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# BUDGET DAY

## - APRIL 19



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony gears up his Budget Speech

In exactly two weeks time, St. Lucians will know exactly how the economy fared in the past year and what the Government's revenue and expenditure projections are for the next financial year.

Tuesday, April 19 has been set as Budget Day – the day when the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance presents the Government's Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 2005 to 2006.

Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony and top officials of the Ministry of Finance have for the past several weeks been meeting with Cabinet Ministers, as well as with finance and accounting officials from various ministries, to discuss budgetary projections and allocations.

The discussions have been taking place against the background of continuous record increases in the world market price for oil over the past year. On Monday, oil prices hit another re-

cord high, this time topping US\$58 dollars per barrel, with projections that it could reach as high as US \$105 per barrel.

The rise in fuel prices on the world market continues to be a matter of serious concern to the Government, which has frequently warned over the past 12 months about the consequences and implications for small, non-oil producing economies like St. Lucia.

The preparations for this year's budget, which are entering the final phase, are also taking place against the background of the St. Lucia economy having grown by 3.5% in 2004, following equally strong growth in 2003.

On April 19, the presentation of the Budget by the Finance Minister will be preceded by the presentation of the traditional Throne Speech by Her Excellency the Governor General, Dame Pearlette Louisy.

Following the presentation of the annual estimates of revenue and expenditure by the Minister of Finance, there will be the traditional one-day break to allow parliamentarians time to prepare for the ensuing Budget Debate.

The presentation of the Budget and the Throne Speech and the subsequent parliamentary debate will all be broadcast live on the National Television Network (NTN).

## SIR ALLAN LOUISY "DID THE RIGHT THING FOR ST. LUCIA"

Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny D. Anthony has challenged Saint Lucians not to forget the history which created us and the people who helped shape that history. Speaking at the investiture ceremony for Sir Allan Louisy, Dr Anthony said he wondered why it was so easy to forget "the accomplishments of our distinguished men and women"

Dr. Anthony said, "Sometimes I wonder whether we think that the achievements of these individuals are

no longer relevant to our times; that we need to move on, as it were. Sometimes I wonder whether we are so preoccupied with the challenges that face us on a daily basis, it is not worth going to the past. Sometimes too I wonder whether there are those among us who are anxious to disown the history that created us to, as it were, engage in amnesia, and forget the past. Sometimes too I wonder whether it is because in delving into the past we do not find enough to glorify, to praise and to give honour to."

Continued on page 2



Sir Allan Louisy flanked by Governor General, Dame Pearlette Louisy (L) and Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony (R)



# Sir Allan Louisy

## “did the right thing for this country”

*Continued from page 1*

The Prime Minister added “Sir Alan Louisy in his own life confirms that there is every reason why we have to celebrate the men and women among us who have helped to shape this country. Look at Sir Allan, a trade unionist, a founding member of the seamen and waterfront workers union, a president of the Civil Service Association, a lawyer a registrar, a magistrate, an acting administrator, a high court judge, an acting court of appeal judge, and then a prime minister of St. Lucia.”

Addressing a gathering of family, close friends and a few legal luminaries at Government House, Dr. Anthony characterised Sir Allan’s life as unknown but “extraordinary” by any means or methods you choose to measure his accomplishments. He noted “Perhaps Sir Allan must bear some of the blame. Not deliberately in any way; but perhaps the very character of the man himself prevents him from advertising his extraordinary accomplishments. Allan Louisy is a simple man, self effacing, extraordinary humble. And humility does not allow you to advertise yourself or accomplishments.”

The Prime Minister said “In all my conversations with Sir Allan Louisy, never once have I heard him go back to his past on what he has achieved or cre-

ated for this country. This simple man was at home with kings and equally at home with the ordinary people of his village and of his country.”

“I recall there was a time some among us ridiculed him because he loved his game of dominos, and that he sought refuse, pleasure and joy by engaging, while he was prime minister, in the occasional game of dominos with the citizens of his community. But yet that simple act, that simple fact of Allan demonstrated how he loved Laborie that created and produced him, but more important than that the pleasures he could obtain from the simple people around him and his community. I think, in that there is a powerful legacy; that no matter what we achieve in our own lives, let us never ever forget the community that created us, the people that helped to shape out lives, and the people who give meaning to who we are and what we are.”

Commenting on Sir Allan short tenure as prime Minister of Saint Lucia Dr. Anthony said “Unfortunately for Sir Allan many people remember him for the turbulent years when he was prime minister of this country and who known history will redeem him and be kind to him, because there are some of us here today who are familiar with that history and understand that his-



Prime Minister Kenny Anthony speaking at the ceremony

tory, and who some day would want to express their views about that history and the role that Sir Allan Louisy. I certainly will leave the rest to history but say this; that whatever action Sir Allan took in those days, given what we know about the integrity of men today, albeit with the assistance of hindsight, Sir Alan did the right thing for this country.”

In congratulating the former Prime Minister Dr. Anthony further noted said “let us look to the future, let us continue to wish Sir Allan a good and joyous life, let us continue to wish him good health, let us also join together in congratulating him and his family with who he has stood by very close over

# Another St. Lucian has been Knighted by Her Majesty the Queen

**The Right Honourable Allan Fitzgerald Laurent Louisy has been conferred with the Award of the Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. He was knighted by Her Majesty the Queen earlier this year but was formally presented with the award by Governor General Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy acting on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen, on Thursday March 31st, 2005.**



Sir Allan Louisy poses with students from Laborie

The investiture ceremony took place at Government House and was witnessed by Sir Allan’s family and friends and representatives of government and people of St.Lucia. A former Prime Minister of St.Lucia, The Right Honourable Allan Fitzgerald Laurent Louisy should now be referred to as Sir Allan Fitzgerald Laurent Louisy.

Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony who shared in the jubilant

moment said the former prime minister in his own life confirms that there is every reason why St. Lucians should celebrate the men and women who have helped to shape this country.

Sir Allan, who will turn 89 on September 5th, was born in the village of Laborie and has earned a reputation as one of the region’s legal luminaries. His early schooling was done at the Laborie Infant School, which was followed by his secondary school education at the St. Mary’s college. Sir Allan then moved on to gain higher learning at the Inns of Court, Middle Temple, in the United Kingdom. Sir Allan’s proficiency as a legal practitioner was well known throughout the region serving as Crown Attorney in St. Lucia, Montserrat, Antigua, Dominica, as Senior Magistrate in Antigua and Resident Magistrate and Registrar of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal in Jamaica.

However the legal luminary reached the apex of his career when he was ap-



pointed Acting Judge of the Eastern Caribbean Court of Appeal, a position which held until his retirement from public judicial service in 1973.

Besides his dynamic public life Sir Allan served in various capacities as Chairman, Director and President on several boards and organizations. He was also an avid cricketer, football player and athlete.

The Government and people of St. Lucia recognize the eminent contribution of Sir Allan awarding him the highest national award- The St. Lucia Cross in 1998.

Sir Allan now enjoys a semi-retired but still fairly active life, as he describes it, resorting now to gardening, fishing, reading, and playing dominoes.



Members from the legal fraternity at the ceremony

# KNIGHTS OF SAINT LUCIA



Sir William Arthur Lewis

Sir George F.L. Charles

- Sir Garnet Gordon -QC
- Sir Frederick Clarke
- Sir Allen Lewis -QC
- Sir Ira Simmons -ISOMBE
- Sir Keith Gordon
- Sir Joseph Quentin Charles
- Sir Vincent Floissac
- Sir Fitzroy Augier
- Sir John Compton
- Sir George Charles
- Sir Stanislaus James
- Sir George Mallet
- Sir Allan Louisy
- Dame Pearlette Louisy
- Dame Marie Celepha ‘Sesene’ Descartes
- Dame Edna Lewis

# Million Dollar Grant for Climate Change Projects

**Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony on April 5th, 2005 signed agreements for two Global Environmental Fund (GEF) projects designed to address the impact of climate change in Saint Lucia, Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.**

A grant has been allocated for the first project which involves the preparation of Pilot Adaptation Measures in Coastal Areas of the three Windward Islands.

An additional Japanese grant of US\$349,000 has been allocated towards the second project involving the actual “Implementation of Adaptation Measures to Climate Change.”

Director of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre Dr. Kenrick Leslie, who signed on behalf of CARICOM, explained that the projects will help the three Eastern Caribbean States implement specific pilot adaptation measures to address the impact of climate change on biodiversity and land degradation along coastal areas. Both projects are expected to be completed within a year.

In some brief remarks at the signing Dr. Leslie said “CARICOM has always been blamed for being reactive, but in the case of climate change it is on the cutting edge of developments in this increasingly important field”

The Caribbean Community Climate Centre which coordinates the regional response to climate change is the key agency for information on climate change issues and the Caribbean’s effort to manage and adapt to climate change. The establishment of the Centre was endorsed by the Caircom Heads of Government in July 2002.



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony welcomes Hon. Ambrose George (Dominica) to the signing ceremony in Castries

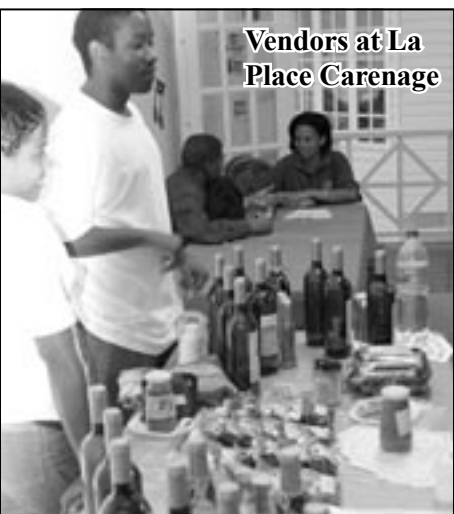
**The St. Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority (SLASPA) has disclosed plans for the staging of one of the main components of St. Lucia Jazz – Tea Time Jazz – at La Place Carenage in the heart of the city.**

Tea Time Jazz, into its 8th year is said to be unduplicated, remaining a “one-of-a-kind” experience that combines fine duty-free shopping, dining and leisure with the best of local musical talent. SLASPA’s General Manager Mr. Vincent Hippolyte says the unique concept has not compromised St. Lucia Jazz, as it continues to hold it own, ever evolving and attracting record crowds.

According to Mr. Hippolyte, “SLASPA remains very proud of having Tea Time Jazz every year. It is something that we look forward to as we believe that it adds value and diversity to jazz in St. Lucia and we will continue to ensure that Tea Time Jazz remains a feature of St. Lucia Jazz every year.”

As the main sponsor of Tea Time Jazz and owner of La Place Carenage duty free- shopping complex, SLASPA has formed, what it says is, an exciting working relationship with the many clients occupying the space within the complex. That relationship in the words of store owner Al Herman has brought gains to both parties, and is especially noticeable during Tea Time Jazz. “St. Lucians probably think all too often that this is just for other people and not for themselves. The fact is that prices

# St. Lucia Jazz - Tea Time Line Up



here even with duty paid are no different from any other shop anywhere in St. Lucia. It’s a good place to buy, it’s air conditioned and far more comfortable than many other places,” said an energetic Herman who manages Banana Beach.

Main organizer of St. Lucia Jazz - the St. Lucia Tourist Board - continues to endorse Tea Time Jazz, viewing it as one of the many vehicles allowing government to realize its mandate of taking jazz to the people. Public and Visitor Relations Manager – St. Lucia Tourist Board Kirby Allain says “a few years ago we re-branded what was called St. Lucia Jazz Festival to simply St. Lucia Jazz. We felt that we had made sufficient strides around the world with the event to call it own, something uniquely St. Lucian that we can mark made and from St. Lucia.”

Tea Time Jazz has also made that bold statement Allain says, “but they did so from the very outset, allowing St. Lucian musicians a unique opportunity to perform on a small local stage but with regional and international audiences watching and truly enjoying what we as St. Lucians have to offer.”

For this year’s line up, gospel recording artist Shirley Ann Cyril-Mayers will launch a new album as she shares the stage with Busta Emerald Steel, Barbara Ann Cadet and the group Nexus with well know musical diva Nicole David as hostess. Tea Time Jazz runs from May 2nd – 5th, 2005.



# Better Government Services for more Citizens

## HOW OUR TAX MONEY IS SPENT

Over the past few weeks, the Inland Revenue Department has been busy on NTN explaining to members of the public how to fill in their Annual Tax Returns. Actually, they are doing a good job of it. This is one Government Department which is trying to reach out to members of the public, albeit, a special group, the taxpayers. I like what I see! It's good stuff!

But understandably, it will be the season of irritation, the season of rendering to Caesar, the Tax Man, the things that are due to Caesar.

Last week, I explained the numerous initiatives of this Government to reduce taxation whether to individuals or the commercial sector. Today, I am going to look on the other side of the balance sheet, the Tax Measures introduced by this Government and the reasons for such measures.

### Overriding Philosophy

Most Governments have an overriding philosophy on taxation. A Government may not state the philosophy directly, but its policies could be evaluated to identify the elements of its tax philosophy. I would say that this Government has attempted to: (1) Simplify the tax system by abolishing nuisance taxes; (2) Improve the efficiency of tax collection by reducing the administrative cost of collecting tax whenever possible; (3) Ensure greater equity



**Tax rebate for contribution to clubs** among taxpayers by broadening the tax base. In other words, avoid putting the burden of tax on one group of individuals and exempting others. The Environmental Protection Levy is a good example of this approach. I'll explain later; (4) Move away from Direct Taxation to Indirect Taxation. Incidentally, Direct Taxation refers to taxes on salaries or other personal income, while indirect taxation refers to taxes on goods and services. The Customs Duties that we pay on imported items is a form of Indirect Taxation. By reducing personal income tax, the worker or tax payer will have greater control over his or her income; (5) Avoid, as far as possible, punitive taxation. The

## PM Converses with the Nation



Prime Minister  
Dr. Kenny D. Anthony

lower the Tax Rate and the fairer the Tax System, the greater will be compliance. Citizens are more inclined to pay taxes if they feel that the tax system is fair and just.

So much for philosophy. Let us turn our attention to the individual Tax Measures.

### The Environmental Protection Levy

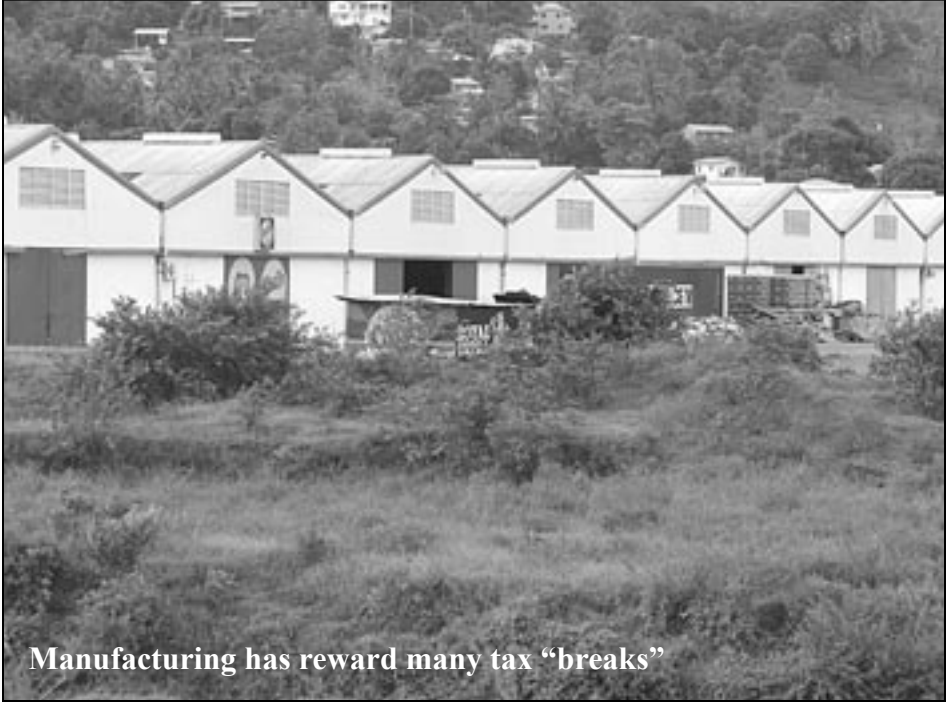
One of the more frequently criticised Tax Measures of the Government is the Environmental Protection Levy. Of course, this tax was made infamous by the Levy on Used Cars.

Why an Environmental Levy?

Everyone, including our fiercest critics agree that the Government has done a good job in garbage collection and disposal. Ciceron Dump has been

closed. New and modern disposal sites exist at Deglos and Vieux Fort. Both facilities were financed under the Solid Waste Management Project conceived and financed by the World Bank and the OECS Governments. The World Bank extended loans to the Governments and quite naturally was concerned about financing the cost of waste collection and disposal.

The then U.W.P Government agreed that the collection and disposal of waste by the Solid Waste Management Authority would be financed by a Household Levy on either the water bills or the electricity bills of consumers. Just imagine how it would work. To get garbage collected from your home, a levy would be imposed on one of your utility bills, mind you, at a fixed rate.



Manufacturing has reward many tax "breaks"

Consider for a moment the implications of this approach. What would happen to garbage collection if a house owner did not pay the utility bill? Surely, it is not only households that generate waste. All consumers generate waste including those who travel on minibuses. What about households without electricity or water? Does that mean that they should not contribute to garbage disposal?

This Government decided that to avoid these problems and to guarantee funds to finance waste collection and disposal, a more efficient approach was needed. So we enacted the Environmental Protection Levy Act, No.15 of 1999. Under this Act an amount is charged, levied and collected on certain goods imported into the country. In this way, all citizens contribute, indirectly, to garbage collection and disposal. Ask those who oppose the Environmental Levy how they propose to fund garbage collection and disposal. What's their alternative? Ask them!



Treatment ponds at  
Deglos Landfill

### Sin Taxes

Then there are the sin taxes, the taxes imposed on cigarettes and alcohol.

Admittedly, not many persons complain about these taxes. But I do get occasional "barbs". After the last increase in the excise taxes on spirits and tobacco, a constituent of mine, known for his support for the Opposition, shouted at me, "I en't voting for you because it too expensive to get drunk".

Jokes aside, we do need to send a clear message that smoking is a health risk. What better way than to ensure that the price of cigarettes are prohibitive?

### Adjustments in Customs Duties and Consumption Taxes

Consumers have also experienced adjustments, and in some cases, increases in Customs Duties and Consumption Taxes on imported goods. As usual, politicians and commentators prefer to focus on the increases rather than the reasons for the increases. Again this is unfortunate but understandable since the increases are more politically injurious to the decision makers.

Why the adjustments? Most of the explanation has to do with commitments to the Caribbean Community. The former U.W.P. Government, along with other Caricom Governments, agreed to introduce similar rates of duty for goods imported into the Caribbean Community in order to better protect goods produced in Caricom.

(Let me tell you at the outset that I support the decision. It was, and still is, good policy.) To give effect to the decision the Governments decided to



Customs Department - one tax  
collection agency

as had been done before by the UWP Government to compensate for the loss of revenue caused by the reductions in Custom Duties.

### Killing Manufacturing

In the ensuing debate you probably heard the voices of some manufacturers. Some argued that the Government should not require them to pay Consumption Taxes as if they never paid such taxes before. The fact is that the Government of St. Lucia cannot waive Consumption Taxes for our manufacturers and levy Consumption Taxes on exports to St. Lucia by Caribbean Manufacturers. Caricom requires manufacturers across the region to be treated equally.

But is it true that the Manufacturing Sector has been taxed to death? Listen

to Sir John Compton in a recent statement:

"How can the Government speak of economic growth when the manufacturing sector has all but disappeared, taxed to death by high consumption and other taxes?"

Nice, typical political language, but untrue. First, let us look at the contribution of the Manufacturing Sector to the total value of goods and services produced in St. Lucia. In 1992, manufacturing contributed \$76.05 million, in 1996 when Sir John abandoned office, manufacturing contributed \$69.97 million and in 2003, it contributed \$70.19 million. So, has manufacturing "all but disappeared?" Your call.

The sector has held its own despite the world recession, the relocation of some manufacturing plants to places



A truck used in the Solid Waste Managment System

like China where labour is exceedingly cheap, and fierce competition within the region, particularly from Trinidad and Tobago.

Secondly, in a bid to assist manufacturers to be competitive the Government exempted the importation of raw materials from the payment of Service Charge and introduced a Consumption Tax Allowance on exports by manufactures. So, is this a sector which has been taxed to death? Again, your call, ask the Manufacturers.

### Miscellaneous Taxes

There are, too, other miscellaneous tax increases by this Government. For example, early in the life of the administration, we increased airport departure taxes as well as the tax on tickets for external travel. We have increased fees for Drivers Licences, Route Bands and introduced the Cell Phone Tax. Admittedly, these increases brought their own displeasure, but this is understandable.

### No Development without Revenue

There is, however, a deeper truth that must be stated. More and more citizens are demanding better services from the Government. The call is for better roads, improved water supply, better health care, more education, better security etc. The choice is to continue as we are with the same level of services financed by the current levels of revenue or to increase, modernise, and improve the services which exist. I prefer the second choice: improve the quality of life of our people but do so within our means, with the resources available to us, and with revenue derived from a fair and just Tax System.

Can I persuade you to agree?

Take care, be of good cheer and God Bless.



# Under-invoicing rocks Barbados used car maket - Investigator uncovers similar practices as employed in St. Lucia

**A regional expert who helped crack the used-car racket in St. Lucia says the Barbados Government is losing over 35 million dollars annually as a result of under-invoicing by local importers operating in collusion with Japanese used car exporters.**

Elizabeth Andrew-Rose, a Caribbean expert who conducted a study of the used car market in St. Lucia and its implications for the country's revenue collections, was also hired by the Barbadian Government to conduct a similar study.

In her report to the Owen Arthur administration, Ms Andrew Rose indicated that the Barbados government lost over 235 million Barbados dollars – the equivalent of EC \$317 million – between 1997 and 2003, as a result of illegal practices by some of the island's used car importers.

The regional expert was asked to undertake a study on the economic, social and environmental impact of the importation of used vehicles on the Barbados economy.

She said a combination of "double invoicing" in the used car market and government's policies that directly encourage the importation of used cars over new vehicles, combined to result in the serious hemorrhaging of the Government's tax revenues.

Ms Andrew-Rose, a Barbadian graduate of the University of the West Indies (UWI) who grew up in St. Lucia,



Used cars have swelled traffic lines

found that importers of used cars and exporters in Japan conspire to evade taxes by engaging in what the Barbadians call "double-invoicing."

The investigator explained that countries like Barbados -- and St. Lucia before it -- had become dumping grounds for cars that no longer met the environmental standards of the Japanese government.

As a result, she added, the Japanese

exporters were quite willing to sell each car at one price and provide a second invoice with any value the importer wants, to "prove" to Customs it cost a lesser amount.

The investigator said in her report to the Barbados Government that the high volume of used cars have resulted in "increased port costs, traffic congestion, faster road deterioration and a host of other ills, which clearly out-

weigh any benefits."

The investigator's report, quoted by the Daily Nation newspaper, showed that used car sales continued to out-strip those for new cars. But while the Government's revenue collections for new cars remained steady, revenue from the used car market continued to slide downward despite an increase in the number of used cars imported.

The report pointed out that in 1997, 2,606 new cars were imported in Barbados. The number increased in 1999 to 2,800, but declined to 1,238 in 2003. On the other hand, used car sales moved from 2,763 in 1997 to 4,212 in 2001 and declined to 2,360 in 2003.

In the case of St. Lucia, similar practices were uncovered by Ms Rose several years ago, with the island's Customs & Excise Department recording smaller unit customs values for the imported cars in what is described locally as "under-invoicing".

Following Ms Andrew-Rose's St. Lucia findings, the Government cracked down on the used car dealers engaged in "under-invoicing", resulting in several local dealers being given an alternative of paying the unpaid millions or facing the courts.

The St. Lucia Government also introduced an amendment to the Environmental Levy that made it more costly to import used cars over five years old. The levy was challenged in court by at least one local used car dealer, but the courts threw out the case.

which, if realized, could spell serious economic difficulty for the territories.

Having been forced to review their energy policies and to allow for increases prices for fuel, several territories have been examining options for alternative energy sources, some looking at solar, geothermal, hydro-electric and wind alternatives.

Just last week, the Cabinet of Ministers in St. Lucia agreed to the allocation of 70 acres of land for establishment of a wind farm by St. Lucia Electricity Services Ltd (LUCELEC), the island's lone supplier electric energy.

As Budget Day approaches in several territories, their Economic Affairs Units are keeping their eyes on the world market prices and constantly studying the implications for the local economies.

Economic and financial analysts are already predicting that if the prices continue to rise at such record highs, the Governments could be forced to again allow for increased fuel prices at the gas pumps, with all the attendant wider implications for prices.

### Powerlessness

Government officials across the region are once again highlighting the powerlessness of the non-oil producing countries -- and especially the small island nations of the region -- in the face of the increasing prices on the world market.

The energy officials are also underlining the added importance of continuing and accelerating the pace of the search for alternative energy sources.

But until such sources can be identified, tapped and distributed, St. Lucia and the rest of the Caribbean remain at the whims and fancies of OPEC and the companies that supply oil to the region.

prices upwards.

But in the past nine months, there has been no let-up in the increases of the world market price for oil, forcing non-oil producing countries to appeal to the OPEC ministers to be more mindful about the effects of spiralling increases on their small economies.

### Examining Options

With the Governments of St. Lucia and other OECS territories preparing their annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, most are keeping their eyes on the record increases and the projections

Bulk oil storage in Castries



## Governments study increased World Oil Prices

**Oil prices are again at record highs, causing concern around the Caribbean and throughout the world about the implications for non-oil producing countries like St. Lucia and most of its Caricom neighbours.**

World oil prices hit record highs on both sides of the Atlantic on Monday, with Brent Crude futures at just over US \$57 per barrel and US crude at \$58 per barrel -- and climbing.

The latest rise in prices were based on concern about US refining capacity, a shortfall of supplies to the US market from Venezuela and earlier predictions that the price could enter "a super-spike" and eventually exceed US \$100.

A Goldman Sachs report on Thursday said prices could rise to US \$105 per barrel and by Monday morning, OPEC oil ministers were discussing the possibility of having to raise production by 500,000 barrels per day.

### Vulnerable

But while oil-producing Trinidad & Tobago may be gearing-up to count profits, St. Lucia and other non-oil producing Caricom territories are preparing to count the costs to their economies if the current trend continues.

Particularly vulnerable are the small OECS member-states, which have over the past year had to adjust to the costs of increased oil prices and the resultant increases in energy costs, particularly for fuel.

Last April, following 30-year record increases in oil prices on the British and

marketplace."

he OECS Heads of Government established a Task force on Energy Policy to advise them on, among other things, effective energy conservation management, alternative energy sources and reform of the sector.

### Increased Prices

In the past year, most Caricom member-states have had to increase the price of fuel at the petrol stations as a result of the spiralling increases in world market prices. Barbados, Dominica, Guyana and Jamaica were among the first to raise

# Prime Minister Kenny Anthony: Pope John Paul II presented Peace and Social Justice

**It is with a profound sense of loss that we in Saint Lucia accept the death of His Holiness Pope John Paul II. His papacy over the past twenty-six years exemplified his own vision of a civilization of love which could help humanity achieve its goal of an authentic and lasting peace. His was a love that spoke to inclusiveness, to reconciliation, to reaching out and accommodating other peoples, other cultures, other faiths. It is for this reason that his death is mourned not only by the Catholic community world-wide, which he has led so selflessly and steadfastly, but by people from all walks of life, in countries big and small, all over the world.**

We ourselves remember with great fondness his visit to Saint Lucia in 1986, and the message of love, of hope, and of encouragement which he brought to all of us: to the children at the George F.L. Charles Airport where he landed; to the Catholic faithful at the Pope Site at Rodney Bay where he celebrated Mass; and to the sick and elderly at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. During his visit he spoke of the growth of the Church here, and we have been witnessing not only a spiritual revival in the different faiths, but also an acceptance of the re-

ligious ecumenism which he advocated then, and which he continued to live through his own relationship and interaction with the leaders and members of other faiths.

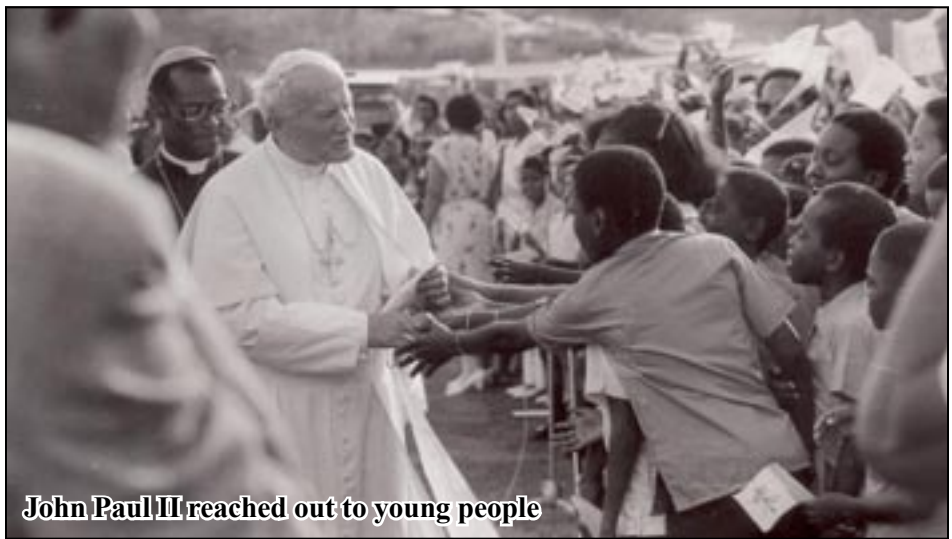
We will remember Pope John Paul II for his candour, for his tireless promotion of peace and social justice, for his respect for human rights, for his courage and strength, for his openness, for his humility, for the moral leadership he provided to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, for his genuine love for young people, for the way he bore his suffering till the end. The world will miss his leadership and his unique ability to communicate with people of all ages, his ability to reach beyond his Church to embrace the whole world.

In spite of its great loss, the Catholic community here in Saint Lucia has reason to celebrate the extraordinary life of its Spiritual Leader for the past twenty-six years, as a unique figure in world history. As we mourn his loss, we should as a nation and as a Christian community pledge to live by the same principles which inspired his life and his Ministry: "Love, in a word, is the gift of self"

The whole nation conveys its sincerest condolences to the Catholic faithful here in Saint Lucia. His life's work ended, may he rest in peace.

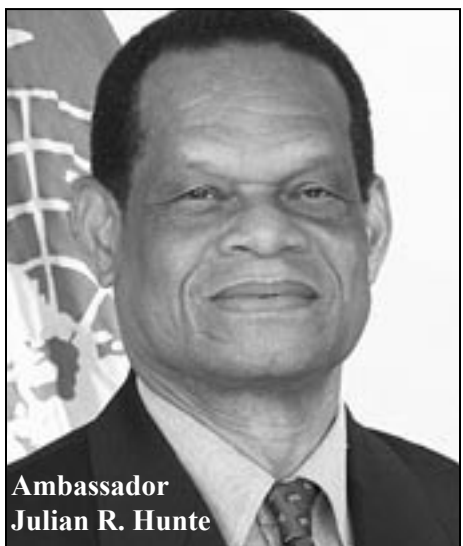


John Paul II blessed all during his St. Lucia Visit in 1986



John Paul II reached out to young people

## Ambassador Hunte on Decolonization Mission



Ambassador Julian R. Hunte

**Ambassador H.E. Hon. Dr. Julian R. Hunte, Saint Lucia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) and Chairman of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization is presiding over a consultation process on decolonization in Bermuda.**

The United Nations Special Mission to Bermuda completed the first phase of its work in March 2005, by meeting with government leaders, opposition members, and a cross-section of the Bermudian community during four days of sessions in the British territory. The Special Mission was led by Ambassador Julian R. Hunte.

The Special Mission held meetings with the Premier of Bermuda Alex Scott, with the Leader of the Opposition Grant Gibbons, and with the Governor of the territory John Vereker. It also conducted a series of sessions with the Bermuda Independence Committee (BIC), a government-appointed body with the mandate to collect information on the political options available to

Bermuda and the implications of those alternatives. The BIC is also responsible for conducting a public information campaign to heighten the awareness of the public of the options available to them in the context of the exercise of the right to self-determination.

The Special Mission also participated in three evening public meetings at various sites around the country where persons from the various communities presented their views on the self-determination process, and asked detailed questions of the members of the Special Mission on the experiences and processes of their countries during the transition to independence.

The second phase of the Special Mission is scheduled for the end of May when additional sessions will be held with members of the Bermuda Independence Commission, followed by a second round of public meetings as well as sessions with targeted groups.

The Special Mission also was comprised of Chairman Hunte, Permanent Representative of Timor Leste Jose Luis Guterres, Permanent Representative of Bolivia Edwin Ortiz Gandarillas, Permanent Representative of Dominica Crispin Gregoire, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Congo Luc Okio, and Deputy Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea Jimmy Ovia. Advisers to the mission were Deputy Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in Jamaica Ann-Marie Ali, and Independent Expert on Governance Carlyle Corbin.

The Bermuda Independence Commission is scheduled to present its report to the Government at the beginning of July.

## Caricom Passports coming soon

**The much discussed Caricom Passport concept for the Caricom Community has successfully moved to the stage of becoming a reality, with the Republic of Surinam being the first country to issue the new travel document.**

Minister for External Affairs Senator Petrus Compton says the islands of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda and Guyana will issue the new passports by mid year -- 2005.

According to Minister Compton, St. Lucia for its part will begin circulating the new Caricom passports to nationals by November 2005.

"Our cabinet has discussed the issue and we have agreed that the new Saint Lucian Passport will also reflect the Caricom Passport when it is issued. Now what does the Caricom passport mean? It is not a passport issued by the Caricom Secretariat, it is still a national passport issued by a national government but it will have

certain features in common. In other words they will all look the same. So if you are a citizen of St. Vincent and the Grenadines or Guyana or St. Lucia your regular passport will be the same colour and on the face of it, it will have the same information," explained Senator Compton.

He says the passports will all bear a common appearance and also the insignia of the Caricom Community.

"There will be the Caricom logo, there will be the words "Caribbean Community" and there will be there will be the country of issue -- for example St. Lucia as that of St. Lucia. The passport will continue to be issued by your local government; and it will be the property of the government and so on."

The Minister says the new passports will bear an important feature in that they will be machine readable. Caricom Passports will consist of data that will be automatically scanned at points of entry and departure around the world.



Caricom nationals at George F.L. Charles



# Bridge Street closed for upgrading

**E**xcauation works to clear the drain inlet along Bridge Street began Monday April 4th 2005. The drain which is located at the centre of the north and south lanes of the street has over the years become affected by the application of several layers of bitumen.

Minister for Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities Honourable Felix Finisterre said the purpose of the work is to free the drain's water inlets from the old bitumen surfaces, beginning with the south lane, which is the lane running alongside the old Bata building and AT&T.

According to Minister Finisterre "We will from the junction of the Morne Road down to the customs resurface this entire carriageway whilst the other one shall become a dual carriageway. So with all of this being done it is very important that we regulate and control parking within the city, because those streets while being done will become no-parking areas."

The works will further enhance government's plan to solve the problem of flooding within the city of Castries. Minister Finisterre said the project will be stopped at the completion of works on the south lane in time for St. Lucia Jazz 2005 and resume following the festival on May 9th.

The Minister made these announcements at a sitting of Parliament last month while presenting a bill to the House of Assembly which amends the fine for dangerous parking from \$2000 to a maximum of \$400 or an imprisonment of not more than 21 days.



Bridge Street, Castries, dug up for new road surface

## EC\$10,000.00 Appeal for Information



Hon. Calixte George

**T**he Government of Saint Lucia has reassured the Saint Lucia public that every effort is being made to solve three recent homicides in a southern community of the island. Minister of Home Affairs and Internal Security, Senator Hon. Calixte George has appealed for the public to cooperate with the police by providing whatever information that they may have on these incidents.

This included the homicide of two young persons, twenty year old Andre Joseph and sixteen year old Hannah Leon, both of Cantonement, Vieux-Fort. The third homicide was Julian Sony, approximately sixty years old,

who also resided in Cantonement. The homicides occurred between March 10th and April 02nd 2005.

The Minister said that these incidents were "senseless" and "disturbing" and announced that the Commissioner of Police Mr. Ausbert Regis was directed to establish a special task force to investigate these cases.

Government has offered a reward of EC\$10,000.00 for information leading to the solution of any of these homicides.

Persons with information should contact the office of the Commissioner of Police at telephone number 452-22851 or the nearest police station.

## Thousands pledge their support as the NCF continues to assist Saint Lucians

**T**he thousands of persons who turned out on at the Pigeon Island Side Lawn over the weekend to support the National Community Foundation's NCF third telethon is reflective of the strong bond and sense of belonging that the Foundation has nutured with the public over the past three years.

That's the view expressed by the Executive Director of the National Community Foundation Ms. Jacintha Annius Lee.

The event which was held on April 03rd attracted a huge crowd which contributed approximately \$93,000.00 through direct pledges during the course of the show, which featured numerous pro bono acts by local performers. According to Ms. Lee the level to

which persons are sensitized about the work of the NCF is truly underscored by ordinary citizens who came forward to volunteer in any way possible.

"I must thank St. Lucians for that show of support. I think right now NCF is now a household name in St. Lucia. We had one month of publicity and I think every single person in St. Lucia got to know about the NCF. You had just ordinary persons calling you and saying I want to support the NCF what could I do. And I can give you an example of a taxi driver John Clement who called and said look I want to of-

fer my services, I will take your artiste anywhere they want to go and he did that."

So far the NCF has not met its target amount of \$250,000.00 but Ms. Lee says the Board remains optimistic that the goal will be met because donors are using other channels such as employee deduction forms to make contributions. An audited report of the proceeds from the telethon will be made available in the near future. The operating expenses of the NCF for 12004, was almost four hundred thousand dollars.



Guest Artist  
Mighty Gabby



Many young persons volunteered at the event



A section of the crowd at Pigeon Island



### THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. April 9th - Fri. April 15th, 2005

The GIS discusses HIV/AIDS and Domestic Violence - Saturday 9th April, 8:00 p.m.

· The National Insurance Corporation - 16 years later - Sat. April 9th, 7:30 p.m.

· The GIS speaks with president of the Canaries community club about long term plans for the development of Canaries - Sun. April 10th, 7:30 p.m.

· Fish Aggregating Devices (FAD) A new method for catching fish - Mon. April 11th, 6:15 p.m.

· CSME Spotlight - Tues. April 12th, 8:00 p.m.

· FEEDBACK "Universal Health Care" - Wed. April 13th, 8:00 p.m.

· Government's commitment to the manufacturing sector - Thurs. April 14th, 8:00 p.m.

· BANANA BITS - Eurep Gap is placed under the microscope - Fri. April 15th, 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, log on to our website at [www.stlucia.gov.lc](http://www.stlucia.gov.lc) and then click on the NTN icon.

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