



NATIONWIDE

A publication of the Department of Information Services



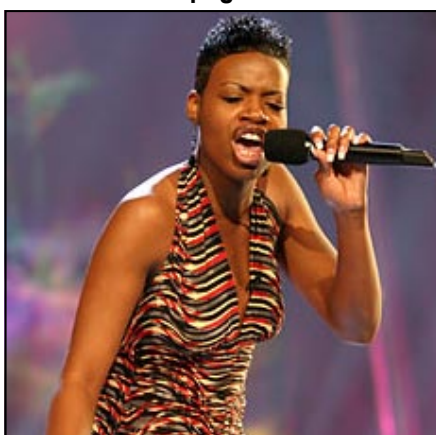
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CRICKET WORLD CUP SAINT LUCIA SCORES FIRST SIX



Cricket World Cup Saint Lucia Inc. boasts six appointees to the management team that will steer the island's preparation for one of the biggest sporting event in the world. This is the strongest evidence so far, of the Government's commitment to hosting the event in 2007.

The appointments, which took effect on March 1, 2005, include some big names in sports administration, tourism and marketing.

Heading the list is Fortuna Belrose, Operations Manager. Mrs. Belrose brings to this position an impressive record as a Sports Administrator, having served with distinction as President of the Saint Lucia Netball Association. Recently, Fortuna has played an active

role in assisting the Saint Lucia National Cricket Association in its organizational development efforts.

Daune Charlery-John has been appointed to fill the position of Tourism and Hospitality Manager. Daune has several years experience in the tourism sector, with extensive experience in destination management, tour operations, ground handling, and hotel management.

Renee De Myers will serve as the Public Education and Media Liaison Officer for Cricket World Cup Saint Lucia Inc. Rene has a marketing background, and was most recently involved in the successful marketing and promotion of the new diverse product range of the Saint Lucia Coconut Growers Association. Rene will also function as

the media liaison officer, and the one through whom communication will be channelled.

The management team of Cricket World Cup Saint Lucia is complemented with the appointment of former Secretary to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Mrs. Heather Hennecart, as Administrative Assistant.

Also appointed to the management team are Denise Amedee, Receptionist. Denise is a former Female Athlete of the Year, and Ian Kieran Ashton, Office Assistant.

Cricket World Cup Saint Lucia expects to appoint its Finance Officer within the next three weeks, and will announce the appointment of its Chief Executive Officer and Security Director in April.

COST OF LIVING DOWN

In the February 21, 2005 issue of the Saint Lucia Gazette, the Government Statistics Department released its analysed report on the real cost of living for public information.

The report, which compares the months of December 2004 and January 2005 makes some important revelations on the state of affairs and the impact on the Consumer Purchasing Power in the five main categories – Food; Fuel and Light; Medical and Health Expenses; Transportation and Communication; and Recreational Entertainment, Education and Cultural Services.

The index figure registered decreases in the Food and Fuel and Electricity categories, while Medical Care and Health Expenses, Transport and Communication and Educational Services increased slightly.

The Consumer Price Index for January 2005 was 181.5 as compared to 183.4 for December 2004. This represents a 1.0 per cent decrease.

The Ministry of Commerce, Investment

and Consumer Affairs welcomes this development, as a positive development for consumers. During 2004, the Consumer Price Index came under pressure mainly due to the increase in prices of certain commodities occasioned by rising international fuel prices, increase in freight cost on imports and a strong Pound Sterling and Euro dollar.

The Ministry would like to advise Consumers to shop wisely, compare prices and make informed purchasing decisions at all times, as this will help them to be more assertive in their quest to get value for money spent.



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

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



OPM spearheads Seminar on ISO Standards

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is spearheading a seminar with the theme, “Protect and Position your Business for CSME” to be held at the Cara Suites Hotel on March 14 and 15 and March 16 and 17, from 9:00am to 4:30pm.

The seminar is being organized by OPM, the Ministry of Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs, and St. Lucia Bureau of Standards, in collaboration with Standards, Assurance and Innovation in Global Business (SAI Global) and Gama Investments.

This initiative comes as Saint Lucia prepares itself for a new era in trade, which is expected to take effect under agreements with such bodies as the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Accordingly, the seminar is designed specifically for managers and supervisors, and will be the first in a series of programmes and interventions aimed at enhancing the competitiveness of local businesses in this era of free trade and globalization.

In this new dispensation, the challenges and opportunities to the Saint Lucia business community will hinge on productivity and competitiveness in Saint Lucia, across Caricom, and in the world at large. Therefore, the Saint Lucian business, in addition to offering competitive prices, will have to offer value for money and excellent customer relations consistent with international standards.

The SAI Global seminar is intended to present the Government and private sector businesses with information on ISO Quality/Business Management Systems and Information Management,



Dr. James Fletcher
Cabinet Secretary

and how they can be utilized to assist in achieving performance, improvement, and market goals.

ISO is a series of international standards developed by quality experts from around the world for use by companies that either want to implement their own in-house quality systems or to ensure that suppliers have appropriate quality systems in place.

The ISO standards developed and maintained by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), promote international trade by provid-



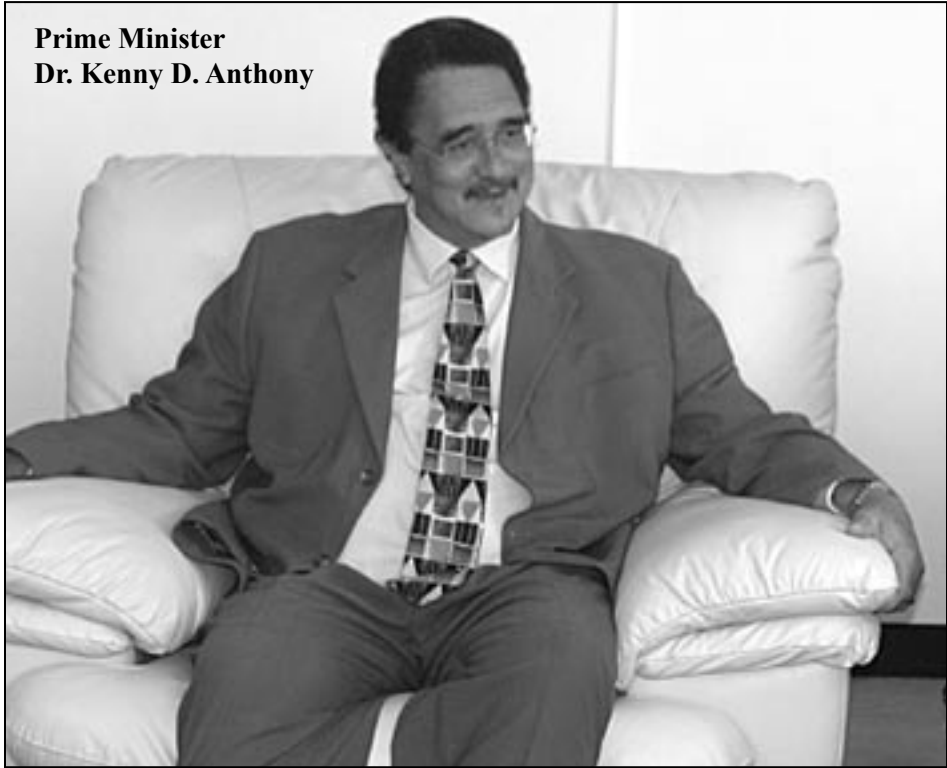
Dr. Allison Plumber, Executive
Director of Bureau of Standards

ing one consistent set of requirements for both quality management and quality assurance. These requirements have been adopted by over 90 countries around the world.

According to Cabinet Secretary Dr. James Fletcher, “this seminar is both timely and germane, and will auger well as we prepare for the impending events of trade globalization”.

Registration and other details can be obtained from Ms. Christel Eugene at telephone number, 468 -5133 or Gilbert Jean-Francois at 489 - 2709.

US Congresswoman Joins Caricom’s Call for Release of Ex-Haitian Prime Minister



Prime Minister
Dr. Kenny D. Anthony

A US Congresswoman has joined St. Lucia’s Prime Minister in calling for the release of an ailing former Haitian Prime Minister being held in detention without charge.

US Congresswoman Maxine Waters yesterday echoed the call by Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony for the release of former Haitian Prime Minister Yvonne Neptune, who has been held in detention without charge for the past eight months.

Mr Neptune, who served as Prime Minister under deposed President Jean Bertrand Aristide, was arrested in June last year by the Haitian military forces under the control of Interim Haitian President Gerard La Tortue.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Anthony, who has lead responsibility for Justice and Governance in Caricom, called on behalf of the regional grouping for the Haitian authorities to either charge Mr Neptune or release him.

Dr Anthony also reiterated the posi-

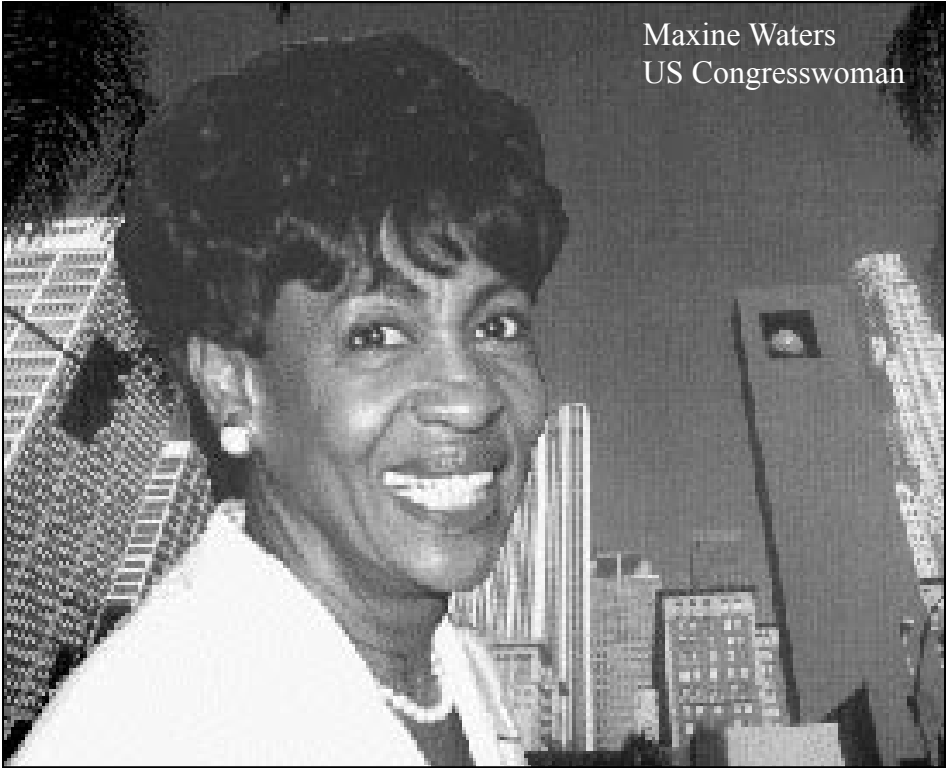
tion that Haiti would not be welcomed back into the Caricom fold until and unless there was a government established by free and fair elections.

On Monday, the US Congresswoman visited with Mr Neptune in his prison cell for one hour and reported afterwards that his health was deteriorating. She also said she was unable to persuade Mr Neptune from abandoning a protest hunger strike he has embarked on for some time now.

Speaking from the USA yesterday (Wednesday), Congresswoman Waters, a Democrat from California, called on the Haitian regime to stop the repression of political dissidents such as Mr Neptune and other supporters of the deposed Haitian President.

Like Dr Anthony, she also urged that the US-backed regime release Mr Neptune and all other political prisoners, saying that “the world is watching” carefully at the regime’s actions.

Mr Neptune has been in detention since June 2004 and Congresswoman



Maxine Waters
US Congresswoman

Waters says the conditions in the jail where he and other political prisoners are being kept are “deplorable”.

Meanwhile, Caricom has reiterated that it will not attend meetings attended by the illegal Haitian regime.

The regional grouping was invited to participate in a French-sponsored aid meeting for Haiti in French Guyana.

According to Suriname’s Foreign Affairs Minister, Marie Levens, Suriname was invited in its capacity as Chairman of Caricom to participate in the meeting. But the minister reiterated that the meeting would be boycotted or the Caricom delegation would withdraw if the Haitian regime attended.

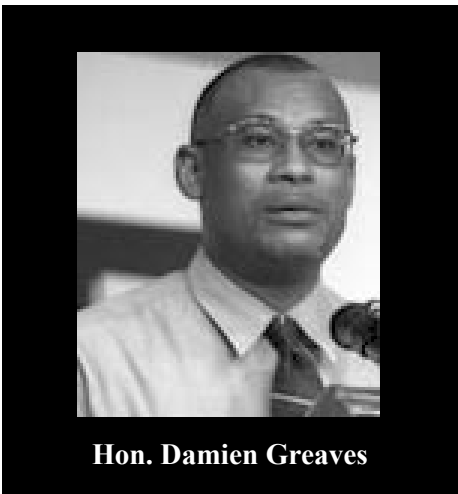
Accompanied by Caricom Secretary General, Edwin Carrington, the Suriname Foreign Affairs Minister said recently in Suriname that Caricom’s non-participation in the Cayenne meeting would be in keeping with its position that the Haitian regime was undemocratically imposed after the democrati-

cally elected President of the impoverished Caricom member-states was deposed by force.

The Surinamese Minister, whose country is the current Chairman of Caricom, said that for the moment, “the only assistance Haiti will receive from Caricom is through the structures of the United Nations and the Organisation of American States (OAS).”

The Cayenne meeting was called to discuss how to collect and disburse some US \$1.3 billion worth of international assistance pledged for the reconstruction of Haiti and Caricom was invited to be part of the talks on what projects would get priority for reconstruction of the regional group’s poorest member-state.

However, the Suriname Foreign Minister warned France and other countries supporting the imposed Haitian regime “not to resort to all kinds of modalities” to try to engage Caricom in talks with the La Tortue regime.



Hon. Damien Greaves

Child Development and Guidance Centre to get financial assistance

under the program of the Child and Adolescent Health Care of the Ministry.

“There are ongoing assessments and diagnoses for children with physical mental, emotional and behavioural problems; there have been intervention programs that have taken into account, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and ear-

ly stimulation, but what is most important of this centre is that the centre will promote the right of children to health care and education in safe, secure and loving environments. And therefore, we have no choice but to support it”, Minister Greaves said.

The Health Minister further called on the centre to work along with his

Ministry in developing a sensitization program that would educate the public on the challenges of children living with disabilities. He said that the Ministry of Health was fully aware of the challenges facing children and was now negotiating on acquiring a property for the establishment of a transit home for troubled children.

Meantime, Education Officer for Special Needs Mrs. Cynthia Weeks said the Ministry commended and supported the efforts of the administrators of the centre. She also called on the public to lend support: “We must play out part in seeking a better quality of life for our children with disabilities, and the children with disability are in this situation not through their own choosing or their fault. Let us rally behind CDGC and Dr. Shuling; I want to tell you to keep up the good work; the Ministry of education supports you”.

The new facility was built through donations from local corporate sponsors and a German association.

Health and Human Services Minister Hon. Damien Greaves has pledged financial assistance to the Child Development and Guidance Centre.

Speaking at the official opening of the newly constructed facility last Friday, Minister Greaves said “while the Ministry’s health professionals had been assisting the centre, the Ministry has been tardy in some areas”.

According to Mr. Greaves, along with educational pursuits, the centre caters to the health needs of children with disabilities. In light of that he suggested that it should be brought fully



Handle interviews of victims as police officers – Justice d’Auvergne

Aretired Supreme Court Judge has advised officers of the St. Lucia Crisis Centre to handle their interviews with victims of domestic violence as a police officer would.

Madam Justice Suzie d’Auvergne

who delivered the feature address at the Centre’s Annual General Meeting on Saturday, said a report of domestic violence is and must be regarded as a report of crime. In light of that, she said it was essential that the interviewing of victims be handled with utmost care.

“The interviewing officer must be aware of the sensitivity of the situation, and bare in mind that this collection of information or evidence as we call it in legal circles from the victim is crucial to the future safety of the victim and the behaviour of the offender, and may even reduce the need for return calls to further incidents,” Justice d’Auvergne said.

Madam Justice d’Auvergne said while it was true that interviewing officers were not law enforcement personnel, when conducting interviews of that nature they were in-fact performing the task of officers of the law: “The crisis centre may be the first port of call for a domestic violence incident, but very often it does not end there. Hence the reason why it is so important that such reported incidents are reported proper-

ly from inception. There must be that professional approach, tempered with kindness ...not mercy, kindness.”

Speaking on the topic, The New Face of Family Law in St. Lucia, Madam Justice d’Auvergne said while victims of domestic violence always had legal right to petition the high court to seek redress, they were kept stranded by the exorbitant cost of legal fees in High Court proceedings.

These issues, she said are addressed in the Domestic Violence Act, which focuses less on whether a legal or equitable right had been infringe and more on whether a physical and psychological act was done or threatened against someone entitled to the protection of the state.

OECS and Caricom position sports in the region



David Peterkin (R) and John Campbell discussing sports in the Region

Head of the OECS Sports Desk David Peterkin hosted the newly appointed Sports Director at the Caricom Secretariat John Campbell on Thursday March 3rd 2005, at the OECS Secretariat.

This first official conference between the two regional sports administrators covered several issues relating to the technical, social and human resource advancement for sports in the region.

Mr. Campbell, Caricom’s first appointee as Sports Director remarked that the meeting, a fact finding mission, was essentially to establish ways in which the Caricom Secretariat

could assist in implementing programmes within the OECS.

“The discussions were fruitful. It was a learning experience that provided first hand information on the programmes and strategies within the OECS Sports fixture”, Mr. Campbell said adding, “there is still a lot of ground to cover to facilitate sports development in the region”.

Mr. Peterkin said he was pleased to have met Mr. Campbell, whom he described as having a passion for sports, and that this was a valuable tool for the development of young people and societies as a whole.

Both persons advocated placing sports higher on the region’s agenda, but warned that such priority would have to be sold to the region’s governments.

“We have to do in our jobs, what is necessary to ensure that the level of management and administration in sports, if we have any say in it, gets to a much higher level, and then we can approach the government and say listen, we are doing things much more

professionally and as a result, we need more from you in resources and commitment. So with both voices and both programmes going, the way forward looks good”, Mr. Peterkin said.

Mr. Peterkin assured that the sharing of ideas and best practices would continue between both regional integration institutions for the betterment of the Caribbean.

This meeting of the minds at the Castries-based OECS Sports Desk also looked at Sports Tourism: “We agreed that Sports Tourism does have different lines to it. There is in our case OECS Sports Tourism, then there is Caribbean Sports Tourism and there is International Sports Tourism. John and I believe strongly, that Caribbean Sports Tourism is something we can work together on, and we want to make the airlines and the hotel associations aware that Caribbean Sports Tourism will do a lot for you. We want to get them on board to help in the promotion of it and to help in the belief that this will do a lot of good for the movement of our people in the region”, Mr. Peterkin said.

Both Sports Directors shared common concerns, such as the need for a more sound structure at the grass roots level, and the need for sports organisations to be more developed.

Meet Cricket World Cup



Mrs. Fortuna Belrose
Operations Manager

Coming
Chief Executive
Office



Mrs. Renee De Myers
Public Education and
Media Liaison
Officer

Final
Office



Ms. Denise Amedee
Receptionist

Security
Director



Mrs. Belrose leads
an enthusiastic
team in a planning
session

2007 Management Team

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Caricom and Canadian trade officials optimistic about way forward in trade talks

Christ Church, Barbados - "Both sides felt that the meeting was constructive. Today's encounter has provided impetus for forward momentum in a process that is the precursor to the commencement of formal negotiations for an enhanced trade arrangement between CARICOM and Canada." This was the view of the Director-General of the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (RNM), Ambassador Dr. Richard Bernal, at the close of the Third Meeting of the CARICOM-Canada Joint Working Group on Enhanced Trade Arrangements, convened in Barbados today (March 1).

Serving as a platform for the two sides to resume consultations, the Working Group was co-chaired by Ambassador Bernal on behalf of CARICOM and Mr. Ian Burney, Head of the Canadian Delegation, on behalf of Canada.

The CARICOM Co-Chair underscored the importance of the two sides

moving quickly to commence negotiations for an enhanced trade arrangement, emphasizing "CARICOM looks forward to the early start of negotiations, as an enhanced trade arrangement would seek to broaden scope and coverage relative to CARIBCAN, especially with regard to the areas of Services and Investment."

In considering the possible scope and coverage of the proposed enhanced trade arrangement, today's technical discussions reiterated that 'flexibility' will be enshrined in the proposed trade agreement, to take into consideration small, vulnerable CARICOM countries. With respect to the scope of the proposed trade agreement, the two sides reaffirmed what had been previously agreed to as regards the primary focus being placed on four areas: (i) Market Access; (ii) Investment; (iii) Services; and (iv) Institutional Arrangements and Dispute Settlement. The two sides also renewed their interest in negotiat-

ing side agreements on Labour and the Environment.

CARICOM's objectives in an enhanced trade arrangement with Canada are to: (i) preserve, build on and broaden the scope of the current instruments of trade and economic co-operation; (ii) where possible, to deepen disciplines to improve market access for CARICOM exports of goods and services; (iii) to broaden the country coverage to include all CARICOM states; (iv) to stimulate increased flows of Canadian investment into the region; and, (v) to provide a comprehensive framework for development co-operation initiatives.

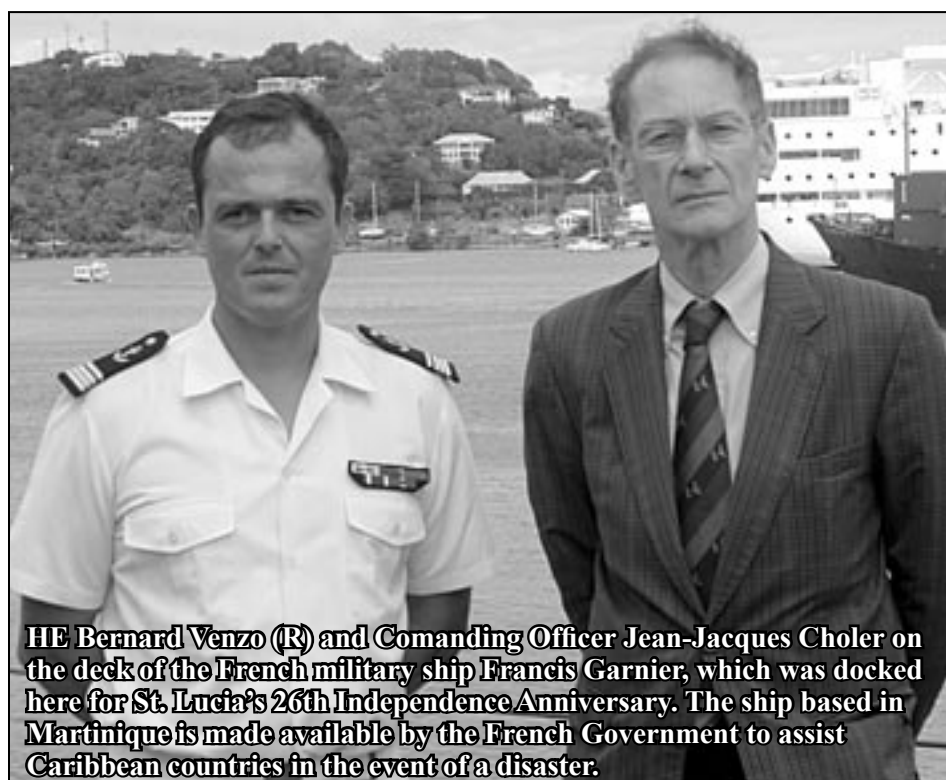
CARICOM was represented at the encounter by trade officials from Member States, the CARICOM Secretariat and the RNM. Led by the Director-General, Bilateral and Regional Trade Policy Bureau, International Trade Canada, Mr. Ian Burney, the Canadian team was comprised of negotiators from Ottawa and representatives



Dr. Richard Bernal

of the Canadian High Commission in Barbados.

CARIBCAN is an economic and trade development assistance programme for the Commonwealth Caribbean countries and territories. Established in 1986, its primary objectives are to enhance Commonwealth Caribbean trade and export earnings, improve trade and economic development, promote new investment opportunities, and encourage enhanced economic integration and cooperation.



HE Bernard Venzo (R) and Comanding Officer Jean-Jacques Choler on the deck of the French military ship Francis Garnier, which was docked here for St. Lucia's 26th Independence Anniversary. The ship based in Martinique is made available by the French Government to assist Caribbean countries in the event of a disaster.

French Embassy shows support for Disaster Management

In its continued support of Disaster Management in Saint Lucia, the Government and People of the Republic of France recently donated two photocopying machines to the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO).

"This is not the first time that the French Embassy has worked with NEMO," Director of NEMO Dawn French explained, adding, "but usually we have some discussion regarding the nature of the collaboration; this time the phone rang and the next minute

there they were."

The unexpected donation has already been passed to two District Committees with the heart-felt thanks of the benefiting teams. The beneficiaries of the gifts have both agreed to share the copier services with neighbouring Disaster Committees until such time that all Committees are fully equipped.

The Director of NEMO, in a letter to French Ambassador HE Bernard Venzo conveyed the thanks of NEMO and the cooperative intension of the Committees.

Furniture workshop to be held March 14 - 18

The National Skills Development Centre at Bisee will be the venue for the latest workshop organized by the Ministry of Commerce, Investment and Consumer Affairs. The March 14th - 18th activity will be conducted under the theme "General aspects of furniture manufacturing."

The one week workshop forms part of the Ministry's continued attempt to enhance the technical capacity of persons engaged in furniture manufacturing.

Commerce and Industry Officer with responsibility for the Furniture Industry Michelle Thomas, said the workshop sought to address a deficiency facing the industry: "We have come to realize that a number of persons who operate or work in various firms have not had formal training in the area of furniture manufacturing, and in that regard, we have decided to stage this workshop to train persons in general aspects of fur-

niture manufacturing".

The workshop is to cover several topics, including costing of furniture items, and the various steps that are involved in furniture production. "We are also looking at the various tools that are used; the safety procedures one should pay attention to in ensuring that everything goes on smoothly in the shop. We are also looking at electrical and mechanical troubleshooting, which are essential in ensuring that we have minimal breakdown", Mr. Thomas informed.

Persons who are interested in participating in this workshop are asked to contact the ministry at telephone number 468-4213. The deadline for the receipt of application is the 9th of March.

The furniture workshop is being organized in collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), which has contracted the services of two lectures from the Department of Building Trades at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College to conduct the exercise.

Dancing programme for Teachers starts soon

The St. Lucia School of Music's in-service training program for primary and secondary school teachers commences on April 18, 2005, following a delay due to insufficient enrolment.

The music program is being offered in collaboration with the University Centre on the Morne as part of its recently developed Outreach Project. Project Officer, Francillia Bernard said the music program was being offered at an affordable cost, to give participants the opportunity for further development, to enable them to make a greater contribution towards their students' development.

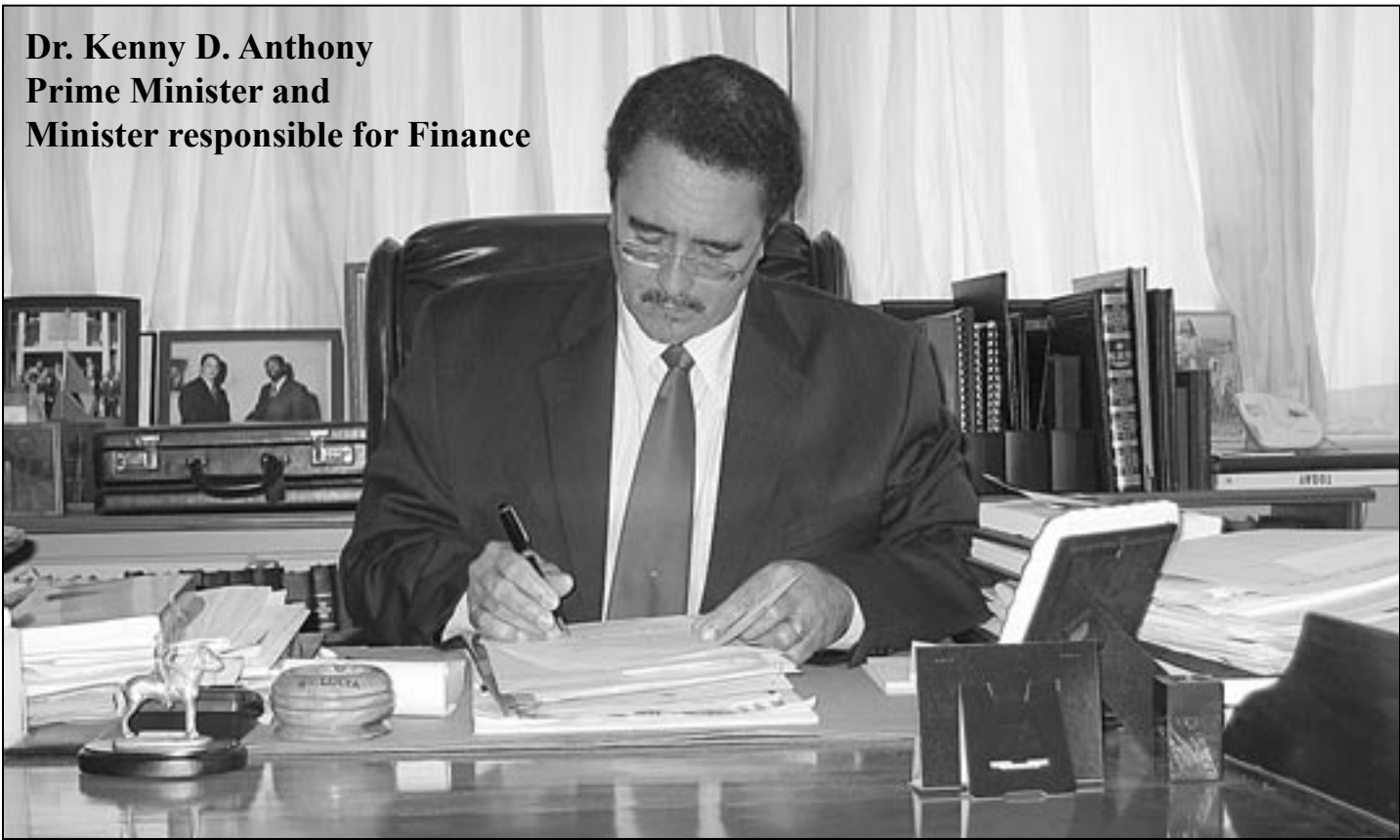
Another component of the Outreach Project is a training component for dance instructors offered by the Crystallite Dance Academy. Classes commenced on February 12th and will culminate with an Open Day on

March 19th at the studio of the Crystallite Dance Academy on Mongiraud Street.

"Teachers will be staging their first presentation. The public is invited to witness the teachers' creativity and their applied knowledge of various dancing techniques. The current group of teachers are enjoying the program and all in all the program has been a success. Persons who miss out can register for the next cycle commencing January 2006", Ms. Bernard said.

The University Centre sees the Outreach Program as another medium through which it can partner with agencies or groups in helping in the development of the community. At the end of each program participants receives a certificate endorsed by the centre.

Budget Preparations Underway



Dr. Kenny D. Anthony
Prime Minister and
Minister responsible for Finance

The Government of St. Lucia has commenced discussions on the Budget for the financial year 2005-2006. That’s the word from the Office of the Prime Minister.

The discussions, which commenced a fortnight ago, continued on Friday, March 4 with Cabinet Ministers and senior Government officials involved in the budgetary process.

The current discussions on the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure are taking place against the background of the St. Lucia economy having grown by 3.5% in 2004, following a growth rate of 3.71% in 2003.

The discussions are also taking place against the background of rising fuel prices. On March 3, 2005, the price of fuel on the international market reached a record high of US \$53 per barrel.

The rising cost of fuel on the world market continues to be a matter of very serious concern for the Government, which has frequently warned about the consequences and implications for small economies in the world, including those of St. Lucia and other Caribbean states

Cricket World Cup Saint Lucia Inc. to host legendary South African cricket administrator, Dr. Ali Bacher

As part of its programme of preparation to host matches in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2007, Saint Lucia’s Local Organising Committee, Cricket World Cup Saint Lucia Inc. (CWCSL), will host Dr. Ali Bacher from 11 to 13 April, 2005.

Dr. Ali Bacher is a former test cricket captain of South Africa, who captained South Africa during its 4-0 whitewash of Australia in 1969-70. However, it is as a cricket adminis-

trator that he has made his most memorable mark. He presided over the administration of South African cricket during its entry back into the world arena in the post-apartheid era, and as Managing Director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa ensured that equal opportunities were provided for cricketers of all races. His crowning achievement, however, was as the mastermind and head of the successful ICC Cricket World Cup 2003 South Africa organizing committee.

While in Saint Lucia, Dr. Bacher will meet with members of the business sector, the hotel and tourism sector, the Government of Saint Lucia, and the Board of Directors and staff of CWCSL Inc, in addition to an engagement with the local media. During these meetings, Dr. Bacher will share with the various agencies the experiences of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2003 in South Africa, and discuss the challenges and opportunities that come with hosting the third largest sporting

event in the world.

As part of a collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences of the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies, Dr. Bacher will also meet with the staff and students of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College.

Dr. Bacher will be accompanied to Saint Lucia from Trinidad by the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Dr. Hamid Ghany.

Misuse of Communal Bins create health hazard - SWMA

The St. Lucia Solid Waste Management Authority is concerned that residents of Bonne Terre, Cap Estate and Rodney Bay carry waste to communal bins along the Castries Gros-Islet Highway.

The upsurge in the transportation of household waste by residents to communal bins is resulting in an overflow of these bins. Furthermore, perpetrators of the act not only create a health hazard but contribute to poor aesthetics along the highway and deprive those residents who cannot receive a curbside collection service of an efficient use of their communal collection service.

The Authority wishes to inform

residents that despite the change in the collection contractor for the Gros-Islet Collection Zone the collection days remain the same. Collection days for Bonne Terre and Cape Estate are Mondays and Thursdays while collection days for Rodney Bay are Wednesdays and Saturdays. All residents are encouraged to observe their collection days and to purchase a bin that will securely contain their waste until the collection days for their community.

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

Help us help you protect our health, our economy and the environment.



Castries disaster committee welcomes drainage project

With only three months away from the 2005 hurricane season, the Castries Central Disaster Preparedness Committee is preparing for its official launch in April, at the Castries City Hall. Chairman of the committee Davis Paul said the grouping would be celebrating

its first anniversary this year as an established entity.

The committee he said, is concerned not only with disaster preparedness, but places heavy emphasis on prevention, and would be working closely with the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO).

“There s always the flooding in the

Central Castries area; a lot of houses are in low lying areas and prone to flooding, so we are really happy and we are welcoming the flood mitigation program. That would assist us and that would be preventing the whole situation whereby every rainy season, we have a major problem within the Central Castries area”, said Mr. Paul.

The committee was expected to meet on Friday 11th to fine tune plans for an upcoming workshop to be held next week in collaboration with NEMO. The workshop is intended to among other things, assist with developing a comprehensive plan for the 2005 hurricane season.

American Idol Fantasia Barrino in St. Lucia Jazz line-up

Following successful local and international press launches of St. Lucia Jazz 2005 earlier this year, the St. Lucia Tourist Board has scored a major coup with the booking of American Idol's Fantasia Barrino, scheduled to perform at main stage, Pigeon Island National Landmark, on Saturday May 7th.

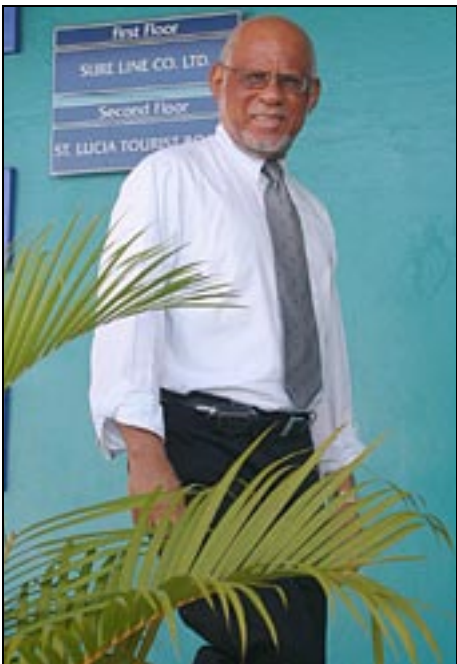
The gospel-inspired, Aretha Franklin-loving 19 year old wowed The Fox Television Show's harshest critic - Idol judge, Simon Cowell - enough to move up the rankings to make the final cut of nine finalists in the show's third season.

The rest is history as Fantasia won the competition by a margin of 1.3 million voters.

The Board is pleased to welcome Fantasia to its 2005 St. Lucia Jazz line up of artistes.

The year's biggest musical event scheduled for April 29th to May 8th will include jazz greats - guitarist Earl Klugh, trumpeter Chris Botti and Grammy nominated saxophonist/composer Dave Koz.

This year's line-up is rounded out by Motown soul/R&B icons, The Isley Brothers featuring Ron Isley, the re-incarnated New Edition group and Eng-



Director of Tourism Hilary Modest lish reggae sensation, UB40.

The official opening of St. Lucia Jazz 2005 takes place at the Mindoo Phillip Park from 7:00 pm on Friday April 29th and will feature Jamaican dancehall



American Idol Fantasia Barrino performer, Beenie Man, MTV's 2005 "Artist to Watch" – soca legend Rupee, local crew Kronic Heights along with powerhouse songstress Nicole David and Spectacle

Another coup for Sports Tourism in St. Lucia

The St. Lucia Tourist Board (SLTB), has expressed delight with the St. Lucia Rugby Union's initiative to stage what is being dubbed the "Carnival 10-a-side Rugby Festival" scheduled to take place in St. Lucia July 16, 2005.

Nine countries are expected to participate, including Defense Force and Police of Trinidad & Tobago, Hornets from Guyana, Renegades and Scorpi-

ons of Barbados, Amazonians from St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Good Luck and Robert of Martinique, and Montego Bay from Jamaica. The St. Lucia Rugby Union plans to enter three teams in the competition.

The Union met with Sports Consultant, Joseph "Reds" Perreira and brought the Board up to date on the plans for hosting of the event, as it falls within the SLTB's sports tourism

thrust. The island is expected to benefit from the games, as all of the visiting clubs will finance their own accommodation and meals locally.

According to Mr. Perreira, the event is to be marketed in the United Kingdom to bring an English flavour in 2006.

Several local venues are being considered by the St. Lucia Rugby Union for use, including the National Stadium

located in Vieux Fort, while the officiating, which is key to the high quality of the event, will include overseas referees.

Further details of sponsorship of the Carnival 10-a-side Rugby Festival will be announced later.

Big swim meet this weekend

Close to 400 persons comprising swimmers, officials and the press from the French territories are to visit St. Lucia this weekend for the 16th Annual International Swim Meet of French Antillean territories. The event which is also called the MIAGE will take place at the Rodney Heights Aquatic Centre, on Saturday and Sunday March 12th & 13th.

Forty-three St. Lucian swimmers between the ages of 7 and 10 years, representing CJ's, Hurricane, Trident

and the Rodney Heights Aquatic Centre Swim clubs, will compete against 173 of their French counterparts. The MIAGE is organized by clubs in Martinique, St. Bathe, Guadeloupe and French Guiana. This is the first time that the meet is being held outside of a French territory.

The visiting delegation is being hosted by the Trident and Hurricane Swim clubs. Last year, the two clubs signed an agreement to become part of the organizing group of the MIAGE, which means that the MIAGE will come to St.

Lucia every four years.

President of the Trident Swim Club and member of the local planning committee for the 2005 MIAGE Brenda Boland, thinks it is an enormous event for St. Lucia, and one that will provide an opportunity for more cooperation within the local swimming clubs.

"I think competition in the swimming arena is very healthy, and to date it has always been a friendly supportive competition. This kind of meet allows our children to compete against swimmers that they have not faced before. Typically we swim against Trinidad, Barbados and the other OECS territories, so to see the French swimmers this time around is going to be a challenge, because they have no clue what the competition is going to be like", said Ms. Boland. Also, as the mother of a young swimmer, she believes it is an opportunity for children to find great friends in the region.

Ms. Boland said she was looking forward to the day when swimming would be one of the leading sports on the island, with an increased number of clubs representing the island overseas. She said this weekend's event would also provide an opportunity for local swimming coaches to develop ideas on how their programmes could be enhanced. The French swimmers will be accompanied by Top Martiniquean swimmer Jack Seco.

Organizers have assured adequate emergency and security personnel throughout the event.



(Left to right) Paula James, President of St. Lucia Amateur Swimming Association; Brenda Boland, President of Trident Swim Club; Yasmin Tyson, President of Hurricane Swim Club; Cheryl Renwick, Public Relations Officer, St. Lucia Amateur Swimming Association; and Joseph "Reds" Perreira, Sports Consultant at the St. Lucia Tourist Board

THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. Mar. 12th - Fri. Mar. 18th, 2005

The GIS Speaks With Officials of Institutions Responsible for Poverty Reduction Initiatives in St. Lucia Saturday 12th March, 6:30 p.m.

- From the Archives of the GIS: The School for the Deaf presents "Do You Hear Me?" - Sat. Mar. 12th, 9:00 p.m.
- Concert of Inspiration & Praise 2005 - Sun. Mar. 13th, 7:30 p.m.
- Laborie & Canaries Jetties: Platforms for Economic Development – Mon. Mar. 14th, 6:15 p.m.
- The GIS speaks with the President of the Soufriere Heritage Tourism Programme - Tues. Mar. 15th, 6:15 p.m.
- Highlights of the launching of the CSME Education Project - Wed. Mar. 16th, 8:00 p.m.
- The GIS speaks with youth from various organizations on the CSME and other issues – Thurs. March 17th, 8:00 p.m.
- Highlights of signing ceremony between the UNDP and the Ministry of Social Transformation – Fri. Mar. 18th, 9:00 p.m.

Remember to tune in for:

- GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.
- Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:
- Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm :
- Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 8:00pm (Kweyol Discussion):
- Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. (Min. of Ed. Prog). Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review)
- Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm - (Week in Review—Kweyol)

For the complete programme guide, log on to our website at www.stlucia.gov.lc and then click on the NTN icon.

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