



NATIONWIDE

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26TH CARICOM HEADS OF GOV'T SUMMIT BLAZES NEW TRAIL

PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION INVITED AS HEADS PONDER ON THE REGION'S FUTURE



Incoming CARICOM Chairman Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony

Preparations are well under way for St. Lucia to host the 26th CARICOM Heads of Government Summit at the Sandals Regency, Golf Resort and Spa located at Pigeon Point.

A new feature at the upcoming gathering will be the first-ever meeting between the Heads of Government of CARICOM and the Leaders of the Parliamentary Opposition from the Members-States and Associated Member-States.

The meeting - carded for July 2nd - ahead of the meeting of Heads of Government on July 3rd, is seen as being of paramount importance as nation states within the region opt for pluralism, leaving behind insularity and singularity.

Consensus among opposition leaders and Heads on key issues such as the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), and the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), is critical to disallow regional fragmentation, when inevitable change in government occurs.

Importantly, recommendations coming out of the meeting will be among the agenda items for discussion and consideration when the Heads meet.

St. Lucia's Ambassador to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Mr. Anthony Severin has been overseeing preparations for hosting of the Conference from July 3rd to 6th.

The meeting will be chaired by Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Dr Kenny D. Anthony.

Key issues of regional concern, including continuing movement towards the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), a regional approach to crime, the spread of AIDS, outcomes of recent meetings with international agencies and preparations for forthcoming summits will receive attention.

Other agenda items for the summit include preparations for and priority issues relating to forthcoming meetings such as the 4th Summit of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) to take place in Panama later in July, the 4th Summit of the Americas to be held in Argentina in November, the CARICOM-Cuba Summit in December and the 60th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, where matters such as UN Reform and the Millennium Development Goals will be among top agenda items.

Issues arising out of the meetings of the CARICOM Bureau of Ministers and the 35th meeting of the OAS General Assembly of Foreign Ministers with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Florida, will also be discussed.

On the periphery of the summit, Heads will hold discussions with special guests, including President of the Dominican Republic Dr. Leonel Fernandez, outgoing President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Enrique Iglesias and a representative of the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Don Mc Kinnon.

Scores of regional and international guests are expected for the summit and its fringe meetings.

VENEZUELA ANNOUNCES A NEW CARIBBEAN INITIATIVE, BUT THERE CONTINUES TO BE MOUNTING FEARS OVER OIL PRICES

There are mounting fears in St. Lucia, the Caribbean and the world over the continuing increases in the price of fuel on the international market. That, notwithstanding the welcome news of an initiative by Venezuela to provide oil at cheaper prices to 15 of its Caribbean neighbours.

There continues to be concern in St. Lucia about the continuing increase and its implications for the island's economy.

World oil prices increased from an average of US \$26.13 per barrel in 2002 to US \$31.29 in 2003, US \$42.33 in 2004 and US \$58 per barrel at April 4, 2005.

Consequently, up to June 2004, the Treasury lost over \$4 million in uncollected Consumption Taxes and since then another \$2.84 million has been lost - a total of over

\$6 million in less than four years.

This week, the world market price for oil reached a record US \$60 per barrel and it has continued to fluctuate around that level, sending shivers up the spines of economic and financial planners worldwide.

These continuing increases have resulted in the loss of millions in tax revenues, forcing the Government to reluctantly increase petroleum prices at the pump in June 2004.

In his 2005-2006 Budget Address, Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony indicated although world market prices remained high, there would be no increase in the price of fuel. But Government, he said, would continue to monitor market prices.

In the April 19, 2005 address, the Prime Minister noted that the increases continued

to erode the country's tax base and that government was now paying suppliers to provide important fuels such as kerosene.

Since then, oil prices have continued to spiral - with no sign of abating - soaring to last week's record US \$60 mark.

The last time there was an increase in fuel prices here - just over a year ago in June 2004 - the world market price for oil was at US \$42.33 per barrel. The current rates are causing jitters in every sector of the economy.

The present fears come at a time when Governments of non-oil producing developing countries are taking various steps to address the rising prices so as to reduce their eventual impact.

One such step is the Venezuelan regional oil initiative announced in Venezuela on Wednesday, at which several Heads of Government and ministerial delegations discussed the plan to supply crude and refined oil to 15 Caribbean nations at more competitive prices than what they currently pay.

Under the plan, Venezuela's national oil supplier, Petroleo De Venezuela (PDVSA) has already created an affiliate called PDV Caribe to implement the initiative.

Host President Hugo Chavez pledged highly preferential oil prices, with Caracas picking up 40% of the cost if oil prices on the world market topped the US \$50 mark - as is the case now.

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Increase in fuel prices will hamper economic activities in Saint Lucia



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FROM CRISIS TO HOPE

Foresight and vision of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security

Continued from last week's issue

Operational Workstream: Community Policing

The aim in this function was to develop a philosophy and best practice of community policing embedded into the Police Service, leading to an enhanced relationship with, and improved service for the community. A comprehensive strategy was developed for community interventions, and relationships developed and implemented.

Work activities in this area included: Developing a strategy for community policing; Developing a crime reduction strategy; Effecting training in community audits and fear-of-crime surveys; Designing community education programmes and resource materials; Establishing mechanisms for community consultations; Training in community education programmes; Establishing processes and training in volume crime analysis to establish resourcing requirements; Advising on user-friendly refurbishment

Re-orientate the Training of Police Officers to emphasize Crime Prevention Detection and Community Policing, particularly the latter.

A critical concern of the Ministry was the high level of cases which were not being successfully adjudicated in court.

The Ministry recognized the urgent need for improvement in the collection of information and evidence by police investigators in the investigation process and case management generally.

To this end, during the second quarter July 2000, an advanced training programme was conducted for 30 Police Officers in the area of Crime Scene Management.

The Programme was facilitated by three professional experts from Canada. The consultants were provided as technical assistance by the Canadian Government.

Key courses presented at that Programme included: Forensic Science; Crime Scene Protocols for DNA Evidence; Special Consideration for Sexual Assault Evidence; Search, Seizure and Law Procedure; Criminal Profiling; Homicide.

On May 08, 2000, the Director of Public Prosecutions conducted a one-day Seminar for Senior officials of the Police Service which included Police Prosecutors and their Supervisors.

The programme was conducted in an effort to further strengthen the investigative and prosecutorial process engaged by police investigators and prosecutors.

Areas examined and discussed included: The Investigative Process; The Taking of Statements from Witnesses; The Taking of Statements from Suspects; The Conduct of Investigations; Supervision of the Investigative Process; Case File Management and Strategy; The Role of Forensics; Identification Evidence and its Admissibility; Pace 1984 and Its Applicability; Marking of Exhibits; Circumstantial and Direct Evidence; Crime Scene Management; Crime Specific Strategies; Ongoing Education of Investigations

Probation and parole

Reorientation: Since the reassignment of that Department and increased networking with the District Courts there was a general shift in the services provided.

The operations of the Department was progressively rooted in the enforcement of the Probation Ordinance.

This also meant greater involvement in the Court System, in terms of support service and more effective supervision of probationers. New statutory forms were introduced and procedures reviewed. The Department planned a more proactive role in the fight against juvenile delinquency.

Workshops/Seminars/Conferences: Four workshops with funding mainly from UNICEF were conducted to enhance the technical competencies of staff. Namely:

The Role of Juveniles in Conflict with the Law; Relevant Programmes for Social Services Agencies; Counselling methods for Offenders; Role of Juvenile Offenders' Support Group.

A series of parenting sessions and group sessions for probationers and parents were also organized.

Staffing: In order to create the atmosphere for the new orientation to Probation, staff redeployment was undertaken. Consequently, a number of persons who had been assigned to the Department for some time were redeployed elsewhere and new officers were transferred to the Department.

Prisons department

Current Facilities and the Construction of a New Prison at Bordelais.

The new philosophy upon which the facility was based emphasises rehabilitation and re-entry into society.

In the interim, measures were taken to provide some acceptable standard for the current facilities: A new facility for remand prisoners was constructed within the compound of the main prison. This brought some measure of relief to the overcrowding situation at the prison, although the issue of overcrowding remained very much a reality.

Repairs to the Female Prison: Renovation work was undertaken and provided some improvement in the condition of operations there.

complement. These counsellors were better qualified to meet the needs of the wards. The Centre as a whole worked towards improving and enhancing quality care, group counselling and social skills. A new post for an Agricultural Officer was approved in the staff structure.

Refurbishment/Physical Environment: The physical structure housing the Boys' Training Centre was in a deplorable condition. Notwithstanding plans for relocation, it was imperative that some structural work be undertaken. To this end, the following were completed: Upgrading of all offices and the installation of air conditioning in badly needed areas, construction of a second staff bathroom for female staff, new flooring installed in the dormitories, new ceiling installed in the Executive Officer's office, repairs to the kitchen, extensive plumbing works throughout the Centre, repairs to the male staff bathroom and installation of a water pump, creation of new office space, new equipment was also procured for the use of the Centre. In addition, attention was also given to the upgrading of the library, the counselling room and the recreation area.

Relocation of the Boys' Training Centre: A New Juvenile Correctional Centre: Work plans were completed for the relocation of the Centre which involved a physical shift from Massade, its current location.

Home for Girls: The absence of a suit-



Hon. Senator Calixte George - Minister for Home Affairs and Internal Security

Bakery Rehabilitation Project: Some \$70,000 was spent to rehabilitate the Prison Bakery. This significantly enhanced the revenue earning capacity of that operation.

The new Bordelais Correctional Facility: The design and construction of the facility is in accordance with internationally acceptable standards and the United Nations Charter on Prisons Rights and Incarceration which takes into account among others: The multi-purpose nature of the facility; Optimum efficiency and functionality; Rehabilitation of inmates; Security/integrity of the facility.

The Range Of Confinement Includes: Maximum Security; Remand; Old offenders and recidivists; Young offenders and first offenders; Female.

Among others, the design features takes into consideration: Health Care Facility; An Induction Unit; A Chapel.

Boys' training centre

Leadership/Management: The Centre was under the leadership of an Officer-In-Charge for some time. As is expected, this kind of arrangement has its inherent difficulties which impacted on the Centre's ability to effectively meet its objectives.

Staffing: There was a lateral transfer of counselors to and from the Centre. Two new counsellors were added to the staff

able place for our delinquent girls was a serious concern to the Ministry and is a major impediment to effective supervision of young female probationers. Discussions were held with the Ministry of Health, Women's Affairs and Social Services with a view to identifying temporary accommodation in the short run.

To this end, discussions were held with officials of the Ministry of Planning for identification of a suitable location. A site visit to one such location was made in May 2000 with the Department of Crown Lands and officials of the Ministry.

A project proposal presenting a general framework for the development/establishment of a new Juvenile Correctional Centre was submitted to both the Ministry of Planning and Development and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs for appropriate funding arrangements.

The new Juvenile Correctional Centre will operate within a more modern and progressive framework. It will provide a conceptual/ philosophical shift from the past which focused on the custodial approach. The new approach will focus on rehabilitation of the wards, both delinquent boys and girls.

A Committee of Stakeholders was Established for the New Juvenile Correctional Centre (JCC).

The committee of all stakeholders was established to examine the construction of the new Centre and oversee the operational plans, development, establishment and implementation of the new JCC.

The Committee included key professionals in the field of counselling; rehabilitation, the Magistracy, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Planning to examine and make recommendations for the establishment and operations of the new JCC.

Establishment of Saint Lucia's National Joint Intelligence Headquarters (NJIH): In November 1999, Government approved St. Lucia's participation in the Project Maritime Office (the PMO) for Maritime Counter Drug Co-operation in the Caribbean.

St. Lucia's participation in the (PMO) facilitated the establishment of a National Joint Intelligence Headquarters which would provide for the development of a formalized data collection, analysis and management systems network, for counter-drug co-operation.

Background checks and security clearances for non-nationals and nationals alike will be processed faster, due to access through a systems based process, with a reliable criminal database.

Funding for telecommunications and other equipment; as well as Management Information Systems including ancillary equipment was provided by donor countries. In particular, France and the United Kingdom.

Development of a Standard Operations Procedures Manual and Training of the Unit's personnel was undertaken; and was provided as technical assistance, principally from the United Kingdom and the United States.

Office Space was identified for the Unit and implementation of the establishment of the Unit was co-coordinated by the Ministry of Home Affairs in collaboration with the Police Department, the Customs and Excise Department, the St. Lucia Ports Police, the Substance Abuse Advisory Council Secretariat and the Project Management Office for Maritime Co-operation and Training in Barbados.

The objective of the Unit is to support the national, regional and international law enforcement mandate of these Agencies.

A Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation and Partnership between the Royal St. Lucia Police Service and the St. Lucia Customs and Excise Department was prepared based on the Barbados model.

The relevant structure and staffing requirements were prepared to conduct the functions and activities of the NJIH and the identification of a Project Manager was also undertaken.

Terms of Reference and qualification requirements for the Project Manager were developed and completed.

Agreements in principle were secured for the secondment of three suitably qualified Police Officers and Customs Officers, and Ports Police to the NJIH.

The Establishment Of The NJIU Will Provide For The Achievement Of The Following: Enhancement of the maritime counter drug operational capability by maximizing the use of existing national and regional structures and institutions; Establishment of an effective network of inter-agency intelligence and operations centers at national and regional level; Facilitation of the implementation of joint law enforcement and sustainable maritime equipment programmes; Joint training of personnel in maritime and counter drugs operations of the future; The establishment of vessels and aircraft databases and; The establishment of a database for the inventory of maritime assets.

Continued in next week's issue

Easing the Squeeze on the poor Textbook Rental Programme Begins in September

Cabinet Conclusion no. 248 of 2005 has approved the introduction of a Textbook Rental Programme which was submitted by the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports.

The first phase of the programme is expected to cover 30% of the students in Forms 1, 2 and 3 of secondary schools - all subjects included.

Bursaries will be administered through a means test and a school-based committee of two persons nominated by the principal. One of the persons administering the bursaries shall be designated the chairperson. The other will be a member of the community nominated by the Minister for Education after consultation with relevant Parliamentarians.

The Ministry of Education, Human

Resource Development, Youth and Sports will determine the criteria for the Means Test and the selection of exceptionally poor students.

New bursary awards commencing the academic year 2005-2006 will cease.

The bursary programme will continue however, for students at the primary level and those at secondary schools presently on bursaries.

Through parents or guardians beneficiaries will be held accountable for the cost of lost, or damaged books, by the application of a standard fine of 15% of the value of each book.

A 15% discount will be applied to the cost of rental for students who take exemplary care of the books.

Subject to the approval of the Accountant General, the revenues from



the Textbook Rental Programme will be placed in an interest-bearing account. These funds will be used to meet the cost of replacement and additional copies of books.

Fees will be waived for students from families who are exceptionally poor, as determined by the school-based committee.

The rental fee will be \$175.00 per set of books per year.

The Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth & Sports is dedicated to service, committed to excellence in providing equity of access, increased opportunity and quality service for the continued development of the people of Saint Lucia.

Consultation ongoing to develop plan for education - Every citizen has a say

Once again the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports has embarked on an ambitious programme of island-wide public consultations to garner the views of stakeholders with the intention of formulating a new Education Sector Development Plan. During the ongoing discussions, the current plan, which technically comes to and ends in December 2005, is also reviewed.

So far officials of the Ministry of Education have met with educators, school administrators and community groups in several of the education districts. These gatherings have discussed a wide range of issues including (i) Universal Secondary Education and its implications, (ii) School Security and the need to improve the physical structure of schools (iii) the need to increase technical and vocational education at primary schools, (iv) the need to curb the rise of indiscipline among schools students (v) the need to develop a sports curriculum (vi) introduction of spiritual and moral education as part in the curriculum (vii) the need for special education teachers at all levels of the system, (viii) continuous training of teachers and (ix) the need to review the Minimum Standard and Standard Six examinations.

One of the more engaging consultations took place with the leadership of the St. Lucia Teachers Union on Tuesday 7th June.

The SLTU delegation, led by President Julian Monroe and General Secretary Wayne Cumberbatch was in full force as it outlined the union's position on several matters.

One of the major concerns of the SLTU is the current status of the Curriculum and Material Development Unit (Camdu). According to Cumberbatch, "Camdu has a significant role to play in the development of curriculum and instruction and so every effort must be made to fill all vacant posts at the institution." The union took the view that while the role and functions of the officers at Camdu may be reviewed, the original intention of the unit must not be forgotten.

The Union also expressed the view



SLTU delegation and Ministry of Education officials exchange ideas



Members of the public are encouraged to provide their input

that the Education ministry should be more receptive to distance education, especially programmes that would meet international requirements.

In spite of the concerns raised, the SLTU commended the Ministry of Education for a number of initiatives undertaken during the past five years. The union leadership saw the enactment of the Education Act, which spells out

clearly the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the education system as a positive move.

The union lauded the goal of moving from a command center to a service center but felt that the pace at which that was being done should be intensified. The SLTU was nevertheless pleased with the appointment of Change Agent (Ms. Cindy Emmanuel) and the train-

ing provided to the ministry's staff in customer service.

SLTU's President Julian Monroe, is of the view that while the current Education Sector Development Plan identified the achievement of boys as a major concern, the necessary action had not taken place to remedy the situation. Monroe questioned the recommended textbooks, which he felt were not appealing to boys. Notwithstanding, the union's leadership hailed the ministry's efforts at improving numeracy and literacy island-wide.

The Testing and Evaluation Unit of the ministry and the introduction of the Lower Secondary School Curriculum received high praise from the union leadership. The Union also expressed its support for moves toward universal secondary education. However, it was felt that there were grey areas, which needs addressing. Some of those areas include resource allocation to secondary schools, the issue of zoning and the secondary school selection process by students.

One critical factor, which the union was asked to ponder was whether it was still necessary to appoint teachers to a particular school or to the system. Other issues, which surfaced during the discussions with the Union's leadership, included the management and ownership of schools, a university campus in St. Lucia, the need to raise the physical standards of primary schools to match the Dame Pearlette Louisy Primary School, the introduction of multi-media technology at primary schools and remedial education support.

The ministry will spare no effort in obtaining the views of St. Lucians on this most important matter. This process of public consultations to determine national policy has been in existence for the past six years and will continue to serve as the vehicle the ministry will utilize to collate the opinions and suggestions of the general public.

If you have suggestions for the new Education Sector Development Plan please do not hesitate to submit them to the Corporate Planning Department or the Communications Unit of the Ministry of Education.

PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING NEEDED A SEASON OF IRRITATIONS

We are in the rainy season and whether we believe it or not, heavy and constant rainfall can affect our moods and well-being. Other developments might well worsen the situation.

Let me explain. You will recall that during my Budget address I announced the commencement of a series of capital works ranging from work in the water sector, road works and private sector developments in the Tourism Sector, as well as construction activity by the Air and Seaports Authority (SLASPA). While these projects will undoubtedly create new opportunities for local businesses and also provide opportunities for employment, there is a more important matter which I would wish to talk about today. This matter will really test our resolve as a people to cooperate with one another, manage our tempers and respect each other's rights.

Earth moving activities

During the period of construction there will be lots of earth moving activities. Roads and drains will be dug; construction material will need to be transported. Our ports of entry will be busy with the importation of construction materials. These activities will cause inconvenience, delays and disruptions. And on top of all this some of these construction activities will commence during the rainy season. So we can well imagine how affected persons will feel as all these scheduled activities will be undertaken during periods of heavy downpours, since it is expected that we will have an active hurricane season. We are all going to feel irritated and annoyed during this period of activity and some will be looking for someone to blame.

Infrastructural work in water sector

Let me expound what I mean. Very soon a contractor will be identified to commence the infrastructural work to be undertaken in the water sector. The work will involve the upgrading of pumps at the Roseau Dam, the elimination of the bottleneck that exists in the transmission line between the dam and the treatment plant at Ciceron. This will involve some excavation work as new pipes are put in to replace the existing ones. This should not prove too inconvenient as the proposed routing will not be along busy thoroughfares. However, a significant component of the infrastructural works will involve the laying of pipes between a newly installed tank at the Morne (near the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College) and Bocage and then on to Hill 20 in Babonneau. This will involve the excavation along the road that runs on the ridge from the Morne to Bocage and on to Hill 20. During the excavation, the road will need to be closed in some areas or reduced to one lane traffic.



Upgrading of pumps at Roseau Dam will allow for increased flow of water

So citizens who live in this area as well as those who normally use this route to go to Forresterre, Ti Rocher and environs will be asked to exercise extreme caution when using the road. I know that this construction activity will wear thin the patience of drivers, pedestrians and residents of the community,

and reaction from airlines. But it must be understood that the work is necessary in order to preserve the integrity of the airport as well as to provide a safe operating environment for the airlines and the passengers who use the airport. The way I see it is that in balancing the options available, there



George F.L. Charles Airport runway will be upgraded

the airport will involve the approach of repairing sections of the runway, which will be undertaken during the night, and therefore leaving the airport open for daytime activity. It is inevitable that at some time during the complete resurfacing of the runway that the airport would have to be closed complete-

ly ensuring that the traveling public be kept informed on the progress of the work.

Redevelopment of castries Gros Islet Highway

During this week I will be heading a delegation to hold discussions in Kuwait with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Devel-



Another major project is the construction of the new National Hospital

opment. The purpose of the discussions is to finalise funding arrangements for the redevelopment of the Castries to Gros Islet Highway. You may have heard the Minister for Communications and Works recently on the revised plans for the highway, and therefore based on these options I will be seeking the Kuwait Fund's approval to finance the new designs to the highway. If all goes well, it is expected that work will commence on the highway

some time in October of this year. The redevelopment of the highway will involve the expansion and realignment of certain sections, as well as the construction of roundabouts near the Friendship Inn, the Choc Junction and Mongiraud. The Vigie roundabout will also be upgraded. Four pedestrian

footbridges will be constructed and the entire road will be resurfaced. Again the need for commuters and residents along the route to exercise patience and forbearance will be called upon.

Reconstruction of east coast highway

As if all of this was not enough, motorists will have to contend with delays on the East Coast Highway. Already, delays are being experienced because

of the reconstruction of the section between Grande Riviere and Fond Dor. Reconstruction will accelerate as Government tackles the section from Manoeel Street, through Cul de Sac, Bexon and on to Grande Riviere. Taxi drivers will have to explain the delays of our visitors. Minibus drivers will need to



Major tourism projects likely to be undertaken this year

take special care as they ply the route from Castries to Vieux Fort, Choiseul and elsewhere.

Other public sector construction

Traffic will also be affected on the Millennium Highway when construction of the two new hospitals commence. Construction of the Psychiatric Hospital, will hopefully, start in October. Before then, an access road has to be built from the highway onto the site.



The Castries Gros-Islet Highway earmarked for redevelopment

but I wish to urge your understanding while the Government attempts to ensure that there is a reasonable supply of water to the community and residents further north.

Rehabilitation of runway

Another example is the work to be undertaken in rehabilitating the runway at George F. L. Charles Airport. Already, the work to be undertaken has been met with some public criticism

must be consideration given to the cost of undertaking the project and the reliability of the consultants and contractors to deliver the project on time and within budget.

During my Budget Address earlier this year, I implored all users of the airport to be patient as the works are going to inconvenience all who use the facility. Some more than others. I have been reliably informed that the best cost effective option to resurface

ly. It is like building a house. At some point all energies must be focused on completing the roof structure and covering the house before plastering the inside walls and laying tiles and painting inside walls. And so it is with the resurfacing of the runway. The final section to make the runway complete would involve the curtailing of business activity at the airport for a very short period of time.

I have requested SLASPA to contin-

So, watch out for more delays.

Developments in tourism sector

During my Budget Address, I also announced the commencement of a number of private sector projects particularly in the Tourism Sector. Some of these projects, based on information that I have received from the developers are likely to commence during the third and fourth quarters of this year.

The first is the Landing at Rodney Bay. This project is estimated to cost US\$120 million. This property will comprise 50 villas and 144 condominiums and will include an impressive array of marine facilities.

The next project is Praslin Bay Resort. This project is estimated to cost US\$ 90 million. This property will consist of executive suites, condominiums, conference facilities and an 18 hole championship golf course. I understand that the ground breaking ceremony is scheduled for August 04, 2005.

The former Wyndham Morgan Bay, now owned by the Almond group of hotels, has already commenced refurbishing work and an additional 100 rooms will be added to this property.

Then there is Port St. Lisi, the proposed development by Choc Estate and C.O. Williams of Barbados. This US\$147 million private marina at Choc Bay will be developed on 30 acres of land, with up to 200 residential units for sale.

While these developments are going to occur on private property, it is anticipated that construction material will be transported to the various construction sites. This will involve the movement of large trucks and containers over roads that would be under rehabilitation, as with the case of the Castries to Gros Islet highway. Unless planned properly, this could result in traffic delays, presenting inconveniences to commuters.

Breaking eggs to make omelet

There is an old saying that in order to make an omelet you must break eggs. This is certainly going to be a season of irritation for most of our citizens. I wish to indicate to everyone that the Government will ensure that disruptions are minimized. In some cases it may be opportune for us to introduce some innovative mitigating factors, which I will be discussing with you at a later date. I know that we all want to see that developments that are programmed are completed on time. Therefore let us endure this season with patience, understanding, and with a quiet and mild spirit.

Until next time, please have a good week, be of good cheer and God Bless!

NIC serious about the nation's health Universal Health Care top of priority list

The matter of a programme of Universal Health Care in Saint Lucia has pre-occupied the business of the NIC for some time now.

And so in October 2003, Cabinet approved the amended report of the Task Force established to review the possibility of implementing a National Health Insurance in Saint Lucia. Since then, a Steering Committee and several Sub-Committees have been activated to operationalise a programme of Universal Health Care on the island.

A total of eight sub-committees were established to address issues such as registration, human resource training and development and a basket of services and overseas care that considers standards and quality assurance, health information and management, legislation and public education.

Though the Committees began their work in earnest, it soon became apparent that some committees did not have the requisite capacity, both in terms of time and ability, to deliver on their mandates. Consequently, some of the work of the committees had to be contracted to external consultants.

The communication and marketing strategy adopted to date has been one of direct engagement with the community of interest groups. Between November 2004 and February 2005, a two (2) person team of Ms Emma Hippolyte and Dr Stephen King conducted discussions with communities around the island. To date the team has met with ten (10) communities, namely, Vieux Fort, Soufriere, Dennery, Babonneau, Choiseul, Laborie, Anse La Raye, Canaries, Gros Islet and Castries. The team has also met with members of the business community in Castries and Vieux Fort.

Though attendance at several of the community meetings was less than satisfactory, persons from Anse La Raye, Canaries, Laborie and Choiseul turned out in large numbers. The session for workers in Castries was also well attended. Notwithstanding the low numbers who turned up for some of the discussions, participation was always lively and enthusiastic.

It is clear that there is broad public support for the UHC programme based on the issues raised by the persons engaged. Perhaps the most significant concerns expressed by participants related to the mode of financing, the assurance for awaiting service and the implementation date for the UHC.

Most persons supported a flat tax as the funding mechanism. It was conceded that the funding mechanism chosen would impact the start-up date of the UHC, as there would be need for a sufficient reserve to be built.

The communities also used the opportunities provided to vent their concerns about other issues associated with the health care delivery system of the island. For instance persons expressed their dissatisfaction with the present service at their health centres. Specifically, they highlighted the absence of doctors on a regular basis, the breakdown of the public assistance card to access the health system as well as the



UHC is everybody's business



Elderly folk want to be in the know

absence of service after 4:00 pm.

The public also expressed concern about the quality of care and the equity of care in the delivery system. They wanted assurance that the UHC system would improve the quality of care.

A consulting firm, Odyssey Consultinc, from Trinidad and Tobago, was engaged to prepare a Human Resource Strategic Plan and a Training Plan for the UHC and the entire health system of Saint Lucia. The firm has submitted and presented a draft report.

During the presentation of the report, the consultants were alerted to the fact that the report did not adequately address blood bank services, mental health services and emergency services. The Consultants were advised that these essential services must be fully detailed in the plans and report. They were therefore directed to obtain the missing information and re-submit with the required and suggested amendments.

The committee responsible for exploring issues related to registration has identified a number of possible processes by which persons may be registered, and the periodicity for repeat registration. However, the committee has advised that they would need further information on the financing mechanism before they can offer final recommendations.

Quality Assurance

In response to issues of quality assur-

ance, the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA) was contracted to conduct a risk assessment on all the health providers (i.e. Victoria Hospital, Tapion Hospital, St. Jude's Hospital, Golden Hope and Turning Point) which are expected to operate within the UHC system.

The consulting team has submitted their reports, and during the months of March and April, held review meetings with the providers. The CCHSA made a number of recommendations, which if implemented will help Saint Lucia achieve international accreditation for its health facilities within the next three to six years. The reports shall be used as blue prints for quality improvement programmes within the health sector.

Information management systems will serve as the central nervous system in the effective operation of a UHC. Sanigest International, a Costa Rican based firm, was engaged in February 2005 to conduct this consultancy. The firm expects that by October 2005, the platform/framework for the operation of the information system would be established, and the UHC could commence registration of participants.

A Legislative Drafter, in the person of Mr. Ken Gumbley of the United Kingdom, was contracted to review the legislative implications of establishing a UHC and to draft appropriate legislation and regulations which shall govern the operations of the UHC. Mr. Gumbley has submitted a draft Bill which has



CMO Dr. Stephen King briefing participants

been forwarded to the Attorney General for review and comment. The Steering Committee is awaiting feedback from the Attorney General's Chambers.

The committee established to review pharmacy and therapeutic services have submitted a proposed formulary. However, there needs to be further discussion with the health care providers before the proposal can be accepted as the national formulary.

The committee responsible for determining the basket of services which the UHC should provide has submitted its report. This report has been forwarded to the St. Lucia Medical and Dental Association and the St. Lucia Nursing Association for their review and endorsement.

During several discussions with the stakeholders in this process, one of the recurring questions related to the start-up date of the UHC. Critical to the operationalisation of the UHC will be the appointment of an appropriate management team. The management team will have among its responsibilities the establishing of suitable systems to guide the efficient operation of the UHC.

Critical to the success of UHC is the recruitment of an appropriately qualified manager. The NIC is making every effort to ensure that the correct individual is employed.

The Steering Committee was of the firm belief that a socio-economic impact assessment of the introduction of the UHC needed to be undertaken. Attempts were made to procure consultants to commission the activity, but their proposed costs were, in the estimation of the Committee, exorbitant.

The European Union has agreed to provide Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Health to assist in the preparation of a strategic plan for the health sector. The Terms of Reference for the Technical Assistance have now been modified to permit the conduct of a socio-economic impact assessment of the introduction of the UHC. The impact assessment will be undertaken by HERA (Health Research for Action), and they have indicated June 30th 2005 as their date for submission of their report.

Recognising the need for greater synchronicity between the introduction of UHC and the other reforms taking place within the health sector, the Steering Committee has been liaising with the Ministry of Health to ensure better coordination of efforts, and pave the way for a smoother transition to a UHC system. One area where this collaboration is most evident is in the discussions on the governance structure of the hospitals.

Quality service ahead of the CSME and Cricket World Cup 2007

Exceeding Customer Expectations

The upcoming Cricket World Cup 2007 will serve as a testing ground for Saint Lucia's readiness to provide service which meets or exceeds customer expectations.

The value and role that service quality plays in achieving business success is becoming more apparent worldwide. This is true for more than just profit oriented businesses. Non profit and public organisations are increasingly recognising that when it comes to keeping customers happy, providing quality service is one of the most valuable strategies at their disposal.

Service quality can be defined as the act of enhancing the value of a product, through service which meets or exceeds customer expectations.

It has been proven that the enterprises that will achieve success in an open market are those which focus on leadership in management, quality, financial performance, and, above all, customer satisfaction. The declining American Customer Satisfaction Index scores, in the face of increasing product quality, highlight this very well.

Businesses worldwide are being forced to improve and differentiate their business through the level of service provided to customers. They are being forced to shift focus from just satisfying customers to exceeding their expectations. How businesses and organizations in Saint Lucia respond to

these issues will be a make or break factor in an open economy and globalised world, particularly in light of the imminent creation of the CARICOM Single Market Economy.

In such a competitive environment, competition will not just be based on the quality of the product, but also, the quality of service delivery.

During Cricket World Cup 2007, Saint Lucia's service delivery will be in the spotlight; the level of our performance as a nation will therefore be a key determinant for our survival in the

greatly assist Saint Lucia's progress in this process.

Customer focus is one of eight quality management principles on which the quality management system standards of the revised ISO 9000:2000 series are based. The global relevance of issues relating to service quality has also prompted ISO and a number of foreign standards bodies to delve more seriously into standards for customer satisfaction, dealing with customer complaints and customer dispute resolution.

The ISO 9000 quality management standards underscore the importance of an organization being customer focused. This is highlighted as a tool to be used by senior management to guide their organizations towards improved performance.

Applying the principle of Customer Focus typically leads to researching and understanding customer needs and expectations, ensuring that the objec-

measuring customer satisfaction and acting on the results and systematically managing customer relationships, ensuring a balanced approach between satisfying customers and other interested parties such as owners, employees, suppliers, financiers, local communities and society as a whole.

Building customer loyalty requires looking at services from the client's perspective. Saint Lucian businesses must think about adopting a service management approach to the running of business and being on the cutting edge where this is concerned by ensuring that your business has the tools and training which will allow you to deliver exceptional service at all times, by using service approaches that work, measuring results, judging performance, and modifying services in response to data. Critically, there must be management structures and practices that support workers in their efforts to provide effective service and ensure competence to meet customer needs.

Organizations depend on their customers and therefore should understand current and future customer needs. Businesses that pay close attention to the details of customer service will be more successful at winning and keeping customers, improving customer loyalty and generating repeat business. Organizations such as these display a greater level of flexibility and response to market opportunities. Consequently they are more likely to record increased revenues, market share and profitability than those that do not.

For information on the ISO 9000 quality management standards, Customer Service standards, training in quality management and related subjects contact the Information Services Department of the Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards.



The SLBS - situated in the Bisee Industrial Estate

new economic environment post World Cup 2007.

Our island's service quality cannot be left to chance. Standardization can

tives of the organization are linked to customer needs and expectations, communicating customer needs and expectations throughout the organization,

Amidst Concerns of Small Island Developing States CSME set to come into effect in January 2006



CARICOM Secretary General His Excellency Edwin Carrington

Fresh from the just concluded 41st Meeting of the OECS Authority in Dominica in June, Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony has reiterated calls ahead of the implementation date of January 1, 2006, for the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), for the establishment of a proposed development fund to help address the current trade imbalance.

Dr Anthony notes that trade between the OECS and CARICOM benefit largely Trinidad and Tobago.

Dr. Anthony says it is vital that OECS countries be provided with far

greater support, either on the proposed development fund or otherwise to ensure that we are able to obtain far more meaningful benefits from the CSME arrangements.

Member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) likely to experience setbacks in being Single Market ready come January 1, 2006, are being asked to seek necessary assistance to enable them to meet the implementation deadline.

Speaking at a media clinic, ahead of the upcoming 26th CARICOM Heads of Government Conference, where the issue is expected to surface, CARI-

COM Secretary General His Excellency Edwin Carrington said there is no question of an extension of time for states to become CSME ready come January 2006.

Mr. Carrington says, it is not in the region's interest to delay on the implementation of the CSME, given the avalanche of challenges that loomed on the horizon.

Carrington also addressed the establishment of a proposed development fund or some other mechanism to help address the current trade imbalance between OECS countries and larger CARICOM member states namely Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Barbados.

Meanwhile, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) will hold the inaugural 10k Road Race on the morning of Sunday, July 3rd 2005. The event takes place hours prior to the official opening ceremony of the 26th Heads of Government Conference.

Open to males and females and the race will include professional and amateur athletes from across the region and CARICOM nationals residing overseas.

CARICOM Secretary General His Excellency Edwin Carrington told journalists at the media clinic, the road race - stretching from Volney's Gas Station in Reduit and ending at the National Insurance Corporation (NIC)



Headquarters on the Waterfront in the capital Castries - is just one way the Caribbean Community is seeking to encourage CARICOM nationals to use physical activity and sport to promote healthy lifestyles, peace and cooperation"

The race will become an annual event and will take place in the member state hosting the regular meeting.

Prizes will be awarded to the top six in each category with the top prize in each category being US\$1000 dollars and a winners' trophy. Special prizes will also be awarded to students.

THE BEAUTIES AND THE PM

In recent years, paying a visit to Prime Minister Anthony has become a regular feature on the calendar of activities for carnival queen contestants.

The meeting place is the official residence of the prime minister.

Dr. Anthony plays host by engaging the bevy of beauties in light conversation as well as some serious matters.

During the recent chit chat, the gorgeous ladies were quizzed on their personal development, and their families' thoughts on their involvement in the beauty pageant.

The issue of female dominance in several spheres of life was a front burner issue – virtually hot to the touch – what with 7 ladies and 1 gentleman.

Then the PM challenged the beauties. "You all can ask me any questions." And questions they did ask. Among them: "What would you do in another life apart from academics?" And after pondering a wee bit: "Play music the prime minister re-

sponded...there's something that attaches the musician to his/her instrument, much like a book to the academic."

Well then, who ever said there isn't a bridge between playing music and academics?

The lasses, ranging from age 19 to 22 years, have a hectic schedule. They all agree that much bonding have taken place among them, as they undertake their tours of duty that range from crash courses in communication to attending dinners held in their honour.

The usually well attended Carnival Queen Pageant is scheduled for July 8th at the National Cultural Centre at Barnard Hill – well after the curtains are drawn on the CARICOM Heads of Government Summit scheduled to commence this weekend.

No doubt, given the beautiful "heads" – displayed in the photos above, one can expect a delightful evening much like we anticipate a successful 26th CARICOM Heads of Government gathering.



19 year old Joy-Ann Biscette



20 year old Kiscia Dolcy



20 year old Keisha St Helene



Carnival Queen contestants routinely visit Prime Minister Anthony



21 year old Aneshar Antoine



21 year old LeAnn Clyne



19 year old Llana Casimir



22 year old Nickita Clarke

Mounting Fears Over Oil Prices

Continued from page 1

Describing the initiative as aimed at creating "an energy alliance" between the participating states, President Chavez also promised further concessions to the PetroCaribe signatories if prices hit the US \$100 mark.

He also disclosed that the Venezuelan Government has put aside US \$50 million to kick-start the plan, which will also see Caracas paying for oil shipments and helping with the establishment of storage facilities across the region.

The Venezuela summit, which took place in the city of Puerto La Cruz, was attended by several Caricom leaders, including Jamaica's P.J. Patterson, Grenada's Dr Keith Mitchell, Guyana's President

Bharrat Jagdeo and Trinidad & Tobago's Patrick Manning. Currently, Caricom neighbours are purchasing oil at world market prices from oil rich Trinidad & Tobago.

Also in attendance were Cuba's President Fidel Castro and the Dominican Republic's Leonel Fernandez.

The Venezuela meeting ended with the announcement of an agreement on the plan, which will see Venezuela – the world's fifth largest supplier – pumping oil to the participating states to help shore up their energy supplies at a time when world prices are hindering their development.

The Caricom member-states due to benefit include Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St.

Vincent and the Grenadines, Surinam and Trinidad & Tobago.

All these countries – except oil rich Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados, which have not initialed the agreement – are expected to breathe a collective sigh of relief when their respective delegations report to the 26th Caricom Heads of Government Summit due to open here this weekend.

However, given the reluctance of Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados to sign and its resultant effect in stalling the implementation of the agreement, it may take some time before the Venezuelan oil facility gets up and running.

During that time, St. Lucia and other non-oil producing Eastern Caribbean states will have to contend with the uncertainties and brace for the challenges brought by the continuing increase in oil prices on the world market.



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. July 2nd - Fri. 8th July, 2005

SPECIAL: CARICOM FEATURES

– **MON. – THURS. from 8:30 p.m.**

The GIS discusses the relevance of technical vocational education in schools - **Sat. July 2nd 6:30 p.m.**

• Rats on the Run – Methods of baiting and keeping the rat population under control– **Sun. July 3rd, 7:30 p.m.**

• La Vie Choiseul – Choiseul Re-discovered – **Mon. July 4th, 6:15 p.m.**

• The Giant African Snail – Controlling the Pests– **Mon. July 4th, 6:30 p.m.**

• The GIS discusses the role of the Peace Corps in St. Lucia - **Tues. July 5th, 6:15 p.m.**

• Women West Indies – An Exciting Series of portraits featuring women in the Caribbean – **Every Wednesday at 6:15 p.m.**

– **Wed. July 6th, 6:15 p.m.**

• Methods of Contraception – **Thurs. July 7th, 9:30 p.m.**

• Secondary Schools Athletic Meet 2005 – **Fri. July 8th 8:00 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,

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