



NATIONWIDE

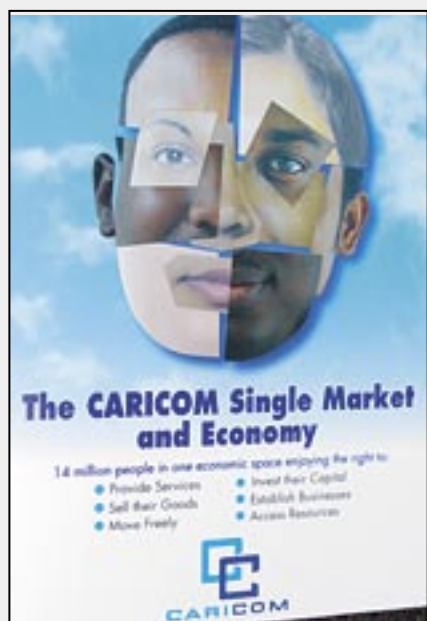
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CSME IS COMING



PM TALKS TOUGH ON ISSUES



In defining the atmosphere that informs the fundamentals of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Kenny D. Anthony says "it's all based on reciprocity."

Dr. Anthony, who is also the Chairman of the National Task Force for the CSME has explicitly stated his position on the issue of

reciprocity, at the launch of the CSME National Public Education Programme on Friday December 17th, 2004. He stressed that the success of the process rested on the principle of reciprocity.

"Everything I have told you that a national in the region can do in Saint Lucia, we are supposed to be entitled to do the same thing in the rest of the region. But here comes the rub! If the CSME is to work, there must be absolute reciprocity that whatever we give nationals of CARICOM, they in turn must give it to us unvarnished. They have identical rights so that, when my Saint Lucian citizen goes to Barbados, or to Guyana, Jamaica or Antigua, I must be guaranteed that the same rights of my nationals will be fully respected. So reciprocity has to be at the heart of the process," said Dr. Anthony.

The Prime Minister spoke to trade restrictions that currently obtain among some member states of the CSME, as they move to implement an open market over 2005 to 2006. He said such actions have affected Saint Lucia. He warned therefore, that although St. Lucia had been very patient in the face of this behaviour, if the situation did not

improve, government would have little alternative than to guard Saint Lucia's interest by also adopting a firm stand.

Dr. Anthony who is also Minister of Finance, openly described the worrisome trade situations between St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Guyana and alluded to some more trade difficulty with other CARICOM States

"Since March 2003, the government of St. Kitts and Nevis has imposed restrictions on beer, pasta and aerated soft drinks from Saint Lucia. That is to say, the Caricom institution responsible for authorising these restrictions in the final analysis, agreed that because St. Kitts was going through its own economic adjustments, they could impose those restrictions provided that the restrictions did not apply to OECS countries or LDC's. Lo and behold, since March 2003, we have not been able to get the St. Kitts government to remove the restrictions in respect of our companies that are exporting beer pasta and soft drinks," the Prime Minister said.

Having laid out its own red carpet in acceptance of the concept of the CSME, Prime Minister Anthony

alerted the business community to government's response to this unfair treatment: "On the first of December 2003, Guyana decides it is going to impose import duties on our beers and out stout. Apparently, we are competitive in beers and stout. And I had reason to write to the President of Guyana. I want to make it very clear; if the Single Market and Economy is to work, there must be absolute reciprocity. Why penalise a little country like saint Lucia, struggling for its place in this CSME; struggling to make adjustments to its economy."

The Prime Minister then sent a clear message: "If the restrictions are not removed by December 31st, 2004 I will impose quantitative restrictions on imports from Guyana, and I am warning the business community. There is no room for nobility in this business and we Saint Lucians have historically been very gracious and very generous."

The Prime Minister's pronouncements immediately stirred the gathering at the NIC Conference room to applause.



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The CSME Education Campaign to Focus on Ordinary Citizens

The National Education Campaign for the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) aims to bring the issues relating to this new dispensation to the attention of the regular citizen, in plain and simple language.

Minister for Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs Honourable Philip J. Pierre officially declared the education campaign opened on Friday Dec 16th, 2004. He called for efforts to be directed at making the term “CSME” more meaningful to ordinary Saint Lucians.

The Minister was part of a high-level delegation lead by Prime Minister, Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony, who outlined the importance and implications of a single economic space for the region.

Minister Pierre’s Ministry is the focal point for St. Lucia’s role in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy. The minister described the significance of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy as the greatest event since the attainment of adult suffrage in 1951 and the formation of the Federation of the West Indies in 1958.

“If we are to protect our interest in the region as a world economy, we need to combine our resources, to enable us to compete in that global economy,” said Minister Pierre. He explained that “although the CSME is conceived as a plan by governments of the Caribbean to facilitate development of member states, it is not a political union.”

The Minister called for the CSME process to be embraced as a deepening of the integration process through the creation of an integrated market

for goods and services, and the free flow of capital and individuals across regional borders.

The launch of the CSME National

Education Campaign in Saint Lucia pooled several representatives of civic agencies, sectors of government and the business community.



Launch of public education programme for CSME

Eastern Caribbean CAA Board elects Chairman

The Board of Directors of the new Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (Eastern Caribbean CAA) has elected Mr. Vincent Hippolyte of St. Lucia as its first Chairman.

Mr. Hippolyte is the General Manager of the St. Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority. His election came at the inaugural meeting of the Eastern Caribbean CAA’s Board of Directors, held in Antigua and Barbuda on December 14, 2004.

Ms. Giselle Whiteman of Grenada was elected Deputy Chairperson.

The other Directors on the Board are Mr. Brian Challenger of Antigua and

Barbuda; Mr. Don Corriette of Dominica; Mr. Trevor Benjamin of St. Kitts and Nevis; and Mr. Godfrey Pompey of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The Board, at its inaugural meeting, also ratified the appointment of Directors to the Authority.

Mr. Herald Wilson of St. Lucia is the first Director General. Mr. Wilson is currently serving as St. Lucia and the OECS representative at the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) in Montreal, Canada. Mr. Rosemond James EMBA of St. Lucia will be the Acting Director General. He will be supported by three Directors. Ms. Tricia Kalloo MBA of Trinidad and Tobago

is Director of Finance and Administration, Mr. Gregory McAlpin, also of Trinidad and Tobago, is Director of Flight-Safety-Division, and Mr. Denzil Jones of St. Kitts is Acting Director of Air Navigation Services Division.

The Eastern Caribbean CAA is an autonomous body established by OECS governments to regulate civil aviation activities within OECS Member States. Its establishment, in place of the former Directorate of Civil Aviation helps the OECS meet international requirements for upgrading and modernizing civil aviation administration in the sub-region.



Vincent Hippolyte

Changes to Waste Collection Schedule

The St. Lucia Solid Waste Management Authority wishes to inform the public that there will be no garbage collection throughout the island on Christmas Day and New Years Day. All collections for communities that receive a Saturday collection have been rescheduled.

Affected residents are encouraged to listen to radio announcements or

public announcements in their communities.

Persons can also call the waste collection contractor for the area or the Authority at 453 -2208 or 450-7070.

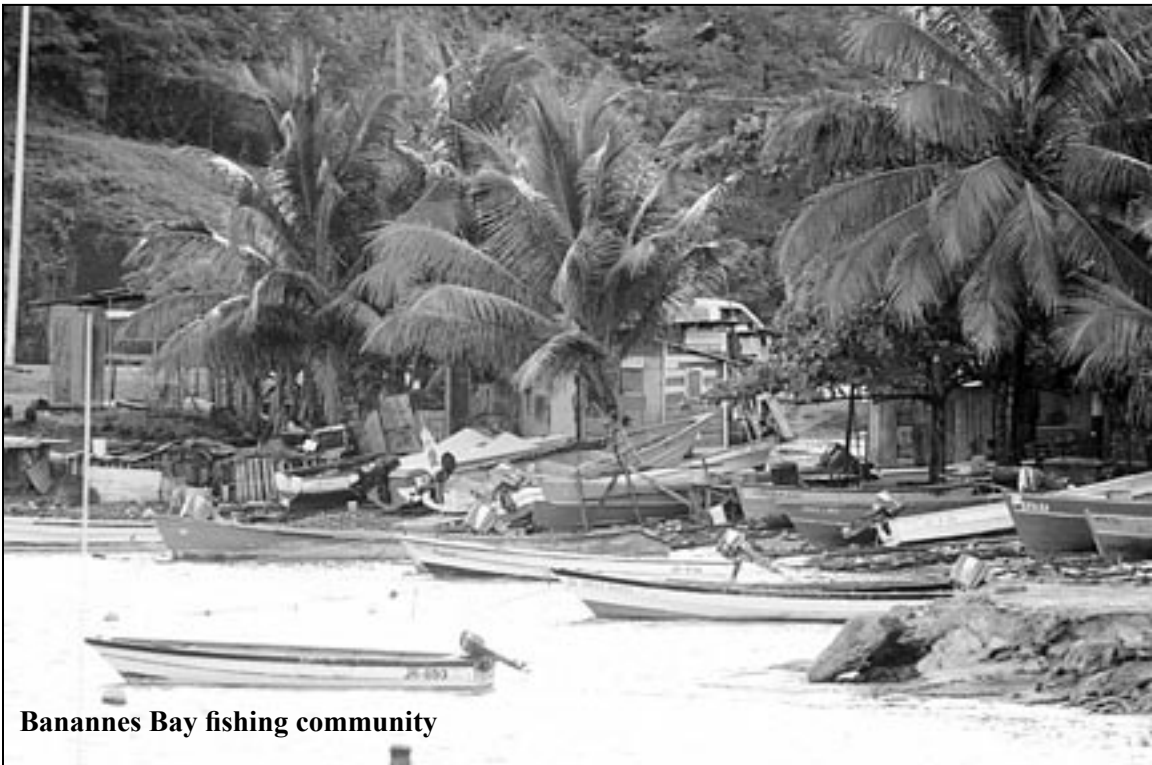
You are urged to cooperate and keep our environment clean.

Remember Solid Waste is My Business, Your Business, Our Business!!!

Let’s all do our part to protect our health, our economy and our environment.



Fishers Expect to Display More Compliance



Banannes Bay fishing community

Fishers are now expected to demonstrate a higher level of safety awareness.

This new optimism follows a recent workshop held to heighten the awareness of fishers to their responsibility to be more proactive where personal safety is concerned.

The Department of Fisheries also expects fishers to demonstrate increased

compliance to safety measures than they have in the past.

The latest initiative dealt with the Safety of Indigenous Fishing Vessels in the Caribbean. Chief Fisheries Officer, Mr. Vaughn Charles said that the workshop coincided with the opening of the pelagic fishing season, which starts in December and ends in July, noting that the Department of Fisheries usually receives several disturbing reports over

those months.

At the opening of the workshop, Minister responsible for Communications, Honourable Felix Finisterre said he was pleased that the “Safety of Indigenous Fishing Vessels in the Caribbean Workshop” initially carded for Suriname was shifted to Saint Lucia.

“When we looked at the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) programmes for the region, we immediately indicated that there was need for such a workshop in Saint Lucia, given what was happening at the time,” he remarked.

IMO Representative and Regional Maritime Advisor, Lieutenant Commander Curtis Roach said that overall, the fishing sector suffered over 24,000 fatalities per year, the large majority of which occurs on board small fishing vessels.

He said “the safety of these 16 million plus fishermen working full time in the marine sector falls within the man-

date of the IMO”, pointing out that the Secretary General had highlighted to the IMO Sub- Committee responsible for fishing vessel safety, the poor state of safety in the fishing industry and the need to urgently address this issue.

According to Mr. Roach, the number of injuries and loss of life can be reduced if the issue of safety on fishing vessels is addressed. He lamented that the regional fishing sector still lacked the international mandatory safety regime.

“Both FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) and IMO have provided technical assistance to the Caribbean in respect of the safety of fishers and fishing vessels, and I am aware that Caricom and the OECS have also taken steps in this regard,” said Mr. Roach.

The workshop provided information on the current status of safety of fishing vessels both regionally and internationally, while identifying measures taken to address safety on board regional fishing vessels. Meanwhile a number of recommendations coming out of the workshop will be implemented.

Other Caricom countries are also looking closely at boosting safety in the fishing sector, to curb the number of tragedies that surface throughout the year.

Bordelais Officers receives Special Recognition

Officers of the Dennery-based Bordelais Correctional Facility have been duly recognised for what has been described as their diligent, committed and professional output for 2004. Speaking at an Award Ceremony on Friday, December 17th, Director of the correctional facility, Mr. Hilary Herman complimented the staff for being overly industrious during the year.

Mr. Herman promised the Bordelais Correctional Officers, that come 2005, management will endeavour to develop an even better relationship with the

staff and to also adhere to suggestions for changes and adjustments to policies. According to Herman, management may not always be aware of the perceived trivial, but however, significant occurrences that develop on a day-to-day basis.

“It is you who are on the ground who knows, and I realize sometimes you think we do not thank you enough, but that’s what today is all about,” said Mr. Herman. He added that while it may appear that officers complaints fall on deaf ears, they should also be cognisant

of the changes that happen occasionally are as a result of the complaints that officers have made.

Executive Director of the National Crime Commission, Mr. Linwal James, who delivered the feature address, told the officers that while their efforts are being recognised, they should continue to exhibit the level of conduct acceptable in such an institution. He said correctional officers must act as role models to offenders in the development of positive behaviour and attitudes.

“This type of behaviour is so im-

portant in the areas that deal with the young offenders. Remember their incarceration here is also a rehabilitation exercise and what they see here is what they will be adding to what they already know,” Mr. James said.

The officers were presented with certificates of appreciation and special awards. The award for Officer of the Year went to Bertrand Fontenelle while the Department of the Year Award went to the Liaison and Security Department, which is under the supervision of Dominic Soudine.



Bordelais Correctional Facility

Reshaping Lives: The PM in conversation



Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony

Good Morning, Saint Lucia, I hope you had an enjoyable weekend and that you are already feeling the good cheer and goodwill that are part and parcel of the festive season.

Another silent revolution

In my address last week, I spoke of the silent revolution taking place in the provision of health services for all Saint Lucians. In fact, upon quiet reflection, I have come to realize that there are several other silent revolutions taking place in this beautiful country of ours. The images of these projects and programmes never find pride of place in the busy headlines of our commercial media. Today I want to share with you some facts and developments about another silent revolution which is already having an impact on the lives of many individuals and families in some of our communities around the island. I speak of the Programme for the Rationalization of Unplanned Development, more popularly known as PROUD.

The problem of squatting

PROUD was established by this Government in April 2000 in response to the problems of squatting which had become rampant in Saint Lucia over the past few decades. These unplanned settlements were naturally creating tremendous problems for the present and future physical planning of these areas. Besides, the major public services including fire and rescue, ambulance and the police were finding these “chok-an-blok” communities totally inaccessible. The main service com-

panies which provide water, electricity and telephones, constantly complained that working in these areas was unsafe and dangerous. Notwithstanding these problems, the response of this administration however, was driven by the need to provide affordable land and housing to the vast majority of Saint Lucians, particularly the poor. I believe, passionately, in the need to provide access to land, and most importantly, the economic necessity of owning land.

Laying the groundwork

PROUD was established as a separate Unit with the Ministry of Physical Development, Environment and Housing. There is a small team of six well qualified, appropriately skilled, exceptionally dedicated individuals who have for the past four years moved steadfastly and meticulously to implement the various components of the programme. They have approached their work with the kind of resolve that this challenge demands.

In addition, an Advisory Committee has also been set up comprising representatives of the Ministries of Physical Planning, Social Transformation, Communications and Works, the National Housing Corporation and the National Development Corporation. Representatives from the targeted communities, the Parliamentary Representative, and the coordinator of PROUD also sit on this committee. This project is an excellent example of the engagement of people in decisions which affect their lives. PROUD responds to needs, not wants. You will recall that during all my constituency visits in the last three



years, the housing needs of community residents particularly those living in conditions of squalor, always came to the fore.

The work of the Unit is demanding. In every community technical studies are first conducted to assess those needs. Upon the completion of the surveys, plans are developed; land is val-

ued and offered to the occupants. The price paid for the land is based on a number of factors including the period of occupancy.

A discounted price is offered if the occupier has resided on the land for years or generations. In the course of its work, the PROUD Unit holds regular meetings with the members of the



The Work of PROUD on with the nation

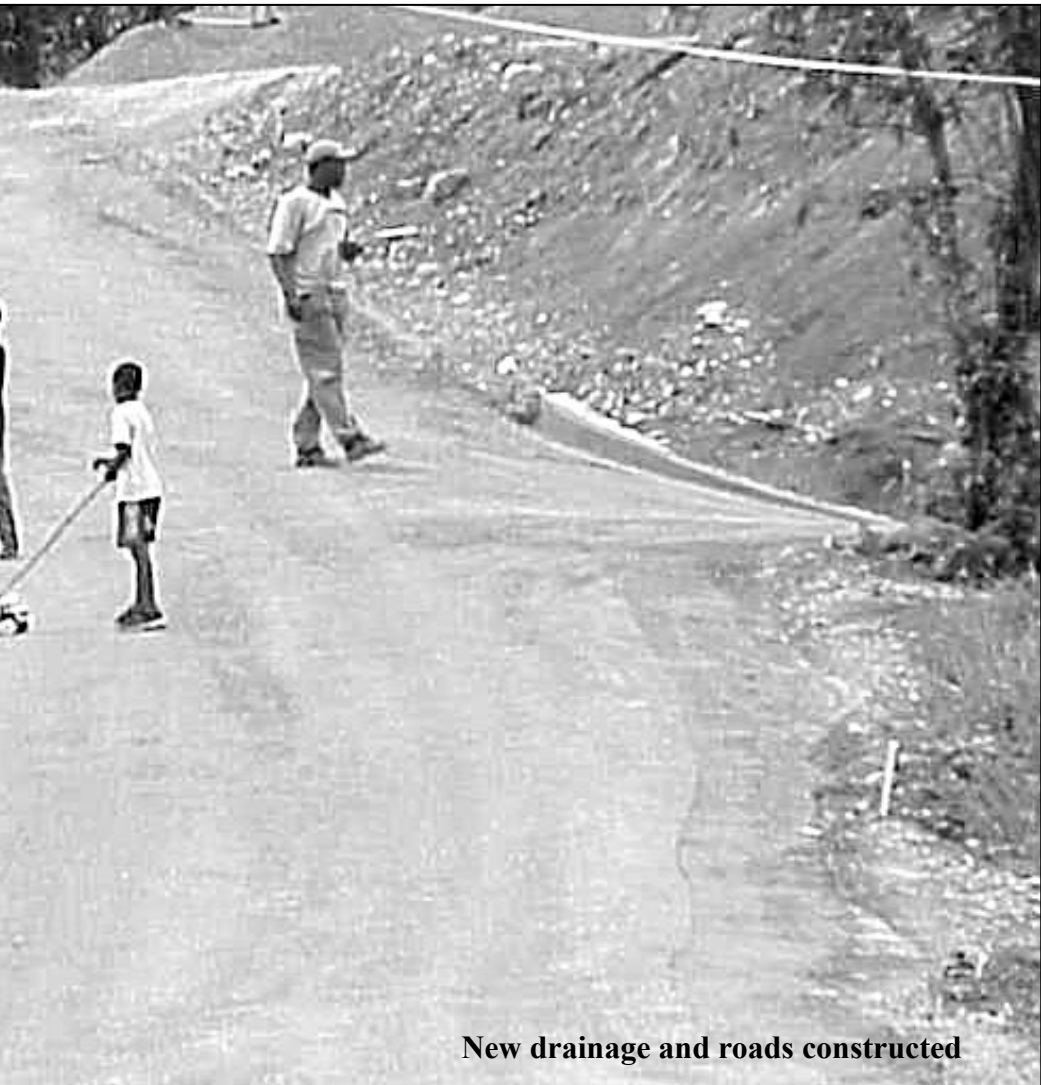


New foot paths constructed

communities explaining to them the complex issues such as surveying of the land and the allocation of lots, to the not so complex issues as the keeping children away from the sites where the drains and the footpaths are being constructed. In addition, the staff carefully assesses and monitors the effects of the ongoing construction on exist-

ing property of the residents, including crops, fences and existing drains. Persons receive compensation for any damage to their property. All of this work is being carried out with extreme sensitivity and a high level of professionalism, away from the media spotlight.

The work of the Unit is supported by



New drainage and roads constructed

an independent consulting firm which has been endorsed by the Government and the Caribbean Development Bank which jointly fund the project.

Modernising the communities

You may be asking, how we as a country hope to benefit from PROUD. To date boundary surveys have been completed in most of the communities - 1128 land lots been surveyed, eighty-seven (87) title deeds have been completed and thirty-four (34) are in process. Over thirteen hundred feet of foot paths and eleven and a half thousand feet of box drains have already been constructed in the eleven communities. By the end of June 2005, all the infrastructural works would have been completed in all the targeted areas. The figure for new roads is even more impressive – 11,862 feet of new roads have been completed. The communities which are targeted in this first phase of the project are La Ressource, Derriere Morne, and La Tournay in Vieux Fort, La Croix in Laborie, Piaye Perdu (Garrand), Des Barras, Ravine Poisson, L' Abbayee, Cendre de Feu, Sarrot and Bexon.

The PROUD team has informed me that whenever and wherever the offer is made most persons are keen and excited about the prospects of having their own lot, and in many cases they quickly approach the local financial institutions for money to acquire the property.

In communities where all occupants cannot be offered land on the site they occupy equally beneficial arrangements are made for their relocation to nearby areas.

Not only about land titles

PROUD is not only about land titles. In these communities which I mentioned, residents are already enjoying the comfort of new roads, yes, new roads. There are some of the best networks of drains and foot paths and other services including electricity, water and telephones, some of which did not reach their unplanned settlements in the past. The construction is being undertaken by contractors and workers from the targeted communities. They really “run tings”. The residents have also been quietly sharing their new quality of life with friends from other communities. The PROUD team in the meantime quietly continues to deliver on their targets and meet their goals with a high level of commitment and efficiency.

In my conversation with a young man from one of the communities, he recalls always having to stop near a stand pipe to wash the mud off his school shoes, as he navigated the mud trenches from his home to school. He was overjoyed as he carefully watched workers from the community cast concrete footpaths, and what seemed an

unending stretch of camber drains in preparation for the road works. Today he is a father of four and life has already changed for his children.

For some of us who are used to these facilities and conveniences in our communities, a drain may seem a trifle to shout about, but for the hundreds of persons, who for years have squeezed their way to work through zinc fences and jumping over mud gutters, the result of the quiet revolution brought about by PROUD is quickly changing the quality of life.

The rationalization of illegal and unplanned settlements will transform our areas into well structured communities with people taking pride in their surroundings.

One of the special features of the Project is the establishment of open spaces to be used by the entire community for recreational and educational activities. The PROUD team is also ensuring that such practices as proper waste management are introduced and followed. Some advisory committees have already been established in the target communities to continue working with government officials.

The future

What is likely to happen after April 2005? It is intention of this Government to continue its programme of the rationalization of unplanned settlements. All new settlements to be targeted will be declared Special Enforcement Areas in order to facilitate the efficient and thorough survey and division of these areas. Penalties will be imposed on those persons who initiate any illegal developments within this Special Enforcement Areas. We will ensure that the Development Control Authority will be extremely vigilant, and police these areas to ensure continued orderly development. Government will continue to allocate resources to the programme. I am determined that the poor people are given a stake in their country.

Care for others

As usual I want to end my Conversation today with an appeal to all Saint Lucians to play our part in the development of our country. Every time you pass near one of the communities targeted by this PROUD project, spare a few moments to see for yourself, the changes which are taking place. I urge you to spare a few additional moments to speak to the residents to share in their own achievements, their joy and to assist them in realizing the opportunities which their new status present. Government will continue to do its part and remain firmly committed to our promises as stated in the Contract of Faith and the 2001 Manifesto.

Until next Monday, walk good, have a wonderful week and a peaceful and enjoyable weekend. You deserve it!

CDF Conducts Vendors Workshop in Preparation For Asou Square 2005

Close to 100 vendors were in attendance at a Vendors Workshop organized by the Cultural Development Foundation, as part of preparations for the staging of this year's Asou Square, which will be held at the Millennium Park in Cul de Sac.

Representatives from various

stakeholder organizations, including the Castries City Council, the Ministry of Health, the St. Lucia Fire Service and Police Force, the Solid Waste Management Authority and the Bureau of Standards addressed the vendors on issues, such as food handling and food safety, proper waste disposal measures, security and traffic management and fire prevention measures. Vendors

were also educated as to the Code of Hygiene that should be adhered to when handling, preparing and selling food at the Event.

The CDF is pleased with the fact that the vendors have been very cooperative and are willing to make Asou Square 2005 an even greater success, by agreeing to stick to the standards set by the various stakeholders.

Booths will be sold on December 28, at the Millennium Park from 9:00 am. at a cost of \$35.00 Vendors must present valid health certificates for each food handler, a temporary Food License obtainable from the Ministry of Health, and a valid liquor license from the Customs & Excise Department, in order to qualify for the purchase of a booth.



CDF's Executive Director, Teddy Francis speaking to prospective vendors

The Cultural Development Launches 'A Special Gift for Christmas'

The Cultural Development Foundation will on Thursday December 23rd launch A Special Gift for Christmas. This historic compilation of Christmas short stories evolved from the popular Radio Saint Lucia Christmas Short Story Competition.

The theme, setting, and characterization in the stories are based on life in Saint Lucia. Throughout the seventeen or so years that the competition has run on the Sun Station, response from aspiring and semi-professional St. Lucian writers has been tremendous. The Cultural Development Foundation anticipates that the book will be an even bigger hit.

"For some, these stories are a doorway back into experiences that they grew up with; for others, they are a revelation of a Saint Lucia they never knew," remarks Teddy Francis, Executive Director Cultural Development Foundation. "Either way, these stories have helped to create community and identity at a highly significant season in the cultural calendar."

The nine stories were selected by a CDF appointed team, led by regionally acclaimed Poets Kendel Hippolyte, and John Robert Lee, as well

as accomplished poet Villiard Tobierre. Hippolyte has been associated with the radio competition for many years as head judge. He says that the book adds tremendous value to a St. Lucian (radio) tradition which itself has significantly assisted in the perpetuation of culture.

"There is nothing as powerful as the printed word for a writer. These stories are extremely good, and the people who came up with these plots and characters have genuine talent. It is great that the opportunity to become published writers was accorded them."

Members of the editorial committee will appear on Radio St. Lucia's Kaleidoscope programme and The Wave during this week to discuss some of the cultural and traditional notions that are depicted in the book. Other events will include a book signing at the Gablewoods and JQ's Malls on Thursday 23rd, as well as newspaper book reviews.

"The overall mandate of the CDF is to create the conditions for the nurturing of the Saint Lucian Caribbean Person as conceived in Saint Lucia's cultural policy: this anthology is a gift from its writers and editors which allows us to do so," says Teddy Francis.

A Special Gift for Christmas will be released on the market later this week and the CDF anticipates that this col-

lector's item will be viewed as just that, by the buying public – a special gift for the holidays.

Festival of Carols 2004 St. Joseph The Worker Church, Gros Islet



Official Launch of the Caricom Single Market & Economy (CSME) National Public Education Programme



Hon. Philip J. Pierre

In 1973 the heads of government of the former British Colonies of the Caribbean agreed to form a trading union to facilitate trade in goods among themselves, giving birth to CARICOM. Sixteen years later, in 1989, the conference of Heads of Government agreed to further strengthen the relationship by sowing the seeds that would create the Single Market and Economy. History has now determined that the process must continue and the reality of global events, particularly at the WTO, force us to inquire as to how can we position ourselves to benefit from these global changes? Can we do it alone, or, must we do so in concert with others? It is therefore imperative at this stage for us to examine our choices and decide on our future. Our questions are answered when we think of the EU, the Asian pact, NAFTA and the impending FTAA.

Much larger nations than us have come together in recent times in order to improve the economic well being of their citizens, particularly in our hemisphere where the on going plans to form a Free trade Area of the Americas which will be a single market arrangement between the AMERICAS. Can the Caribbean survive between these huge land masses with their "large economies" the time for alternative thoughts could not be more appropriate.

Many persons throughout the region are asking and rightly so, what is the Single Market and Economy, better known by its acronym CSME?

The CSME is arguably the most significant event for the region since the Adult Suffrage in 1951 and the Federation of the West Indies in 1958. If we are to protect our interests as a region in the world economy, we need to combine our resources to enable us to compete in the global economy. The CSME Treaty is in essence an amendment of the treaty of Chagaramus with nine new protocols now incorporated as Chapters in the revised treaty.

The CSME, although conceived as a plan by Governments of the Caribbean Community to facilitate development of member states, is not a political union. In essence, the CSME represents a deepening of the integration process through the creation of an integrated market for goods and services and the free flow of capital and indi-

viduals across traditional borders. The CSME will seek to harmonize and coordinate foreign exchange, interest rate policies, tax regimes, laws and eventually a common currency for all member states.

The CSME will be the vehicle through which Member States will collectively achieve the goals of development that we strive for. If implemented, as envisaged, the primary objectives of the CSME are as follows: Full employment of all the factors of production; improved standards of living and work; accelerated, coordinated and sustained economic development; increased economic leverage and effectiveness; expansion of trade and economic relations with other Caribbean countries, Central and Latin America and the World in general

These objectives must be grounded in firm policy interventions by Member States based on the realities of globalization and the trends in the world economy. The essential philosophical underpinning in the CSME is the creation of a single economic space which in reality means the removal of all barriers that prevent the combining of the physical, natural and human resources of the existing Caricom States.

It is expected that the combination of existing resources will lead each member state to: Achieve increasing levels of competitiveness; organizational capacity and economies of scale to meet increased demand and production; and create opportunities for small and medium size firms to consolidate and form strategic alliances.

CSME means that instead of 238 square miles, St. Lucia could be the entire Caribbean basin where workers should benefit from expanded job opportunities as a consequence of the free movement of labour, business and investment.

Young persons should benefit from additional opportunities to travel, study and work in a region where all barriers would have been removed. This means that businesses will have access to new markets, new workers and the available knowledge and technology from across the Caribbean, contributing to increased productivity and success.

Governments of the region will be able to pool resources and information to tackle the health, crime and other social problems that plague all member states.

Coming together in the CSME can also benefit our cultural diversity and create a Caribbean identity and culture that can be packaged to the rest of the world.

While the CSME has the potential to transform the economies of small Caribbean States like St. Lucia, this will not happen overnight nor will it be a seamless and painless experience. The most fundamental aspect of the CSME involves the willingness to make and accept change. That willingness must be shared on the part of both firms, the business owners, workers and the general public.

Firms will have to engage the use of competent and qualified personnel to

conduct the relevant market research, product development activities and strategic planning. Business simply can not continue to be conducted on an ad hoc and uninformed basis. There must be the willingness to share ideas, network and enter into joint venture operations to take advantage of business synergies and economies of scale where these exist.

The financing decisions of firms must involve sources of finance outside the traditional commercial banking sector. The role of equity financing must be considered. This however has implications for the ownership structure of firms and businesses as consideration will have to be given to the listing of companies on the Regional Stock Exchange to attract financing through shares.

Workers must also examine how they relate to the workplace. Initiatives must be taken to acquire appropriate skill and in some cases undertake re-training to become marketable in the new job market created by the establishment of new opportunities.

The CSME can be the vehicle for opportunity but there must be fair play and recognition and obedience to the rules of the Treaty. The Caribbean Court of Justice serving as the final arbiter in trade disputes, is a necessary and sufficient body where these problems will be resolved when they arise.

Rationale for Public Education

In order to sensitize our nationals on the desirability for the Single Market and Economy it is essential that Government embark on a public education programme that will cover not only the aims and objectives of the CSME, but will equip citizens with the tools that will allow them to identify opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses in the revised treaty. In so doing, the information will guide their awareness towards the need for competitiveness in business within the state and also the new opportunities that will become available within the region. The CSME Public Education Programme targets the Youth, Public and Private Sectors, Trade Unions, NGOs, academia and civil society. Through public education we hope to develop an informed country on all CSME issues;

Accurate information is required to create a favourable mindset to win support of the public, investors, entrepreneurs, workers, civil servants, consumers, students, the youth and media professionals for this new phase in our thrust towards regionalism. We hope through the process of public education to dispel the myths associated with CSME. The following activities are to be implemented, to assist in getting the message across: Art competitions; national Forum for 4th and 5th form students of secondary schools; sensitization seminar for teachers of Social Studies; national quizzes on CSME Issues; consultations and workshops; town hall meetings; information Boxes in newspapers and other journals; events booths; community meetings; meetings/discussions with sector/stakeholder groups.

Through this awareness drive, we hope to inspire national debate on the impact of the CSME and through this process strengthen the public support base. Through the involvement of civil society in community dialogue we are certain that the message filters through every strata of our society. The message of the CSME must be integrated in the curricular and extra curricular activities at our schools to further maximize opportunities for practical involvement by the young people of our country.

The Ministry of Commerce will coordinate these activities and collaborate with other ministries and form partnerships with private sector organizations and civil society to ensure that information on the CSME is disseminated across the length and breadth of Saint Lucia. We must alleviate the fears of our citizens and the pessimistic predications of a few. Nothing in the CSME is completely new; it has been done before in one form or the other. Now it will be in an organized form.

While it is the role of Government to ensure that the nation is informed and properly sensitized about the CSME and its implications for us in St. Lucia, every man, woman and child must take personal responsibility to educate themselves on this subject. No public education programme, no matter how effective, could succeed without the interest of the targeted population. My message is that people must demonstrate a certain level of interest in the things that matter. We cannot sit back and complain that we know nothing about the CSME, the FTAA and the WTO when we neglect to avail ourselves of opportunities provided for us to be informed.

I sincerely hope that the programmes and information avenues that will be created by the Ministry of Commerce will be fully utilized by the public of St. Lucia so as to ensure that there is extensive dialogue and understanding of the CSME.

The CSME is not a new step but the evolution of a process that must be hastened because of the swift pace and changes in world affairs. It can be said that the CSME provides the ground rules that can be shaped and fashioned into the economic pillars of a new society and new era for the Caricom Region. The CSME is not an idea that needs to be made real, it is a reality that the region must face - a situation which can be summarized by a quotation from the book: "Globalization A Calculus of Inequality": "the developing countries are nevertheless linked together by the fact that by and large the functioning of the international economic system places them at a distinct disadvantage vis a vis the developed countries. In any event, these countries will be placed at an even greater disadvantage if they opt to go it alone."

The choice is clear.

I thank you and declare the Public Education Process of the CSME officially open.

The Jamaica/St. Lucia Community treats underprivileged children in Anse La Raye



Minister Cyprian Lansiquot presents gifts

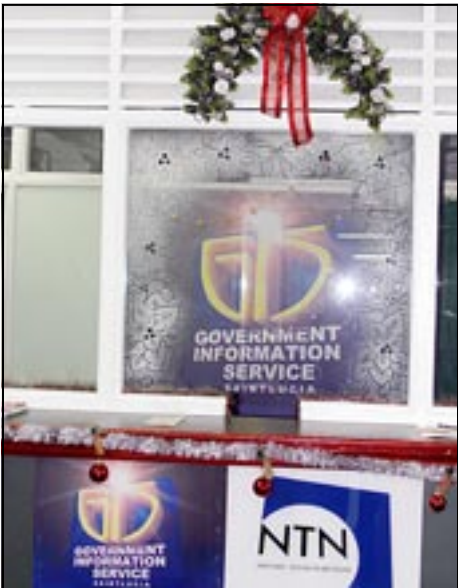


Children playing with their toys



Organisers relax after a very tiring day

Seasons Greetings from GIS



The members of staff of the Department of Information Services (DIS) in the Office of the Prime Minister, extend warm wishes of peace and joy to all persons in Saint Lucia and around the world, whom they continue to serve with timely, accurate and reliable information on the policies, programmes and projects of the Government of Saint Lucia.

In particular, they extend these seasonal tidings to all the viewers of the National Television Network (NTN), the readers of Nationwide and all those who interact regularly with their web site www.stlucia.gov.lc. Greetings also to the numerous persons and organisations, who receive our information via other local and regional media agencies.

The department, which includes the Government Information Service and the Government Documentation Centre is also responsible for the regulation of the broadcasting industry in Saint Lucia. Seasons greetings to all, who have collaborated with the DIS in one way or another, either in proving information, or assisting in the processing and distribution of information.

It is a season of good cheer and giving, and the DIS urges all to lend a helping hand to the less fortunate in the society. Through increasing coverage of activities in all the rural and urban communities, the DIS will continue to reach out to all Saint Lucians.

Merry Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year to you.



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. Dec. 25th - Fri. Dec. 31st, 2004

- Christmas Messages from Parliamentary Representatives Sat. Dec. 25th, 6:30 p.m. & Sun. Dec. 26th - 7:10 p.m. Che Campeche - "In My Neighbourhood"
- Youth Gospel Concert 2004-Fri. Dec. 24th, 9 p.m.
- The CDF presents Youth Exposé 2004 - Sat. Dec. 25th, 2004 - 9:00 p.m.
- Prime Minister's Address at the SLBC's 4th Annual General Meeting 2004 - Mon. Dec. 27th, 9:00 p.m.
- Sandals' Resorts 4th Annual Cricket Academy 2004 - Tues. Dec. 28th, 9:00 p.m.
- Government's Year in Review 2003 - Wed. Dec. 29th, 8:00 p.m.
- KiddiCrew.Com (New Edition) - Thurs. Dec. 30th, 7:30 p.m.
- Emancipation - Impact and Lessons - Thurs. Dec. 30th, 9:00 p.m.
- Government's Year in Review 2004 - Fri. Dec. 31st, 8:00 p.m.
- Blacks - Masters of Invention - Fri. Dec. 31st, 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 and then click on the NTN icon.

www.stlucia.gov.lc