

NATIONWIDE

No.37. Friday February 27 2004

A publication of the Department of Information Services



A NATION AT 25

Prime Minister of Saint Lucia Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony has urged St. Lucians to continue to wage war against poverty, injustice, intolerance, and bigotry.

In a statement issued in observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Independence Dr. Anthony said the struggles of our forefathers have helped “assert our right as a people to decide our own destiny, and to take our place in the world as free men and women”

Dr. Anthony said “Our rights and freedom came with the price tag, one that mandates that we demonstrate a willingness and readiness to govern ourselves. If, out of almost nothing, our ancestors created a society where we now enjoy a descent standard of living, democratic governance, relative peace and tranquility, then we should have confidence that we too, can create a more glorious future than the present and the past”

cont'd on page 3



Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony



Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy, Governor General of St. Lucia presents St. Lucian leaders to His Royal Highness, the Duke of York. From left to right: Mr. Michael Pilgrim, Dr. Vaughn Lewis, Sir. Vincent Floissac, Lady Floissac, Lady James, Sir Stanislaus James.

EDITORIAL

JOURNEY TO NATIONHOOD

The Silver Jubilee Year of Independence is a significant milestone in the history of our young nation. It signifies a nation coming of age and a readiness to accept responsibility for its own development and the collective destiny of its people.

During the course of the past 25 years of independence, we have achieved much and we therefore, have much to be proud of as a people and as a nation.

Despite the many trials that we have encountered on the journey to nationhood, we have had many triumphs. Today, we celebrate those triumphs, but in the midst of this celebration, we must pause to contemplate and appreciate the historical process to which we owe this social, political and economic evolution.

History is the collective consciousness of a nation and it is only by recalling our history that we can understand the genesis of our being and gain a fuller comprehension of ourselves.

As we celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the birth of our nation, we must never forget the struggles of the past, for it is out of those struggles that our nation was born.

It is therefore, imperative that we all remember, recognize and preserve the contributions of those who dedicated their lives and gave of their service in order to ensure that Saint Lucians have a dominant voice in shaping their socio-economic and political destinies.

The struggles of those before us have helped us assert our right as a people to decide our own destiny and to take our place in the world as free men and women.

Rights, however, are always accompanied by responsibilities, and freedom is never a gift bestowed without a cost. Our rights and freedoms came with a price tag – one that mandates that we demonstrate a willingness and readiness to govern ourselves.

cont'd on page 7



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

Government Notebook
A fresh news package
daily
on all local radio stations



Congratulations from other Nations

AUSTRALIA

The Hon John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia has congratulated the Government and people of St. Lucia on the occasion of the island's 25th Anniversary of Independence.

In a message to Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, the Australian Prime Minister said, "On the occasion of the National Day of St. Lucia, I wish to convey to you, your Government, and people my warmest wishes together with those of the Australian Government and people. May I express my confidence that the friendly relations existing between our two countries will continue and prosper in the coming year. Please accept my personal congratulations and the assurances of my highest consideration".



*Barbados Prime Minister
Hon. Owen Arthur*

"On the occasion of our 25th anniversary, I salute those who have gone before, those whose efforts have brought us this far. Although we have come thus far, we still have a long way to travel and we cannot be like weary travellers who seek rest long before the journey is done."

BARBADOS

Prime Minister of Barbados, Hon Owen S. Arthur has written to Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, Prime Minister of St. Lucia to congratulate the island on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary of Independence.

In a letter to Dr. Anthony, he said, "I am happy to extend warmest wishes and heartiest congratulations to your Government and the people of St. Lucia as you celebrate the 25th Anniversary of your country's Independence. I look forward to continue working closely with you within the framework of the Caribbean Community and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, and to see the further strengthening of the good bilateral relations which currently exist between our two countries. On behalf of the Government and people of Barbados, please accept our best wishes and congratulations on your country's achievement".

BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

Chief Minister Dr. the Hon. D. Orlando Smith has extended best wishes to St. Lucia on the occasion of the island's 25th Independence Anniversary.

In addition, Representative for the Fifth District, the Hon. Delores Christopher represented the BVI in St. Lucia during a series of celebrations from February 21 to 22, which were planned to mark the occasion.

St. Lucia became an independent country 25 years ago on February 22. The BVI Government sent an official representative following an invitation by Prime Minister of St. Lucia Dr. Kenny Anthony.

In response to a letter from Dr. Anthony dated January 23, the Chief Minister said, "Thank you for your invitation to join in the celebration of your country's 25th Independence Anniversary. Please accept my Government's best wishes for your celebrations."

St. Lucia's 25th Independence Anniversary has been recognized by several countries, as congratulatory messages to Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony pour in. The following are extracts from these messages.

Nevis Island

Nevis Island Administration Premier, Vance W. Amory said, "Your country has distinguished itself as one committed to the realization of a forward-moving, visionary perspective which keeps pace with the development of globalization. We have no doubt that this resolve motivated by the determination to safeguard, as well as to advance the well-being of your people will continue to strengthen you in the future".

Montserrat

Montserrat's Chief Minister, John A. Osborne wrote: "Twenty-five years of independence is a significant milestone in that it demonstrates the coming of age of your country and the many strides that have been taken in the socio-political and economic development. I am confident, Prime Minister, that you have played and will continue to play a pivotal role in securing a sound democratic State thus, ensuring a legacy of prosperity, security and stability for your country".

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

President of the United States, George W. Bush through the Embassy in Bridgetown said, "The nations of the Eastern Caribbean share a common heritage with the United States. In addition to long-standing ties of culture, trade and friendship, St. Lucia and the United States share a deep commitment to democracy. We look forward to continuing to work closely with St. Lucia to promote good governance, respect for human rights, and the rule of law throughout the region".

Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, Patrick Manning said, "May I take this opportunity to affirm my commitment to further enhancing the existing cordial relations between our two countries and peoples".

Anguilla

Acting Chief Minister of Anguilla, Victor F. Banks said, "This event is a significant milestone in the history of St. Lucia and it must engender the patriotism, national pride and consciousness of all citizens. We in Anguilla can sense your joy and admire the tremendous progress the people of St. Lucia have made since your decision to travel the path of nationhood. We also value the warm fraternal relationship we share in the sub-region and the close bonds of friendship between our governments and people".

Congratulatory messages also came from the governments of Malaysia, Grenada, as well as the Organisation of American States.

BUDGET Process Begins

Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony, on Tuesday February 24th, began meeting with government agencies to hear and consider their budgetary proposals for the 2004/2005 fiscal year.

This year, the budgetary process, which started immediately after the island's 25th Independence Anniversary, came earlier than usual.

The process generally involves scrutiny of the agencies' programme of expenditure for recurrent and capital projects for the ensuing fiscal year commencing April 1, 2004 and ending on March 31, 2005.

from page 1

The St. Lucian Prime Minister also addressed the state banquet at the Sandals Grande Resort on Sunday February 22nd 2004. The following is the full text of the address at the banquet.

“In the long march of time, history is full of ironies, strange twists and unexpected conclusions. In the tunnel of time, many intense rivalries, bitter feuds and epic struggles lose their poignancy and in the end, when the whirlwinds settle, all that is left are echoes of the vanity of men, the folly of nations and underlying it all is the lesson of the elemental humanity of which we all partake.

And so it is, esteemed ladies and gentlemen, that tonight we are gathered in around this common table to share bread and to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of this young nation of ours. And we do so in the company of some of the most distinguished representatives of those who came and those who fought.

Centuries of battle

Yesterday at the Youth Rally our school children summarized this history well – they dramatized and encapsulated in one battle on stage – replete with cannon and the clash of arms – many battles fought between the British and the French for hegemony of this land. Seven times British and seven times French.

Three centuries after the dust of these bitter battles has settled, here we are today – a British polity with a French culture, inflected by African and Indian resistances, fused into a Caribbean civilization.

Their rusted arms of yesterday have long been beaten into the ploughshares of a common Europe and the children of pain

“We are a people of unparalleled resilience and unproclaimed possibility and this 25th Anniversary is the opportunity not simply to celebrate but to reflect on the challenges and the potential and to face the future with unflinching resolve.”

A NATION AT 25



His Royal Highness the Duke of York flanked by past and present state and government leaders of Saint Lucia

have become a new people of hope and possibility, crowned twice with the laurels of the highest intellectual achievement in Derek and Sir Arthur and today presiding over the general conference of the world’s nations.

We are a people of unparalleled resilience and unproclaimed possibility and this 25th Anniversary is the opportunity not simply to celebrate but to reflect on the challenges and the potential and to face the future with unflinching resolve.

Colonialism to Independence

History is full of strange ironies and unexpected conclusions. In every anal of Colonialism, bitter harvests have been reaped irrigated with the blood of many, leaving abiding differences and singular enmities. Yet, in our history, the final chapters of our episode have been peaceful and civilized.

Our transition from Colonialism to Independence was in historical terms, peaceful and the interesting twist of history is that we have harvested from this history solid traditions of governance and democratic rule from the British, the passion and elegance of the French, the pride and courage of the African and the industry of the Indian.

As the esteemed West Indian educator Professor Errol Miller once put it:

“we West Indians are a remarkable people. We are Indians without caste, Africans without tribes, Chinese without dynasty and Europeans without class”.

Guest of Honour

Thus it is that we are able tonight to welcome around this table of friendship and historical affinity, His Royal Highness Prince Andrew Albert Christian Alfred of the House of Windsor, Duke of York, Earl of Inverness and the Baron Killyleagh.

We extend a heartfelt welcome to Your Highness as one does to a not-too distant relative and in the name of the common heritage – now formalized in the shape of

the Commonwealth – that we share. The presence of a member of the Royal Family on occasions such as this, has always helped to re-affirm the Queen’s esteem and the bonds that bind.

Esteemed Guests, this is not a time for long speeches. It is appropriately the moment for expansive hearts and thankful stomachs. Please join me in a series of toasts.

Toasts

We toast our nation and its 25 years of growth and courage and the emergence of pride and nationalism. Ladies and gentlemen, to St. Lucia.

cont’d on page 8



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony and former Prime Minister Dr. Vaughn Lewis



Helen Alexandra Jean, the first baby to be born on February 22, 1979 celebrates her birthday with the nation.

INSIDE PARLIAMENT

10 Million Euros for Tertiary Roads

Several communities around the island especially those with significant eco-tourism potential are to benefit from the latest injection of funds into the Tertiary Roads Rehabilitation Project. On Tuesday, February 17th, 2004, the St. Lucia House of Assembly approved the borrowing of Ten Million EURO from the Agence Francaise de Development to rehabilitate 22 kilometres of roads.

The tertiary roads project was conceived as part of government's commitment to provide appropriate road infrastructure to support economic activity in all sectors, with particular bias on tourism and agriculture.

In seeking parliamentary approval, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony said the road works, which will offer many communities a new lease on life, will be carried out in three phases and was obtained under remarkable terms.

The loan is to be paid in twenty-six (26) equal half-yearly instalments, with the first one due and payable on April 30th, 2010, which is some six years away. The last instalment is due and payable on October 31st 2020. Interest on the ten year loan is at the rate of 3.5 per cent a year, which is

an extraordinary and generous rate of interest, the Prime Minister observed.

Several MP's spoke on the resolution, as it holds tremendous economic prospects for their constituents, in terms of employment, improved road conditions and ultimately, assistance to farmers in banana production areas in obtaining a better quality fruit.

Minister for Communication and Works Honourable Felix Finisterre says some 55 major roads all around the country will receive attention under the programme. Evaluation of tenders is currently underway and contracts to commence works are expected to be approved in the coming weeks.

The St. Lucia House of Assembly also passed two bills piloted by the Minister for Commerce, Tourism, Investment and Consumer Affairs Hon. Phillip J. Pierre. The bills, the Free Zone Amendment and the Liquor License, were taken through all of their stages.

The Caribbean Community and the Waste Management Bills came up for first reading, but the second reading was deferred for a subsequent sitting of the House of Assembly.

SUPPORT FROM INDEPENDENT MP

Former Opposition Leader, Marius Wilson, member for Micoud North on Tuesday, February 17 praised the Government's initiatives designed to assist poor and marginalised St. Lucians.

Mr. Wilson's praise for the Government followed similar accolades showered on The Government by the present Leader of the Opposition, Arsene James for the EURO 10 million borrowed to rehabilitate some 55 roads throughout the island.

Determined to relieve the pain and suffering of persons leaving in deprived conditions, the Government established a number of institutions to deal with those problems. These institutions include the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF), the Basic Need Trust Fund (BNTF) the Short Term Employment Programme (STEP) and the Games Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund (BELfund).

These entities offer a wide range of services to the less privileged in society, including the construction of footpaths where there is little or no access to deprived communities; drains where run-off water present a problem; and retaining walls where land slippage is occurring. The BELfund even makes small loans available to less fortunate persons wishing to establish their own businesses. All of these

projects have a heavy emphasis on using community skills and in that way, persons from the communities gain employment in the process of implementing the various projects.

In praising the Government, Mr. Wilson said, "Often, I have said to my Parliamentary Colleagues on the other side, that I believe the Government is doing very great work and I applaud the Government when it does well", stressing, "They are doing some very great work under the able guidance of the Minister of Social Transformation; they are touching the lives of the poor and marginalised constituencies in a manner never done in this country ... never done in this country".

Chastising the media for the lack of publicity on the benefits of the Government-led programmes he said, "What is not happening is that the nation is not being told what is being done in the form and manner required". Suggesting that the Poverty Reduction Fund was doing more than reducing poverty, he called for its name to be changed to "The Empowerment and Development Agency".

Mr. Wilson beckoned further: "Let us empower our people and let us start talking to them so that they can understand that when the projects are done, the footpaths are done, the roads are done, the electricity

cont'd on page 5

OPPOSITION LEADER LAUDS GOVERNMENT ROADS PROGRAMME.

Opposition Leader, Arsene James on Tuesday, February 17, 2004 admonished a member on his side of the House of Assembly for criticizing the Government's borrowing of EURO 10 million to rehabilitate 22 kilo meters of tertiary roads. He was supporting Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony's motion for approval of the loan.

The Tertiary Roads Rehabilitation Project was conceived as part of the Government's commitment to provide appropriate road infrastructure to support economic activity in all sectors, with particular bias on tourism and agriculture. Some 55 major roads all around the country will receive attention under the programme.

Hailing the Government's latest road rehabilitation project as critical to the continued development of eco-tourism and agriculture, the Opposition Leader said, "Roads are very important to all our people in St. Lucia; we all must understand that", pointing out that there are a number of roads on the island that need repairing.

"I think what my colleague was trying to say here was that in borrowing, one needs to be cautious and if one can borrow and invest, and in the process probably kill two



Road construction in the rural areas has taken on new dimensions in St. Lucia

birds with one stone that will be a lot better", he said in an attempt to save the Opposition's face.

Mr. James cited two roads - the Desruisseaux/Calypso road via the Des Carte road and the Mahaut/Calypso/Des Carte road - in his constituency that lead to the rain forest, which he pointed out was very attractive to tourist, and that they continued to travel there despite the condition of the roads. "So I think getting money to fix these roads would attract probably more tourist to the rain forest and at the same time, it would give relief to the farmers, who have their plantation in that area", adding, "we are killing two birds with one stone".

Mr. James argued that farmers had suffered from the bad roads and because of this they had lost income from their plantation, especially their banana plantation, as a result of the current leaf spot disease. "Maybe, with goods roads they can begin to diversify and be able to go to their plantation and grow other crops", he said.

He stated that his support for the rehabilitation of the Mahaut/Calypso road equally applied, as tourists also use that route, as well as farmers, who have plantations there. "Our farmers will definitely benefit, and since I am from a banana farming belt, I must say that our farmers will get some kind of relief", he assured.

Several members of the House spoke on the resolution, as it holds tremendous economic prospects for their constituents, in terms of employment, improved road conditions and ultimately, assistance to farmers in banana production areas in obtaining a better quality fruit.

In seeking parliamentary approval, the Prime Minister said the road works, which will be carried out in three phases will offer many communities a new lease on life.

For ease of management, the roads to be rehabilitated have been divided into three separate packages based on their location, with the northern package including Riviere Sally, Monchy, des Rameaux, Nesroad La Borne, Bois D'Orange, Windjammer Road, Trouya, East Winds road, Cas-En-Bas road and extension, Rodney Bay main road will be completely resurfaced, Paix Bouche, Boguis, Des Barras road Marquis/Boguis road, Marquis Estate road, an important area for eco-tourism at Grande Anse and La Sorciere, involving turtle and whale watching among others, the Fond Assau/Chassin road, Genneau/Forrestier road.

CICERON SECONDARY SCHOOL

New Standards for Education in St. Lucia

On 3.8 acres of land and constructed and equipped with state of the art laboratory built at a cost 8.4 million dollars the Ciceron Secondary School is a look into the future of education, the marriage of a traditional teaching approach with computer based learning modules.



Dignitaries visit one of the school laboratories . Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy, Governor General is at the extreme left, HRH Duke of York in centre of picture.

The school was officially opened Saturday February 21st, as part of activities to mark the 25th Anniversary of Saint. Lucia's Independence. The overall aim is to create a new generation of employment ready students, as well as develop St. Lucians who have a high proficiency in the use of computer technology. The new look education model in Ciceron was initially conceived as a

replacement for the Rock Hall Senior Primary School.

Minister for Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports Honourable Mario Michel said that Rock Hall had space limitations, as well as issues of squatter families and topography which made a replacement facility necessary. He said that mid way through construction

of the school ministry officials wanted more from the school and sold the Caribbean Development Bank on the idea.

Principal Ronald Issac said that the new style in learning pioneered at Ciceron will expand career opportunities for students. He said it was an initiative worthy of emulation and applauded the Ministry of Education for setting a new course in education.



His Royal Highness the Duke of York speaks to school principal Ron Isaac after the unveiling of the plaque.



Minister of Education, Human Resource Development Youth and Sports, Hon. Mario Michel, addressing the ceremony.

US SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION IN ST. LUCIA

St. Lucia may be in for even greater educational benefits from the United States of America. The announcement came from the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States to St. Lucia, Her Excellency Mary Elizabeth Kramer while presenting her letters of credence to St. Lucia's Governor General, Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy on Thursday February 19th, 2004.

Ambassador Kramer emphasized her determination to increase interaction at all levels between the United States and St. Lucia's Educational Systems. According to Mrs. Kramer, with her interest and experience in education, St. Lucia can be assured of her fullest support.

Ambassador Kramer pledged her country's continued support for the Fulbright Scholar Programme, which provided St. Lucians the opportunity to study at universities in the United States. According to Mrs. Kramer, graduates of this programme have been instrumental in the establishment of a Criminal Justice Programme at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College, the first programme of its kind in the Caribbean.



Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy Governor General of St. Lucia (left) and Her Excellency Ambassador Elizabeth Kramer.

St. Lucia's effort at improving Immigration and Custom procedures, as well as its fight against the scourge of drug trafficking and other criminal activities was also highly commended. Mrs. Kramer described the initiative as a model for other islands in the region.

Governor General Dame Pearlette Louisy said "it is indeed encouraging, that the United States Ambassador has accredited the island with the same category of interest and experience in education that exist in her country".

"This is particularly welcomed at this time, as we focus on human resource

development", Dame Pearlette Louisy said. She also added that some of the US education assistance programme have been very successful, particularly the Fulbright Scholarship Programme and expressed optimism about the outcome of another recent US education initiative, The Centre of Excellence in Teacher Training Programme.

Dame Pearlette Louisy also made an appeal for the US to renew its effort at implementing the Third Border Initiative, while expressing her gratitude for the assistance already given for HIV/AIDS Education. Diplomatic relations between St. Lucia and the United States was established, twenty five years ago.

PARLIAMENT

from page 4

and everything are put in place to help them, that they can understand and appreciate that this is an initiative by a Government that cares and the people can be greater sensitised".

Recalling the benefits which his constituency has derived from the Government-initiated programmes he said, "Do you know what kind of burden S.T.E.P. has eased on me as a parliamentary representative? I have always said that". He even asked to be given, allocation made for a few houses, which have not been taken up. "I have completed four in my constituency", he said, asking the Prime Minister, "Those who don't want it give it to me. Let me ease the frustrations of the poor and deserving people in my constituency".

FOR SERVICE TO COUNTRY

A number of Saint Lucians have been awarded for their outstanding contribution to the island's development over the years. Over the weekend, Governor General, Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy decorated the awardees with their respective honours at Government House.

The Saint Lucia Cross (SLC) has been bestowed on Dunstan Gerbert Raphael St. Omer for long and meritorious service in the Arts.

The Saint Lucia Medal of Honour Gold (SLMH) has been awarded to Justice Suzie Agnes Ida D'Auvergne for long and commendable service in the Judicial System and Truscott Ronald Georges Hinkson for his contribution to music.

Mrs. Charmaine Marie Gardner and Miss Jessie Margaret Florida Stephens received the Saint Lucia Medal of Honour Silver SLMH for long and meritorious service in the business community and for community enrichment, and for long and praiseworthy service on behalf of Saint Lucians resident in the United Kingdom respectively.

The Saint Lucia Medal of Merit (Gold) has been awarded to John Robert Hector Lee

"Dunstan St. Omer has given St. Lucia international recognition as one of the principal muralists in the region and undoubtedly, the premier Catholic muralist in the Caribbean."

for service in the field of literature and John Paul Bailey and Miss. Barbara Ann Cadet for service in the field of music.

The Saint Lucia Medal of Merit (Silver): has been bestowed on Gregory Mongroo for service in the field of Agriculture; Emerson Nurse for service in the field of music; and Kennedy Philip Samuel for outstanding contribution to the development of culture and arts.

Gregory Biscette, Mrs. Veronica Augustine and Joseph Foche Modeste received the Les Piton Medal Gold for their contribution to education, community work, and public service in Surveying.

The Les Piton Medal Silver has been bestowed upon Samuel Lucien for his long and meritorious community service and Andrew Vaughn Osbourne Noel for service in Broadcasting.

Mrs. Marcia Imogene Mitchel and Mrs. Jane Clara St. Croix received the Les Pitons Medal (Bronze) for their outstanding contribution in business, while Julian Alexander received the award for outstanding service on behalf of Saint Lucian residents abroad.



Dunstan Gerbert Raphael St. Omer - Recipient of the Saint Lucia

CLUB MED ON COURSE

Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony has said that work on the former 250-room Club Med hotel in Vieux-Fort was proceeding on course for a September, 2004 opening.

Dr. Anthony, who visited the property last Wednesday, February 18 said, "Considerable work has been done; I'm pleased with the renovations being undertaken by the new owner, Jamaican business titan, Karl Hendrickson".

Some 80 persons are currently employed in the construction activities, which include among others, a new public entrance and extension of rooms by 10 feet, the Prime Minister informed. The hotel, which is to be renamed, "Coconut Beach Hotel and Spar", is the last remaining hotel on the island to be opened following September 11.

The operationalisation of Coconut Beach Hotel and Spar is seen as one of the accomplishments of the Government of Dr. Anthony, and it is expected to benefit the country through increased foreign exchange earnings, direct employment, and the purchase of local supplies, services and utilities.

Karl Hendrickson, OJ, CD, was inducted into the Private Sector Hall of Fame on October 1, 2003, by the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica in recognition of over 50 years of contribution to the Jamaican business landscape. Mr. Hendrickson's complex bakery and hospitality empire are said to belie his gracious and simple approach to life.

SITEL Caribbean for St. Lucia

A leading Jamaican newspaper, Business Observer has confirmed an October 2003 report that SITEL Caribbean's parent company, E-Services Limited would be setting up a 200-seat contact centre in St. Lucia to commence operation by the fourth quarter of this year.

Like Jamaica and other Caribbean islands, the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector in St. Lucia has made it possible for companies, such as SITEL Caribbean to do business here, creating opportunities for the utilization of surplus labour to enhance social and economic development.

Commenting on the coming of SITEL to St. Lucia, Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony said, "Our main priority is to provide jobs for St. Lucians, particularly the young people, and the eventual opening of SITEL in St. Lucia will provide a great opportunity for young school leavers. Indeed this is one of the factors that attracted the company to St. Lucia".

General Manager of the National Development Corporation (NDC), Wayne Vitalis said, "This St. Lucia-based facility paves the way for more information technology-related businesses to operate here, and it is testimony to the fact that the Corporation continues to target the sort

of business ventures that are sure to generate employment in this country, which is one of the main objectives of the NDC".

SITEL is a leading global provider of outsourced customer support services to clients in the automotive, consumer, financial services, insurance, technology, telecommunications, and utility industries. These clients include major international companies, such as Phillips, United Health Care, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia, Colonial Penn, Bankers Life and Causality, NTT Verio and Information Resources Incorporated.

Patrick Casserly, Chief Executive Officer of SITEL Caribbean and E-Services Group Limited has further confirmed that the operation in St Lucia would be located in the 15,000 square-foot, former Botlers St. Lucia Limited factory on Vide Boutielle Highway, and that the move to St. Lucia represented a diversification of his business, rather than any attempt to move away from Jamaica.

SITEL which began operation in Jamaica in 2001, following the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector has been expanding rapidly. It expects to begin another operation at a 50,000 square-foot facility in St Catherine soon and should employ 1,600 persons by mid-year.

Mr. Casserly says his almost four-year-old information and communication technology company last year earned more than J\$1.2 billion from its operations. "We have had revenues in excess of US\$20 million last year and we have been profitable every quarter since the second quarter of 2000," he said. In 2003, E-Services Group's payroll in Montego Bay, Jamaica exceeded US\$10 million, making it the one of the largest single site payroll in that part of the island.

Last month the company opened a 25,000 square-foot facility in Kingston, Jamaica which now employs 80 persons. "We will also be opening our stand-alone 50,000 square-foot facility in April or May of this year," Mr. Casserly added. Based on his existing contracts, the company hopes to employ in excess of 1,600 persons and to realise earnings of about US\$32 million by year-end.

SITEL Caribbean currently manages approximately 2 million customer contacts per day via telephone, e-mail, Internet, traditional mail, and other media. Nearly 26,000 SITEL employees operate from more than 21,000 workstations in 79 contact centres located in 23 countries, providing services in more than 25 languages and dialects.

Our Journey to Nationhood

from page 1

If out of almost nothing our ancestors created a society where we now enjoy a decent standard of living, democratic governance, relative peace and tranquility, then we should have confidence that we can create a more glorious future than the present and the past.

Fighting Poverty

As we celebrate the Silver Jubilee of Independence we must continue to wage war against poverty, injustice, intolerance and bigotry. The battle for social progress and the material advancement of our people must be waged with a new fervour.

On the occasion of our 25th anniversary, I salute those who have gone before, those whose efforts have brought us this far. Although we have come thus far, we still have a long way to travel and we cannot be like weary travellers who seek rest long before the journey is done.

The task of nation building is not the exclusive preserve of the government, but it is a responsibility that we must all shoulder as citizens. It is a task that we cannot and must not shed.

Strong Nation-State

It is in this spirit that the Private Sector, the Public Sector, Civil Society and other civic-minded institutions must join hands in fostering the further advancement and progress of our nation.

Our legacy to future generations must be that of a strong nation-state that is responsive to their social, political and economic needs. We must instill a deep sense of national pride in our people and the young must be taught to respect, protect and revere our national symbols and institutions.

Without a sense of nationalism and patriotism, the foundation upon which we hope to create a strong basis for national development will inevitably crumble. Hence, it is necessary that we articulate and embrace a shared vision for our common destiny - one capable of withstanding international challenges and internal pressures and schisms. The challenges are great, but so too is our resolve. Our resources may be limited, but our will is infinite.

Improved Living Standards

Since independence in 1979, many have toiled long and hard to secure gains in health care, education, infrastructural developments and to introduced into our societies the trappings of a modern nation state.

Indeed we have incrementally improved the standard of living of the large majority of Saint Lucians. On the remnants of the colonial state we have been able to erect a modern bureaucracy capable of giving service and meeting the needs of the Saint Lucian populace.



A scene from the Independence Eve gala.

Our diplomatic service, although small, has been very effective in promoting, defending and articulating the national interest abroad. Through its efforts we have been able to forge relations with friendly governments and countries that share our ideals and find our principles noble.

That shared vision of today and tomorrow has resulted in their confidence in our country, as manifested in their support for our candidacy for the Presidency of the UN General Assembly – a seat we hold on behalf of Caricom and share the rest of the developing world.

The gains we have made must be jealously guarded. But more importantly we must keep on pushing the frontier of possibilities. Therefore we must embrace advances made in science and technology and be creative, innovative and unconventional in our thinking if we are to go boldly into the future.

During the twenty-five years since independence, through the hard work and commitment, we have been able to lay the basis to become a nation of producers.

Our National Independence Exhibition and Showcase 25 have both afforded us opportunities to show what we can do and to retrace our steps as a developing nation

since 1979. They also provide us with opportunities to understand our society and nation through the knowledge of the various social, economic and political processes that have contributed to incremental change and the transformation of our nation through the passage of time.

And they allow us a better understanding of our individual and collective roles in the process of nation building.

Our exhibitions also allow us to recognize and to pay tribute to those who have worked tirelessly in ensuring that each succeeding generation of Saint Lucians enjoy a better standard of living than the one before.

As we celebrate our 25th anniversary of our birth as a nation, we welcome all those who have come to visit and share in our celebrations. We also welcome our Royal Visitor and all the diplomatic and consular representatives here for the occasion.

We salute you as we pledge to continue to strive to take our nation to higher heights with each passing year and with each anniversary of our independence. Here's to a brighter future for us all as we pledge to continue the task of nation building.

Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony
Prime Minister



Passing on the flag from the present to the next generation of leaders.



"Special Blend" on stage at the concert of Prsise and Inspiration.

Saint Lucia Independence Silver Anniversary Celebrations

from page 3

We toast our ancestry. We toast the strength and the wealth of British tradition, the inseparable bonds of friendship and the commonwealth to which we belong, exemplified in the person of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Ladies and gentlemen, to Her Majesty the Queen.

And a special toast to our esteemed special guest. Ladies and gentlemen, His Royal Highness the Duke of York, the Earl of Inverness and the Baron Killyleagh...

We toast the other commonwealth to which we belong. Nous toutes sommes enfants de la Patrie et La Francophonie. Ladies and gentlemen, let us toast our French patrimony and the Francophonie. Ladies and gentlemen, to France.

We toast the multiple identities that have shaped us – the shadows that only we can feel, the grandfathers who go with us. Ladies and gentlemen, to Africa, India, China, Syria and all whose confluence has strengthened us as a people. Ladies and gentlemen, to those who came, who suffered, who toiled...

Our Humanity

Let us now eat in brotherhood but maintain in introspection, the lessons of history. If all is dust in the wind, what endures are the core values that affirm our elemental humanity. As we move beyond this 25th



Hon. Mario Michel inspects a parade at the Gros-Islet playing field, one of the numerous community-based activities.

birthday, let us grow into a responsible adulthood that respects, enshrines and upholds these values.

As a small nation, we must always heed the admonition of our Governor General that we ought to always look beyond the differences that divide us to the necessities that unite us.

I thank you.

Among the special guests present at the banquet were Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy, Governor General of St. Lucia, His Royal Highness the Duke of York, Prince Andrew, Former Governor General Sir Stanislaus James and Lady James, former Governor General Sir George Mallet, former Governor General Sir Vincent Floissac and Lady Floissac, former Prime Minister Mr. Michael Pilgrim, former Prime Minister Dr. Vaughn Lewis and Mrs. Lewis, Excellencies of the Diplomatic Corps, Mr. Baden Allain Speaker of the House of Assembly and Mrs. Allain, Senator Hilford Deterville, President of the Senate and Mrs.

Deterville, Parliamentarians including Hon. Mario Michel, Hon Ignatius Jean, Hon. Sarah Flood Beaubrun, leaders of business, national non-governmental organizations and recipients of the order of St. Lucia Independence Awards.

“As a small nation, we must always heed the admonition of our Governor General that we ought to always look beyond the differences that divide us to the necessities that unite us.”



The staff of the Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities get the attention of the Governor General and the Cabinet Secretary



Dr. James Fletcher, Cabinet Secretary and chairman of the Standing National Independence Anniversary Committee addressing the official opening of “Showcase 25” at the Pointe Seraphine Duty Free Shopping Complex



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Highlights: Week of Mar 1- 6, 2004

Continuation of Independence Anniversary Coverage and Special Features

Tune in Weekly For:

Regional News & Sports with GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 pm
Issues & Answers (Discussion Programme) Mondays at 8:00pm
Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm
Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 6:15pm (Kweyol Discussion)
Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15pm
Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review - English)
Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm (Week in Review—Kweyol)
KiddiCrew.com/Saturdays at 9:30 am

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

Saint Lucia NATIONWIDE is published every fortnight by the Department of Information Services.

Contact us at: The Department of Information Services, Grahame Louisy Administrative Building, The Waterfront, Castries, St. Lucia, West Indies
 Tel: (758) 468 2116; Fax (758) 453 1614; E-mail: gis@candw.lc; <http://stlucia.gov.lc>