed money would definitely have to be supplemented by local funds.

However, given the continuous need for such programmes, the Prime Minister called on the Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth to suggest to her peers at the Commonwealth Secretariat, that a special Global Fund for Youth Development be established to assist the young people in other developing countries throughout the international grouping.

Such an approach, Dr Anthony added, would help give more purpose and direction to the young people of the region and the world.

The Youth Enterprise Development Fund will be specifically targeted at youth between the ages of 18 and 29 and it will be jointly administered by the Ministry of Social Transformation, along with other such entities as the BELfund, the NSDC and the National Youth Council (NYC).

Monday morning's ceremony was also attended by Minister for Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports, Hon Mario Michel, as well as Minister for Social Transformation, Hon Menissa Rambally. Other officials in attendance included representatives of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Youth Programme, the BELfund and other associated local entities.

transfer of title to the property and the facilitation of the US\$150,000 mortgage on the said property.

The investigation will also seek "to determine whether the behaviour of the parties involved in these matters constituted criminal misconduct, acts of corruption, or other acts of impropriety, misfeasance or illegality."

Mr Eldon Mathurin, a retired local

and regional public servant, has agreed to conduct the investigation and he is mandated by the Cabinet of Ministers to make recommendations as may be deemed appropriate.

The Prime Minister said Cabinet has mandated that "the report should be written within the shortest possible time, but in any event, no later than 30 days."

## Cabinet gives the Nod to NEC Report

**T**he Cabinet of Ministers, accompanied by members of the Committee of Permanent Secretaries, met with the National Economic Council (NEC) on Friday, 6th August 2004 in the National Insurance Corporation's Conference Facility, to receive the Inaugural Report of the NEC.

The presentation by the NEC, led by its President, Richard Peterkin looked at the Development Framework within which it operated, articulated the need for an integrated strategic development approach, and identified sector specific initiatives and cross sector strategies for stimulating the economy in the immediate

to short term.

Members of the Cabinet of Ministers questioned the NEC on issues raised in the report and sought clarification on some of the recommendations and strategies proposed.

There was a general consensus among the Cabinet members that the report was a good one, and that further dialogue with some specific sectors was required in order that it may be informed by current Government initiatives.

The meeting ended with an agreement to continue the discussion at a follow-up meeting with the Committee of Permanent Secretaries and another with the Cabinet, to respond to the issues which were raised.

## Gov't Launches Inquiry Into "Helenites Building"

**G**overnment has announced an investigation into the circumstances surrounding an attempted transfer of title and facilitation of a mortgage relating to the Helenites Centre in New York. This was announced by Prime Minister Dr Kenny Anthony at Tuesday's sitting of the House of Assembly.

Delivering a statement to Parliament at the beginning of Tuesday's session of the House of Assembly, the Prime Minister recalled the historical use of the building located at 438 East 49th Street in Brooklyn, New York, as a traditional meeting place for St. Lucians resident in the tri-state area.

Dr Anthony recalled that when the future of the building became uncertain in 1998, "Government stepped in with the sole purpose of saving this important facility" and paid the outstanding taxes of US\$59,000. After paying that amount, the Prime Minister said, "the Government held the building in trust for St. Lucians resident in the tri-state area."

The Prime Minister told parliament

he had been informed by the current Ambassador/Permanent Representative to the United Nations that "certain arrangements may have been entered into a little over a year ago that caused a loan of US\$150,000 to be taken on the property." This, he added, has since been confirmed by the then St. Lucia Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr Earl Huntley, who served from 2001 to 2003.

The Prime Minister told the House that "Government is concerned with ensuring that these arrangements were undertaken in an appropriate manner and that neither the Government nor the people of St. Lucia would have been compromised as a result."

To this end, the Prime Minister indicated that the Cabinet of Ministers, "at its meeting of August 3, 2004, agreed to initiate an investigation into the circumstances relating to the Helenites Building."

According to the Terms of Reference, which was articulated by the Prime Minister, the investigation will focus specifically on the attempted

# Statement by Honourable Mario Michel Minister for Education,



Hon. Mario Michel

## Inside Parliament Tuesday, August 10, 2004

**T**he 2003/2004 academic year for primary and secondary schools in St. Lucia came to an end on Friday, July 9th 2004, having commenced on Monday September 1st 2003.

It was a good year for the education system of St. Lucia for a number of reasons.

Firstly, it was the year when we finally brought to an end, the shift system which had subsisted for a quarter of a century at two of the largest primary schools in our country – the St. Aloysius R.C. Boys Primary School and the Ave Maria Girls Primary School – and had in the process denied thousands of St. Lucian children a full day of schooling.

Secondly, and relatedly, it was the year when we opened the largest and most modern primary school in the Eastern Caribbean, namely, the Dame Pearlette Louisy Primary School, and presented to the nation in the process, a picture of the primary school of the future, complete with a computer laboratory, a multi purpose room, a learning resource center, other specialist rooms, offices for the principal, the vice principal, a school counselor, a staff room, a reception area, segregated sick bays, an outdoor teaching area, an assembly court with an open stage, a multi purpose court, a playing field, a children's playground and several other facilities and amenities that should one day, adorn every primary school in St. Lucia.

Thirdly, we opened yet another new secondary school – the Ciceron Secondary School – continuing our march towards universal secondary education in St. Lucia. The Ciceron Secondary School also presents a vision of the future secondary school, in terms of its high-tech specialist rooms and other modern amenities.

Then, fourthly, having opened a new modern primary and secondary school in the 2003/2004 academic year, we also opened in that year a new educational institution that is somewhat of a hybrid between a primary and a secondary school. The Vieux Fort Technical Institute caters to post common entrance students in the south of the island who have exhausted their common entrance chances but who are yet within school

age and are still trainable. The Institute offers them a three-year programme of technical education designed to equip them for the world of work.

Fifthly, apart from new schools, we also recorded successes in the last school year in terms of significant improvements in the performance of our students in local examinations, particularly within the primary school sector. The two exams which are used to measure the performance of our students in the primary school sector are the minimum standards tests and the common entrance examination. The performance of our primary school students in the minimum standards tests – administered in Grade 2 and in Grade 4 – showed a significant improvement, not only over last year's results, but over the entire life of the exam first introduced in 1999.

A brief synopsis of the results this year should serve to illustrate the point that I am making.

2,926 students wrote the Grade 2 Minimum Standards Tests in English Language and Mathematics.

The national mean performance of Grade 2 students in English Language this year was 53.66%, which is the highest it has ever been since the introduction of the Minimum Standards Tests in 1999. The national mean is calculated by adding up the marks of all the students who wrote the exam and dividing the aggregate mark by the total number of students who wrote the exam.

The national mean performance in Mathematics this year for Grade 2 students was 47.57%, which is also the highest it has ever been since the introduction of the Minimum Standards Tests in 1999.

3,367 students wrote the Grade 4 Minimum Standards Test this year in English Language, Mathematics and General Paper.

The national mean performance of Grade 4 students in English Language was 47.25% - the highest it has ever been since the introduction of the tests in 1999.

The national mean performance of Grade 4 students in Mathematics was 50.34% - the highest it has ever been since 1999.

In General Paper the national mean performance this year among Grade 4 students was 50.56%, again, the highest it has ever been since the introduction of the Minimum Standards Tests in 1999.

In terms of the common entrance exam, here again our primary school students recorded a significant improvement in their performance.

Results were processed for a total of 4,295 students who wrote the Common Entrance Exam this year. The students were tested in English Language, Mathematics and General Paper.

The overall national mean this year for common entrance students was 50.695% - an increase of almost 4% over the 2003 national mean of 46.734%.

In each of the subjects tested – English Language, Mathematics and General Paper – the national mean was higher in every case this year than it was last year or the year before.

2,508 students, or nearly 60% of those whose results were processed, have been assigned places at the nineteen public and assisted secondary schools in St. Lucia, with another 393 being assigned to the Vieux Fort Technical Institute or to one of the two senior primary schools in St. Lucia.

Bearing in mind that the 275 students who are assigned to the Rock Hall and Grande Riviere Senior Primary Schools this year are virtually guaranteed places in one of the three new secondary schools which will be opened by the time that these students have completed senior primary school in 2007, it means that this year 65% of the common entrance students will find their way into a secondary school.

Considering that prior to 1997 just over 40% of common entrance students found places in secondary schools in St. Lucia, it can clearly be seen how much progress has been made in the education system of St. Lucia in just seven years.

Returning though to the assessment of the 2003/2004 academic year, it is not possible at this stage to pronounce on the academic performance of our secondary school students this year because the results of the CXC exams are not yet available. But, in terms of approved non-academic activities among secondary school students – like Junior Achievement and Young Leaders Programmes and school sports – there were improvements in the quantity and quality of participation of our students, with the school year ending with our secondary schools team being crowned as the undisputed sports champions of the Windward Islands, having successfully defended their Inter Secondary Schools Games Championship in Grenada.

So you see the 2003/2004 academic year was a good one for the education system of St. Lucia and I want to take this opportunity to congratulate and commend all those who made this possible, especially our students and our teachers and the parents who supported the efforts of the students and teachers.

As the 2003/2004 academic year was winding to a close – as has been done every year since 1997 – I met with the senior leadership of the Ministry of Education to determine the dates for the opening and closing of school for the next academic year. Four options were discussed to take us to the agreed

length of the school year – 195 school days.

Option 1 was that the first term would commence on Monday September 6th 2004 and would end on Friday December 10th; the second term would commence on Tuesday January 4th 2005 and end on Friday March 18th; and the third term would commence on Monday April 4th 2005 and end on Friday July 15th.

Option 2 was that the first term would commence on Monday September 6th 2004 and would end on Friday December 10th; the second term would commence on Tuesday January 4th 2005 and end on Thursday March 24th; and the third term would commence on Monday April 4th 2005 and end on Friday July 8th.

Option 3 was that the first term would commence on Monday September 6th 2004 and would end on Friday December 17th; the second term would commence on Tuesday January 4th 2005 and end on Friday March 18th; and the third term would commence on Monday April 4th 2005 and end on Friday July 8th.

Option 4 was that the first term would commence on Monday August 30th 2004 and would end on Friday December 10th; the second term would commence on Tuesday January 4th 2005 and end on Friday March 18th; and the third term would commence on Monday April 4th 2005 and end on Friday July 8th.

All 4 options incidentally involved the identical number of school days, 194, which is one less than the agreed 195 and two less than the 196 school days encompassed in the 2003/2004 academic year.

Having looked at all 4 options, we felt that option 1 – which meant closing school on Friday July 15th – took the school year too far into July and too far into the carnival festivities – Friday July 15th being carnival Friday, i.e., the Friday preceding the Monday pageant and the Friday following kiddies carnival on Sunday July 10th. The date for the closure of school under option 1 would also be over one week after a number of teachers and education officers would have left the island for Barbados to participate in the marking of CXC papers. In the circumstances, we felt that option 1 was not appropriate.

Option 2 involved the reduction of Easter Holidays from 2 weeks to 1 week, which we felt could put some strain on students and teachers if they had to go on for all of the 26 weeks encompassed in terms two and three with only one week break in between.

Option 3 involved having school go on for 4 days after the December 13th holiday – which is treated as the start of Christmas festivities. We tried this option in December 1999, partly to help break the long cycle of feting and spending that takes place from December 13th through to New Year's Holiday, but it did not work because both teachers and parents responded negatively to it and the leadership of the Teachers Union at the time specifically requested that we avoid using this option in future.

This left us with option 4, which involved breaking the mould of no school in August – a mould incidentally which has long been broken by the tertiary education sector, with the University of the West Indies – like most universities around the world – commen-

# Human Resource Development, Youth And Sports

ing their first semester in the month of August (as opposed to the month of October, which is when the first term commenced in my time at University), and with the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College now opening on August 23rd (as opposed to the middle of September, which is when school opened in my time at the 'A' Level College). That mould, incidentally, has also been broken by several developed countries, like the United States of America for instance, which now commences its school year in the month of August each year.

So in the end we decided to go with option 4 and a circular was sent to the schools in the usual way at the usual time informing the schools of the dates for the opening and closing of school for the next academic year.

Within days of the circular being sent to the schools came a number of reactions. There was of course the usual opposition from the current president of the Teachers Union, expressed not to the Ministry but on the media. But there was also opposition from actual teachers, from principals, from parents, from students – some of it founded on misinformation deliberately spread or allowed to be spread by persons who know or ought to know better, but some also founded on real concerns.

The main arguments advanced against the opening of school on Monday August 30th can be enumerated and summarized as follows:

1. Teachers are required to report to their schools one week before the opening of school and if school is to open on August 30th instead of September 6th, teachers would have to report for school on August 23rd instead of August 30th. Moreover, teachers had already planned their vacations on the basis that school would be re-opening on the first Monday in September, which is September 6th, and several of them would therefore be out of State or otherwise unavailable until just prior to August 30th and so they would not be able to report to their schools on August 23rd.
2. Temporary teachers are employed from September 1st each year and could not therefore be reasonably expected to commence teaching before September 1st.
3. Parents traditionally rely on their August salary to buy books and school supplies for their children and if school were to open before the end of August it would mean that some children could start the school year without books and other school supplies.
4. Some parents had planned overseas vacations with their children and in some cases were not due back in the State until the end of August or the beginning of September and would accordingly be seriously prejudiced if school were to open on August 30th.
5. You just can't have school in August, or some other variant of that same theme.

I have not of course referred to the arguments advanced about taking away teachers holidays, because as has already been explained, the agreed length of the school year is 195 days, and whether you get your 195 days by opening and closing school early or late

in no way impacts on the length of the school holidays. In other words, given that a normal year is 365 days, and given that the school year is 195 days, the other 170 days are school holidays, and it does not matter whether you start school on August 30th, on September 1st or September 6th, you will still end up with 195 school days and 170 non school days.

Having listened to or read all of the views and concerns which reached us in the Ministry of Education (some coming via petitions from PTAs), I telephoned the presidents of the National Principals Association and the St. Lucia Teachers Union and informed them that - based on the views and concerns expressed – it was the intention of the leadership of the Ministry of Education to cause a circular to be sent to all schools informing them that the dates for the opening and closing of school would be changed and that school would now open in the new academic year on Wednesday September 1st, 2004. Neither the President of the NPA nor the SLTU expressed any difficulty with the new dates and so on Friday July 9th 2004 – the last day of school - the following circular was sent to all public and assisted schools in St. Lucia.

on that day. To date I have been given no reason why school should not open on September 1st – the exact date on which it opened for the 2003/2004 school year – other than that September 1st is a Wednesday and school usually opens on a Monday. I also heard the SLTU President say during one of his several media appearances that there might be parents who would not want to wash their children's clothes for their children to use them for only three days instead of five.

I take my job as Minister of Education of this country very seriously; maybe sometimes too seriously for my own sake; and I am genuinely and absolutely committed to the advancement and enhancement of the education system of our country. I have continued to work towards its advancement and enhancement throughout the seven years of my tenure as Minister and will continue to do so for so long as I am charged with the responsibility of being Minister of Education. I am not perfect and will err sometimes, but always I will err on the side of advancement and enhancement of the education system of our country.

I respect the teachers of this country and believe that the majority of them work very hard towards the education

Teachers Union seeking to discourage teachers from attending school on September 1st and/or seeking to discourage parents from sending their children to school on that day. I even read in the Mirror Newspaper of Friday August 6th a call by an SLTU official for a boycott by teachers of school on September 1st, despite the fact that the date that teachers are expected to report to school remains Monday August 30th whether school opens on Wednesday September 1st or Monday September 6th.

As Minister of Education I cannot force any teacher to attend school or conduct classes on any particular day; nor can I force any parent to send their children to school on any particular day. What I can do, in fact what I must do and have done, together with other members of the senior leadership of the Ministry of Education, is to set the dates for the opening and closing of school for the next academic year. For the avoidance of doubt I will repeat: All public and assisted primary and secondary schools in St. Lucia will open for the new academic year on Wednesday September 1st 2004 and will close for the first term on Friday December 10th. School will then re-open for the second term on Tuesday January 4th 2005 and will close for the second term on Friday March 18th. School will then re-open for the third term on Wednesday March 30th, 2005 and will close for the year on Friday July 8th. This will result in the 2004/2005 school year being exactly 195 days, which is the agreed length of the school year, and which incidentally is one day less than the 2003/2004 school year.

I want to conclude this statement, firstly, by wishing our students and teachers all the best in the new academic year and wishing in particular that the successes recorded in the 2003/2004 academic year will not only be replicated but exceeded in the 2004/2005 academic year.

Secondly, I want to take this opportunity (through you) to record the appreciation of the Government and people of St. Lucia in general and the staff and clients of the Ministry of Education in particular for the service rendered to the education system of this country by Dr. Didacus Jules.

Dr. Jules formally demitted office as Permanent Secretary responsible for Education and Human Resource Development on July 31st this year, bringing to an end seven years and two months of committed and competent, dedicated and devoted, enthusiastic and energetic service.

As Minister of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports in the Government of St. Lucia, I want – through you Mr. Speaker – to thank Dr. Jules for his service to the education system of our country and to wish him all the best in his career as an education and human resource consultant.

**"Following several appeals by principals, teachers, students and parents to the Ministry of Education to reconsider the date for the opening of school in the next academic year, the Ministry has decided to re-open schools in the new academic year on Wednesday, September 1st, 2004"**



Ciceron state-of-the-art Secondary School

"Following several appeals by principals, teachers, students and parents to the Ministry of Education to reconsider the date for the opening of school in the next academic year, the Ministry has decided to re-open schools in the new academic year on Wednesday, September 1st, 2004 and to make up for the lost school days by re-opening school after the Easter vacation on Wednesday March 30th, 2005. This will result in the 2004 – 2005 school year consisting of 195 school days, which is the agreed length of the school year.

Teachers will be expected to return to school on August 30th, 2004 and to double up on their efforts to prepare for the opening of school in two days instead of the normal five-day period."

To be fair, the President of the SLTU had told me in the course of our telephone conversation on Friday July 9th that he had previously scheduled a meeting with shop stewards of the Teachers Union for Monday July 12th and he would have to proceed with the meeting, but that he would inform the meeting of the change made in the dates for the opening and closing of school.

The next thing I heard after that was the SLTU President on radio and television saying that the Union had decided to convene a meeting of teachers for Wednesday September 1st, presumably to frustrate the opening of school

of the children of our country. Let no one doubt the commitment of this Government and this Minister to the teaching profession in St. Lucia. Two of the members who sit on this side of the House, including the Honourable Prime Minister, have served in the capacity of President of the Teachers Union and one member, your Humble Servant, served for over a decade as Legal Advisor to the St. Lucia Teachers Union. Ask Virginia Albert, ask Julian Delauney, ask Jn. Francois Sonson whether any of them who served as President of the Union when I served as Legal Advisor has any reason to doubt my commitment to the cause of the teachers of this country. But they, and all others who know me, will equally vouch for my unflinching commitment to do that which is right, regardless.

I shall not play games with the education of our children and I regard it as truly unfortunate that anyone should allow himself or herself to do so.

I have myself heard the President of the St. Lucia Teachers Union advising parents not to send their children to school on September 1st because the teachers will be attending a meeting and so if parents send their children to school they may have to come back to collect them later in the day. I have also heard or read other statements from persons connected with the

# Public Awareness Campaign on Biodiversity Launched

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, under the Biodiversity Enabling Activity Project launched a public awareness campaign on Tuesday, August 10, 2004 to encourage St. Lucians to conserve and value the island's biological diversity. Through this campaign, St. Lucia is delivering on its commitment to support the pledge of the 1992 Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The 159 countries, which participated in the United Nations Earth Summit made a collective commitment to value and conserve biodiversity; to use its components in a way that will ensure that they continue to be available for future generations; and to share the benefits of biodiversity fairly and equitably between all nations and people.

"This campaign hopes to draw the link for our citizens on how Biodiversity is essential to every man, woman, and child, our economy, our collective

health, culture, heritage, and sustainable development," said Honourable Ignatius Jean, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. "Consequently, we have selected the slogan "Think about the Natural Link! What's done to nature is done to us all," he emphasized.

A banner, logo, calypso and jingle have been developed as the signature marks of the campaign. The public awareness campaign is targeted at every strata and sector of the St. Lucian community and will be rolled out through television and radio advertising, group presentations, a televised game show, and an islandwide roving exhibition.

"We hope that by the end of the campaign, every St. Lucian would have developed a new value system where St. Lucia's biological diversity is concerned, and conclude that indeed, biodiversity is truly the living bank balance of a people, on loan to them by



**Governor General Her Excellency, Dame Pearlette Louisy and Minister for Agriculture, Honourable Ignatius Jean shows off Commemorative Stamps featuring Indigenous St. Lucian wild life**

their children," said Project Coordinator Joan-John Norville.

The key elements of the Biodiversity public awareness campaign were unveiled at Government House, where the highlight was a presentation by Minister Jean, of a special collection of

stamps to Governor General Her Excellency, Dame Pearlette Louisy. The stamps were issued by the Philatelic Bureau and features indigenous St. Lucian wild life, including endangered species, endemic birds, and reptiles.

## Miss SLHTA Coming

The St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism (SLHTA) will be hosting its 1V Miss SLHTA Pageant on Friday, 10 September, 2004 at the National Cultural Center.

Proceeds of this event will go towards the SLHTA Scholarship Fund. The fund presently provides full scholarships for approximately 15 Secondary School students, whose parents are employed in the hospitality sector.

Eight Contestants vying for the coveted title of Miss SLHTA 2004 were presented at a Press Launch at the Marigot Beach Club on Wednesday, 11 August at 12:00 noon.



### THIS WEEK ON NTN

#### August 13 – 20, 2004

- The premiere of Sports in Action with Joseph "Reds" Perreira – Friday August 13 at 8:00 p.m.
- Professor Neville Ying of UWI Mona Campus explores the mix of working, intellectual and social capital needed to propel the region forward in the 21st Century. – Monday, August 16 at 9:00 p.m.
- The GIS discusses the new Code of Practice for the preparation and sale of street vended foods with Dr. Xanthe Dubuisson – Chairperson, and Mr. Fulgence St. Prix - Technical Secretary - Bureau of Standards Food Safety Technical Committee
- How to Grow Your Agribusiness – Tuesday, August 17 at 7:10 p.m.
- The Prize Giving Ceremony for the 2004 Carnival Season. Wednesday August 18 at 8:00 p.m.
- Soil Erosion and the Impact on the Coral Reef - Thursday August 19 at 7:10 p.m.
- Focus On The Future: The Pacific Islands Forum – Saturday, August 21 at 7:10 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.slucia.gov.lc](http://www.slucia.gov.lc) and then click on the NTN icon.

**www.slucia.gov.lc**