



# NATIONWIDE

A publication of the Department of Information Services



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## CONFIDENCE IN OUR ECONOMY

### JALOUSIE HOTEL TO BE REFURBISHED

The decision by regional and international financial institutions to support major national investment initiatives, reflect confidence in the economy of Saint Lucia. Addressing members of Parliament at the sitting of the House, Tuesday August 16th Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony said the Government of Saint Lucia got the highest price per share for its stake in the Jalousie Hotel. The following is the full text of the Prime Ministers statement to Parliament.

“Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring Honourable Members up to date on the sale of shares in the Jalousie Hotel. But before I do this, it will be useful to dwell for a moment on the history of this matter, so that Honourable Members can gain an appreciation of the decision that Government had to make with respect to the offer to purchase the Government’s shareholding in the hotel.

#### The background

In 1996, the Government of Saint Lucia purchased shares in Jalousie (1996) Limited along with M Group Resorts Inc. and Comfort Inns B.V. The latter is an affiliated company of the Hilton Group of hotels. This was a new entity formed to take over the assets and liabilities of the old company, Jalousie Plantation Limited. Hilton Hotel, Honourable Members will recall, was offered a contract to manage the



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony

hotel. The ownership of the company was structured as follows: M Group Resorts (Mahvi Family), 43.5%; Comfort Inns (Hilton), 28.8%; Government of Saint Lucia, 27.7%.

As part of the arrangements for funding the purchase of shares by the Government, the National Insurance Corporation participated through an investment of \$2.7M. The Government is holding the equivalent amount in value of shares in trust for the National Insurance Corporation.

#### A history of accumulated losses

During the period of its operations (i.e. from 1997) the Company has been

making trading losses and as of December 31, 2004 had accumulated losses of US\$15,057,063 or EC\$ 40,654,070.

While the operations of the hotel have generated above average occupancy, the hotel’s viability was challenged by inadequate capital, heavy debt and high operating costs relative to its size.

Based on the audited financial statements of the company as of December 31, 2004, the book valuation of the shares of the company was US\$0.14(EC\$0.38) per share. The shares were originally purchased at a book value of US\$0.42(EC\$ 1.13). This therefore means that there has been a decrease in the value of the shares by approximately 67% over the 7-year period of the operations of the company.

In other words, shareholders have experienced a reduction in the value of their original investment in the company by approximately 67%, or on average 9.5% per year. At least one of the investors in the company, the NIC, would have expected a return of between 7–9% on its investment. No dividends have been paid to shareholders. Mr. Speaker, this says it all about the value of the investment.

Continued on page 8



Hotel expansion in all areas of Saint Lucia - Discovery at Marigot Bay



“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





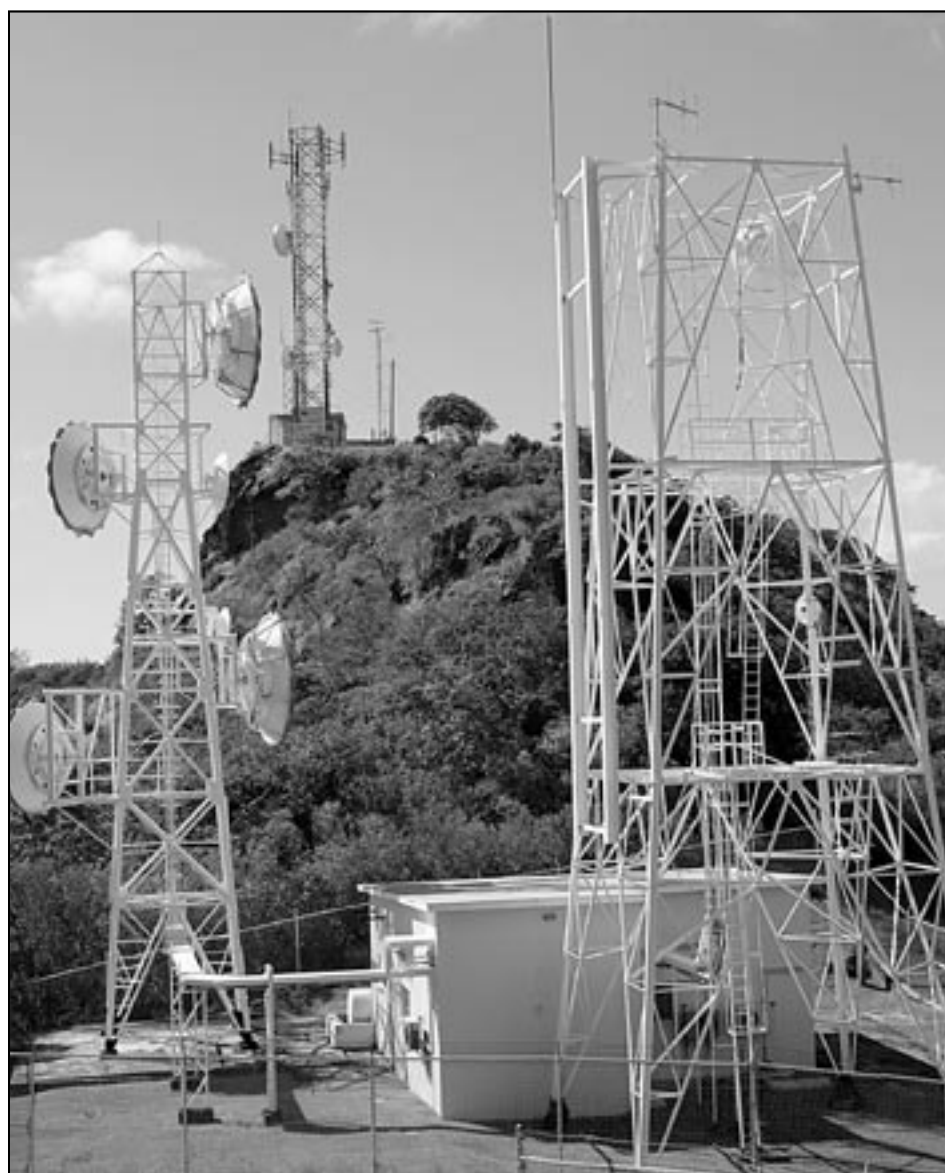
# Economic Benefits From Radio Spectrum

**T**he members of the public of Saint Lucia and interested organizations are being invited to be part of the consultation on a draft plan for the management of the radio spectrum in the Eastern Caribbean. Comments can be sent in writing or via email to the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) office in Saint Lucia and will be considered in the formulation of a detailed plan for spectrum management. All comments will be treated in confidence.

The procedure for the consultation of this document is as follows: the Draft plan is submitted for comment on 2005 August 12; a thirty- five day period, up to 2005 September 12, for comments; a further twenty-one day period up to 2005 October 03 for comments on the comments received will be allowed; the Regional Spectrum Plan shall be published when approved by the ECTEL Council of Ministers.

The radio spectrum is an important but limited resource managed by the ECTEL, for the people of the Eastern Caribbean. The radio Spectrum provides a useful medium for the establishment of telecommunications and broadcasting services for the functioning and growth of the economy of the region.

The ECTEL Spectrum Plan is a regional plan and divides the ECTEL radio frequency spectrum into a number of frequency bands which designates the general purposes for which each band may be utilized. The process is referred to as the allocation of frequency bands to radiocommunication services. The Telecommunications Act of Saint Lucia provides for the establishment of a national plan by the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) for the allocation of spectrum among radiocommunications operators in accordance with the regional plan established by ECTEL.



**Extensive use of spectrum for mobile communications in Saint Lucia - Telecommunications tower in Vieux-Fort**

tions operators in accordance with the regional plan established by ECTEL.

The regional Spectrum Plan provides a technical basis for the allocation of radio frequencies to the various services that are delivered to the inhabitants of the Eastern Caribbean and in particular to those of the ECTEL Member States.

The plan is dynamic in nature and is subject to amendments every three years consistent with the table of frequency allocation of the International Telecommunications union to which the ECTEL Regional Allocation table is aligned.

ECTEL is responsible for providing

advice to the Governments of the region on the allocation of the spectrum resource to meet the demands of existing and emerging technologies and services thereby ensuring that the radio spectrum provides the greatest economic and social benefit to the peoples of the region.

ECTEL Member States are signatories to the International Telecommunications Union, ITU, and the Caribbean Telecommunications Union, CTU, and collaborate with other Inter-Governmental and national telecommunications regulatory organizations in the Americas.

ECTEL was established by Treaty in 1999 and manages the affairs of five States, namely Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines. The allocation of the scarce resource is carried out under a Multi-Island Spectrum Management system. The basic principle applied is that of harmonizing the processes to ensure equitable distribution of the spectrum.

ECTEL comprises a Council of Ministers responsible for the formulation of policy, for the management of telecommunications in the Contracting States to whom a Board of Directors are answerable, together with such staff as ECTEL requires for the performance of its functions under the supervision and control of a Managing Director.

The complete draft plan is available from the ECTEL website [www.ectel.int](http://www.ectel.int). Comment should be sent to the following addresses (1) Spectrum Management Consultant/Specialist, ECTEL, Po Box 1886, Vide Boutielle, Castries, St Lucia, [rhumes@ectel.int](mailto:rhumes@ectel.int), Fax 1 758 458 1698; (2) Managing Director, ECTEL, P.O. Box 1886, Vide Boutielle, Castries, St. Lucia, [ewilliams@ectel.int](mailto:ewilliams@ectel.int), Fax : 1 758 458 1698.

## World Oil Price Increase will Affect Saint Lucia

**I**t is becoming more and more likely that the Government of St. Lucia will be unable to avoid an increase in fuel prices. That's the view of local observers following last week's increases in the price of fuel in two OECS member-states, Antigua and Montserrat.

On Monday, August 8, 2005, the Government of Antigua announced an increase of EC\$1.00 in retail prices for both unleaded gas and diesel, taking the price today to \$9.30 per gallon for gas and \$9.31 per gallon for diesel.

In the case of Montserrat, the Government has also announced that effective Monday August 15, 2005, the price of unleaded gas has increased by 95 cents to \$9.50 per gallon.

OECS Member States have long been monitoring the continuous increases in the price of fuel on the world market. In recent times, world oil prices have gone way past the previously feared US \$50 per barrel mark. In early August, the world market price for oil reached a high of US \$68 per barrel.

These steady increases have impacted negatively on the OECS economies, and, while at varying stages of economic development, all have experienced negative economic reverberations at the local level.

In his budget presentation earlier this year Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony noted that there will be far reaching effects of these price increases on the government revenue.

"Under such circumstances, Government's consumption tax revenue from petroleum products is likely to come under increasing pressure in the new fiscal year. In fact, sustained oil prices can completely erode the current consumption tax revenue on unleaded gasoline and diesel. Additionally, prices are also likely to increase due to higher prices from our trading partners.

These developments point to the need for continuous monitoring of trends within the international oil market and its impact on our economy. The Government urges all Saint Lucians to reflect on the important issues of energy and conservation during this period of sustained high oil prices. We recognize that further increases in gasoline, diesel and LPG prices may constrain the recovery that we have witnessed in the economy of our country. In the light of this, we have chosen to keep fuel prices unchanged, for the time being, but if prices continue to rise, there will be no choice but to increase petroleum prices." He said.

The analysts are of the view that with

the continuing increase, more states are being affected in a more serious way and it will be difficult for any of the OECS Member States to escape having to revisit the local price of fuel.

Dr. Anthony encouraged Saint Lucian citizens to adopt energy saving measures to address the effects of the oil price increases. The Prime Minister said "Meanwhile, in a bid to assist energy conscious consumers, Govern-

ment will reduce Consumption Taxes on energy-saving devices. This will take effect on August 01, 2005. Government will for a second time, from income year 2005 up to and including income year 2007, allow the deduction of expenses reasonably incurred by a tax payer during the income year in the purchasing and installation of a new solar water heating system, up to a limit of \$6,500."



**Increasing demand for fuel for public and private transportation**

# OUR PORTS ARE ISPS COMPLIANT

*The following is an address delivered by Prime Minister Dr. Kenney D. Anthony at the fifth annual general meeting of St. Lucia Marine Terminals Limited (SLMTL) in Vieux Fort on Wednesday August 12th 2005.*

“This being convened at a time when maritime trade is being influenced by heightened security concerns, a wave of privatization, mergers and acquisitions by major shipping lines. These and other realities impact significantly on our maritime sector and challenge us to formulate appropriate strategies in order to gain a competitive advantage. Both SLASPA and SLMTL are compelled to conduct constant reviews of cost elements and focus on increased productivity and efficiency, utilizing technology and strategic alliances.

As we strive to adhere to changing global standards, we should endeavor to establish our own benchmarks with respect to critical success factors like safety, quality and security. The International Maritime Organization’s International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) code, which came into force on 1st July 2004, is one such imperative for Caribbean ports. The primary objectives of the Code are: (1) the establishment of an international framework involving cooperation between contracting governments, government agencies, local administrations and the shipping community and port industries; (2) the detection of security threats and the implementation of preventive measures against security incidents affecting ships or port facilities used in international trade and to establish the roles of diverse government and non government parties for ensuring maritime security.

### Saint lucia isps compliant

It is noteworthy that Saint Lucia did achieve ISPS compliance, albeit at a significant cost. To date, SLASPA has spent about USD1.5 million on security upgrades at our ports and estimates that this figure will be doubled over the next five years. We cannot fail to adequately respond to increased global attention concerning security at our seaports and airports. This entails the introduction of leading edge technology like underwater surveillance, metal detectors, and CCTV and patrol boats.

Some regional territories have spent millions of dollars on the procurement of X-ray inspection systems designed to facilitate the comprehensive inspection of containers and cargo packages to prevent the smuggling of drugs, weapons, explosives and other contraband. Naval escorts for cruise ships and protective cordons for ships in port is also becoming standard practice.

### A paperless port

The local maritime industry continues the drive to design a port community system linking stakeholders in the industry by moving towards a paperless port and enhancing efficiency via information communication technology. In this regard, the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA++) project, with SLMTL as the pilot site is com-



Prime Minister Dr. Kenney Anthony

mendable. The primary aim of this project is to implement an imports/exports processing system, which maximizes efficiency within the Customs clearance process, provides an efficient service to the trading community, and ensures an effective control and collection of revenue. Moreover, this system will provide quality information for decision-making as well as more concise statistical data on trade.

tional Maritime Organization (IMO) and ensures the fulfillment of the State’s obligations in respect of the maritime conventions to which Saint Lucia is party. The Division is also responsible for advising Government on maritime/shipping related policies and their implementation.

The recently announced air surveillance security system established by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago provides a timely opportunity for collaboration with Saint Lucia and other neighboring territories. Such a collaborative approach serves to enhance not only national security but makes the region a more safe and secure zone.

The Caribbean region is poised for further growth and development and our responsiveness to world trends is inextricably linked to our survival. Challenging times calls for profound and creative thinking. Consequently, we must endeavor to create the kind of infrastructure and operating environment that will ensure our successful participation in the world market. As a region, we must prepare for the implementation of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), since trading will be liberalized to create increased threats as well as opportunities. Saint Lucia will also have to capitalize on opportunities afforded by the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME). Therefore, the issue of maintain-

port in Saint Lucia, the Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority must undertake the upgrading of the existing finger pier that is approaching the end of its useful life.

On the part of government, work continues on the upgrade of our inland transportation linkages. With the reconstruction/ rehabilitation of the Vieux-Fort to Soufriere road and other projects, it is intended that the major towns of Vieux-Fort, Soufriere and Gros – Islet will benefit from an improved road network linkage with the Capital City, Castries. Government will continue to support creative initiatives that are intended to foster the development of the South by incorporating existing facilities. To this end, Port Vieux-Fort is strategically located in the heart of Saint Lucia’s newest industrial frontier. Given the port’s proximity to the under utilized Hewanorra International Airport, the Industrial Free Zone, the Goods Distribution Free Zone, the Vieux-Fort Industrial Estate and the largest Fisheries Complex in the Eastern Caribbean, there is potential for collaborative approaches which could be the catalyst for the sustainable growth and development of southern Saint Lucia. We must create opportunities to boost the light manufacturing center of Saint Lucia, since increased exports will provide backhaul cargo for shipping lines that call Vieux-Fort. Thus, a more vibrant manufacturing sector will contribute to increased throughput at our ports.



Containerised goods for local consumption and transshipment

### A safe and secure zone

In the days ahead, demands will be made on the Division of Maritime Affairs of the Saint Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority which was established in 2000, following an amendment to the SLASPA Act, No. 10 of 1983 and the Shipping Act, No. 11 of 1994. The primary objective of the amendments was to allow the Authority to administer the Shipping Act.

The Division of Maritime Affairs has the responsibility of representing the interests of Saint Lucia on Maritime matters, serves as the national focal point to the Interna-

ing a well-trained workforce becomes of paramount importance. It is imperative that all parties including SLASPA, the Customs & Excise Department, the Maritime Division, the Goods Distribution Free Zone and the Shipping Association of St. Lucia Inc. collaborate with central government to meet the challenges of the region and pursue strategies that will redound to the benefit of Saint Lucia.

### A SLMTL a primary transshipment port

To better position St. Lucia Marine Terminal Ltd, as the primary transshipment

### A facilitator of international trade

Bananas continue to be the main tangible export from Saint Lucia. The Port of Vieux-Fort is the port from which all bananas are exported from Saint Lucia. Bananas accounted for 27% of breakbulk cargo at the Port for the year ended March 31st 2004 and 39% in the previous year.

The importance of the maritime industry is fully acknowledged by the government of St. Lucia. It is a significant economic multiplier for prosperity at a national and regional level, since it is a facilitator of international trade, which is a major revenue earner. Moreover, the industry is a facilitator of other revenue earning streams, such as tourism and agriculture.

I understand that SLASPA is formulating a strategic plan that will include SLMTL. This is a necessary undertaking in order that the Port Authority aligns internal operations with the external environment. The overriding objective should be to so position the Authority that it will anticipate changes and adapt in a proactive manner. This positioning is of paramount importance since Saint Lucia’s sustainable development hinges on the maritime industry.

Therefore, I would like to encourage the Council, directors, management and staff of SLASPA and SLMTL to continue striving towards greater effectiveness and efficiency at our ports, with the assurance of Government’s critical support. I would like to congratulate SLMTL for having another successful year of operation and urge the Board of Directors and management to be proactive in light of the dynamic nature of the maritime industry.



Improvement to Ports infrastructure



# Government Helps Banana Farmers Adjust To Marketplace

Two useful initiatives  
Good Day St. Lucia, Last week's Conversation about PetroCaribe attracted considerable attention and feedback. Most people welcomed the news about the Venezuelan initiative because they too believe that it holds out the possibility of cheaper fuel supplies. Indeed, most persons who spoke on the issue, whether to me personally or through the media, have urged the Government to move fast and take up the Venezuelan offer. But as I have explained, before we can make use of the initiative, there are real challenges to resolve.

Another development which elicited considerable interest was the announcement of the eye care programme by the Cuban Government. Ever since I unveiled this initiative with the Cuban Ambassador, many have commented effusively about the programme. The Cuban Government will make available two ophthalmologists to examine and treat persons for various eye diseases such as cataract and glaucoma, among others. Persons, who need surgery, will be flown to Cuba at the expense of the Cuban Government. And in cases where persons may have to travel to Cuba for treatment, they can take someone along to care for them while in Cuba. Here again, people have been inquiring as to when the programme will get under way. I can assure you that it will commence



BERU - New approaches to supporting banana farmers

this month. Meanwhile, listen to the announcements confirming the dates when the doctors will be in your communities.

**Back to bananas**

These two initiatives are crucial and important, but I have something else on my mind. I am preoccupied again with the continuing issues surrounding the banana industry. Once more, my topic is about bananas, which has been in the news ever since the World Trade Organization ruled that the proposed tariff of 230 euros per ton on banana exports from Latin America would be illegal if implemented.

Time and time again, the Govern-



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony in communication with banana officials

ment has explained the challenges we face and what's at stake in the negotiations between Europe and Latin America at the WTO. I have spoken on the issue; the Minister of Agriculture has spoken on the issue; the Chairman of the St. Lucia Banana Corporation and the Chairman of WIBDECO have spoken on the issue; the representatives of the other local banana companies have

**Political agendas**

Even though we all know that things have changed significantly in the banana industry worldwide, there are still those who feel they can and should milk the issue dry for political reasons.

Take the latest statement by the Leader of the United Workers Party, Sir John Compton, on the WTO situation. Last week, Sir John issued another of his weekly statements. It was indeed a strange statement. He went on and on about how bananas built St. Lucia; about how many millions of dollars bananas earned for St. Lucia in the past; and about how banana production figures have declined significantly. Sir John lamented that the industry was destroyed by his political opponents. He said banana farmers were neglected today and left to look at their land with nothing else to do. He said the industry was mismanaged by the Government. And, as has become his habit, the UWP Leader sought to miniaturize – to downplay – the importance of tourism to our economic survival today.

**Not a word**

In all that Sir John said, there was not a word about the fact that the rules of international trade have changed significantly; not a word about the tough competition from Latin American producers. There was not a word about the fact that he ignored the signals of

## PM Converses with the Nation

Of course Sir John has never been magnanimous to concede that it was the SLP Administration under George Charles that established the banana industry. Surely, he should allow history to speak, at least for a change.

decline during his tenure in office; not a word about the fact that he abandoned office in 1996 when he saw the signs of hard times for bananas. He knew he could no longer ride on the back of the banana industry.



Modernisation in agricultural production

Sir John talked about STABEX funds, but said not a word about the EU funds which financed new packaging sheds built on farms; not a word about the EU funds which financed Inland Reception Depots constructed by this Government, not a word too, about the EU financed irrigation programme that

this Government introduced but which he never worried about when he was in office; and finally not even a squeak about the introduction of tissue culture and other assistance such as the input revolving fund which farmers continue access.

**Unforgetful reminders**

I need not remind you, that the decline in the banana industry began un-

reorganize the industry to meet the new challenges of these times. It was this Government that set out to encourage banana farmers to adjust to the realities of the market place.

Understandably, production has declined throughout the Windward Islands. Grenada has abandoned bananas. Dominica is struggling to stay afloat. St. Vincent and the Grenadines too, is struggling to keep the industry going. In St. Lucia too, production has declined but despite this, St. Lucia still remains the leading producer in the Windward Islands, producing more than half of all the bananas exported to Europe. This is indeed a tribute to the resilience of our banana farmers; especially those who have not given up hope and who have embraced the need for change in the way they produce and package bananas for export.

**Diversification beyond bananas**

Despite the contraction in export of bananas, this economy continues to grow. The IMF has confirmed that the economy grew by 4% last year, the highest growth rate since 1992. Take a look around St. Lucia today and you will see just how much Castries and Gros Islet – and the areas in between – have changed. Look at the number of new hotels going up as we speak, adding another one thousand rooms to our local hotel plant. Look at the number of local and foreign companies that have taken advantage of the Government's incentives to expand. Look at Brazil Street and Bridge Street – see the changes taking shape. Look on the streets and see the new tourism taxis and local minibuses that ply our streets and highways.

**Doomed to fail**

Sir John's weekly efforts to belittle the Government and to downplay its achievements do not change the reality of progress, nor do they hide his past.



Loading bananas at Port Castries

They may mask his intentions, but they do not erase his history.

So then, I wish to ask: "Who is crying crocodile tears?" Who is it, who misses office and power so much, that he has emerged from retirement on a third occasion. Who is it, who cries every day to the media about things no longer being like it used to be when he was in charge? Who is it, who so desperately wants to return to office that he would defy reason and offer to put us in reverse, and take us back to the old days? Yes, crocodile tears are being shed, but they certainly aren't mine.

One thing is clear. We are not turning back now!

I thank you for listening today. As usual, I invite you to tune in again next week when I'll be back with another Conversation With The Nation. Until then, may the Good Lord bless and keep you.



Modernising Castries City



Improving agricultural extension



# Continuing Education – The St. Lucian Context

## Nearly 700 students register annually

*Continued from last week's issue*

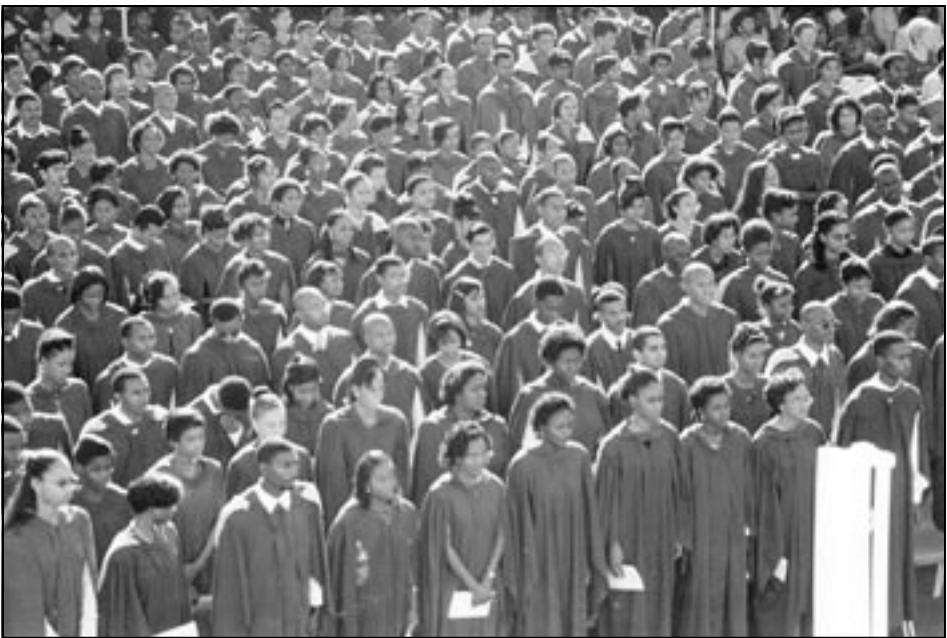
### Programmes/Courses

The Department offers a variety of quality academic courses/programmes and other activities designed to meet the general and specific educational needs of our adult students. Students may either register for a programme, comprising several courses leading to a Certificate or Associate Degree, presented at the annual graduation; or they may register for a single “stand-alone” course for which they receive a certificate upon successful completion.

At the main campus, persons can pursue programmes in Business Studies, Secretarial Studies, Computer and

various public and private sector organizations. It facilitates the Defensive Driving course for the Ministry of Transport and has provided training for 113 Tour Guides and 1,049 Taxi Operatives on behalf of the St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association and the Ministry of Tourism respectively.

Training and certification were also provided for construction workers as part of a CPEC funded initiative of the Ministry of Planning, Development, Environment & Housing in order to prepare construction workers to face the challenges of open market competition.



A graduating class of the SALCC

of this department.

Moreover, the DOCE functions as an outreach arm of the College, liaising with a number of other institutions, community groups and organizations. This community function is enhanced

ing students with regard to their study and career choices. Seminars on Time and Stress Management and Study Skills are available free of charge to our students. In addition, the Student Services Centre is available two eve-



Division of technical education and management studies



SALCC southern extension centre

Information Technology, Management Studies, Information Studies (formerly called Library Technical Assistants) Environmental Studies, Cooperative Studies, Social Work, Paralegal Studies and Criminal Justice.

The SEC offers programmes in Business and Secretarial Studies with options in Management, Accounting and Computer Applications. Many of the academic courses are also available full-time in the various other Divisions of the SALCC.

A student can begin a programme on a part-time basis and later apply to the full-time programme to which all earned part-time credits would be transferred or vice versa. This is particularly applicable to secondary school graduates who wish to work for a period of time before beginning full-time tertiary studies. These persons can pursue part-time courses while they work and gain credits for courses that will be part of their full-time programmes. Some programmes such as: Social Work, Paralegal Studies, Criminal Justice and Information Studies are offered only part-time, but are fully endorsed and accredited by the College Academic Board.

The DOCE also offers the one-year UWI Certificate in Information Technology. Thus persons can earn a UWI certificate while studying part-time at the SALCC.

Apart from academic courses, the DOCE also provides general interest courses such as Basic Car Maintenance and CPR, and short-term seminars for

### Collaboration

For several years, the Department of Continuing Education has worked in partnership with the Small Enterprise Development Unit (SEDU) to provide facilities and assist in the development of curricula for its courses. The Department has also collaborated with and delivered customized courses for the National Enrichment Learning Programme (NELP), the Centre for Adolescent Rehabilitation and Education (CARE), the St. Lucia Civil Service Association and the Civil Service Credit Cooperative, among others. Professional training for insurance sales persons also falls under the jurisdiction

by the lecture series, which it facilitates in the various communities on a variety of issues and topics selected by the communities themselves.

### Student Services

The DOCE serves a very diverse clientele ranging from the young adult to the mature, experienced learner with an equally wide range of academic and experiential achievements. The programmes are designed to allow persons to work at a pace, which is suitable to the demands of their work and family obligations.

The staff of the department devotes a considerable amount of time counsel-

lings a week for counseling consultations by appointment.

### Student enrollment

The yearly academic enrollment at both branches of the Department is approximately 700. In addition, the Department trains an average of 900 new drivers in the Defensive driving programme every year.

### Accomplishments

A major accomplishment of the Department is its success in exposing large numbers of persons, who would not otherwise have had the opportunity, to tertiary education. As a result of their continuing education achievements, most graduates from the various programmes have obtained job promotions or reclassifications; some have changed to better and more rewarding jobs in new fields. Many of them have gained admission to overseas universities and some are excelling in these institutions, having gone on to pursuing Postgraduate Degrees.

The SALCC Department of Continuing Education has indeed come a long way since its humble beginnings in 1988. Much of what the Department has become today is due to the dedicated endeavours, insight and vision of its first coordinator, the current Parliamentary Commissioner, Mr. Madison Stanislaus, who headed the Department for 15 years from its inception to May 2003; his commitment to the principles undergirding the provision of lifelong education was indeed a major driving force for the development of the department to what it is today.



SALCC have placed many skilled persons in the workplace

# BIODIVERSITY AND WATER

## Focus of Saint Lucia's Environment Record Card

St. Lucia is currently working on completing its first State of the Environment Report. (Global Environment Outlook - GEO - 3). The global environment is analyzed periodically to keep policy makers up to date on the status of the world's environment and measures needed to keep actions in check and development proceeding in a sustainable manner.

GEOs have also been produced for some Latin American cities such as Mexico and finally two GEO-Youth for Latin America and the Caribbean have

been produced with St. Lucian youth collaborating in the last publication.

The entire process takes place in a collaborative fashion with consultations being held with major stakeholders including governments worldwide. Experts representing different countries around the world in various areas of expertise are usually selected to lead the process that impact on the environment.

**Biodiversity and Water**

This time, St. Lucia is participating as experts in the areas of biodiversity and the water sector. The experts are expected to serve as contributing authors, presenting data where necessary to support any observations made and also suggesting examples of case studies to prove their points.

These authors are also expected to ensure that the Caribbean, including St. Lucia, is adequately represented in the aspects of the assessment that they are



Castries Watershed - a multi-use area



Water treatment at Ciceron

working on. These experts form part of a Latin American and Caribbean group that are working closely together to ensure that the needs and concerns of the region are addressed in the study.

The environment assessments occur at the global, regional, national and local levels. As a result, one GEO for Latin America and the Caribbean has already been produced. National GEOs have also been produced for the Bahamas, Barbados and some of the Latin American countries and in these cases, they are called SOEs, State of the Environment Reports.

natural resources found all over planet earth are absolutely essential to maintain an acceptable quality of life for the earth's inhabitants. Even though all the natural resources are destroyed and their locations turned into steel and concrete, it will soon become very apparent to everyone that we cannot eat steel nor drink concrete, no matter how much money is in our bank accounts.

As a result of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Agenda 21 - which was a blue print for maintaining environmental conservation through to the 21st century - was produced. One of the objectives of Agenda 21 was that regular monitoring and evaluation of the world's environment would ensue so that checks and balances would be put in place to stem the tide of any run-away activities. Consequently, under a UNEP Governing Council decision of

May 1995 which requested the production of a comprehensive global state of the environment report, the first such report was produced.

The last assessment was done in 2002 and was called GEO-3, or the Global Environment Outlook 3. The global assessments tend to examine drivers of environmental degradation, pressures that they create, the state of the environment that exists, the impacts that result and policy responses expected by governments to halt the degradation decline.

The environmental assessment is a United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) led initiative and since 1995, three such assessments have been completed and published.

**biodivproject@slubiodiv.org**

Now that we have a better understanding of what is at stake in this venture, it behooves all of us as inhabitants of this 'simply beautiful' country to take an interest in the development of both the current and future SOEs and the GEOs. We need to do our part in stemming environmental degradation locally and globally. Those interested in obtaining copies of the already published GEOs can contact the Sustainable Development and Environment Unit of the Ministry of Planning, Development, Environment and Housing at 468-4462/63 for further information. Any person interested in learning more about the current GEO4 process can contact Ms. Anita James of the Biodiversity office, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries at 468-41222/27 or e-mail at [biodivproject@slubiodiv.org](mailto:biodivproject@slubiodiv.org)

**Agenda 21**

It is increasingly becoming recognized by all and sundry that the existence of the natural environment or



Maria Island Nature Reserve



Press Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, Mr. Earl Bousquet

## Press Secretaries in Chile

**Press Secretaries to Prime Ministers from across the region will be among Spokespersons from the Organisation of American States (OAS) gathering in the Chilean capital, Santiago, this week.**

At the invitation of the OAS Secretary General, His Excellency Jose Miguel Insulza, Press Secretary Earl Bousquet will join other Press Secretaries and Spokespersons at a Meeting on August 17th and 18th to discuss the goal of enhancing the ability of communicators to confront the communications challenges of the 21st century by exchanging ideas and experiences, promoting dialogue and creating a network of prominent individuals from

the public information sectors.

The spokespersons from the 34 OAS member states will attend a series of interactive roundtables and lectures by distinguished speakers on a variety of issues related to importance of public information in the Americas.

Assistant Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Alicia Barcena, will participate in a panel discussion on "Combating Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals."

Chief of the Gender Unit, ECLAC, Sonia Montano, will participate in a panel discussion on "Gender and Gov-

ernance" and Executive Secretary, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Mr. Santiago Canton, will be part of a panel to discuss Human Rights.

Associate Professor at the Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University, Mr. John Dinges, will lecture on "Journalism quality, ethics and democracy," while President of the Freedom of Expression Commission, Inter-American Press Association (IAPA), Mr. Gonzalo Marroquin, will speak on the topic 'Threats to Journalists and the Media.'

The Meeting is a joint effort of the OAS and the Ministry General Secretariat of the Government of Chile.



# GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO CRICKET WORLD CUP 2007

**P** Prime Minister and Minister for Finance Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony on Tuesday August 16th, received approval from Parliament, to borrow EC\$56 million dollars from First Caribbean International Bank of Barbados Limited to finance, in part, expenditure relating to the hosting of Cricket World Cup 2007.

Dr. Anthony underscored that the loan was not new borrowing but merely part of bonds amounting to EC\$188.4 million dollars approved by Parliament in June of this year to be raised on the Regional Government Securities Market RGSM. The bonds are to assist in financing government's capital expenditure programs for 2005/2006 financial year.

According to Dr. Anthony "included in that 188.4 million was an amount of 56 million for the ICC world cup. However First Caribbean International Barbados Limited presented loan proposals far more attractive to that made by the Regional Government Securities Market. And that is the real reason."

First Caribbean International Barbados Limited is offering the loan at an interest rate of 5.25 %, 2% less than the RGSM. The loan is to be paid within 10 ten years. Dr. Anthony said while the loan was a demonstration by First Caribbean International Barbados Limited that it was committed to the hosting of Cricket World Cup 2007, there was another fundamental reason.



Artist impression of the Beausejour Cricket Ground for 2007

The 56 million dollar loan for Cricket World Cup 2007 expenditure will go towards the upgrading of the Beausejour cricket ground, the Mindoo Philip Park, and the Gros Islet playing field.

It will assist in the areas of land acquisition, tourism marketing, training in disaster preparedness and improving the road infrastructure.

## CONFIDENCE IN OUR ECONOMY JAHLOUSIE HOTEL TO BE REFURBISHED

*Continued from page 1*

From this brief summary of the operations of the company, it is clear that certain decisions had to be made with respect to the continued viability of the operations of the hotel.

### Offers to purchase

Over the years there have been many offers to purchase the hotel. Honourable Members may recall that the Government had issued a statement in this House regarding the possible purchase of the hotel by the One & Only Group. This offer was made in May 2004, but was later withdrawn by the principals of the One & Only Group as there was some difficulty in securing the required funding.

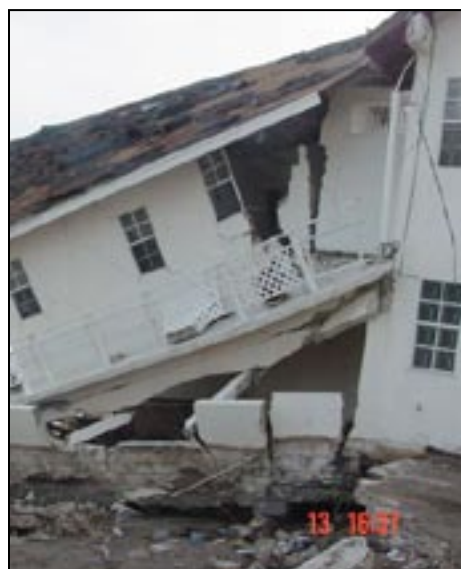
Recently an offer was made by TRMC Caribbean Inc., a Saint Lucian company partially owned by the owners of Le Sport Hotel and another investor currently resident in Saint Lucia. The offer was as follows: (1) M Group, Offer Price US\$ 2M, Original Price Paid US\$8.8M; (2) Comfort Inns, Offer Price US\$ 1.1M, Original Price Paid US\$5.8M and (3) Government of Saint Lucia, Offer Price US\$ 3M, Original Price Paid US\$5.6M.

Honourable Members will note that the Government of Saint Lucia got the highest price offer per share at US\$0.23, while the other shareholders got lower offers of US\$0.10 and US\$0.08 for M Group and Comfort Inns respectively. The other shareholders received additional sums, however.

M Group received US\$4M for land comprising 133.64 acres. Previously the land on which the hotel is sited (some 90 acres) was leased from M Group. M Group has now sold the land to the company along with some additional 43 acres. Comfort Inns was repaid an advance made to the Hotel and was paid as well for the remainder of the Hilton management contract. The value of the Comfort Inns/Hilton transaction was US\$3.9M.

### Settlement of taxes

The Government of Saint Lucia was also able to have settled some outstanding payments due for taxes. Government has agreed to the full settlement of taxes as follows: Hotel Accommodation Tax, EC\$ 3,718,338; Stamp Duty, EC\$ 712,375; Property Tax, EC\$ 194,400.



The hurricane season is on - be prepared avoid damage to life and property

After a careful review of the proposal made to the Government, the offer has been accepted and arrangements are being made for the transfer of the shares.

The decision to invest in the Jalousie Hotel in 1996 meant that the Government of the day was taking a risk that the investment was viable and would have resulted in some measurable returns. The fact of the matter is that the decision did not yield the desired results and that this Government was left with no alternative but to seek other means to ensure the continued viability of the hotel which would ultimately lead to sustaining the livelihood of the many workers who remain employed at the hotel.

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### In the hands of saint lucians

Our understanding from the investors is that they would soon commence refurbishment of the hotel. In addition, more rooms will be built and the spa redeveloped. Given the already successful operations of Le Sport and Rendezvous and the seemingly successful outcome of the Landings project, the Government looks forward to the successful redevelopment of the Jalousie Hotel and its continued attraction as an exclusive property for the discerning traveller. The Government is pleased that this property is now in the partial ownership of Saint Lucians."



### THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. Aug. 20th - Fri. August 26th, 2005

**The GIS Speaks with Sir George Alleyne – Chairman of the Caribbean Community Health & Development** - Mon. Aug. 22nd 6:15 p.m.

• **Prime Minister Anthony addressed the nation - Oil Prices** - 8:00 p.m., Monday August 22nd, 2005

• **St. Lucia Folk Culture & the Struggles for Emancipation** - August 20th, 7:30 p.m.

• **The Cuba/St. Lucia Eye Care Initiative** - Tues. August 23rd, 8:00 p.m.

• **Proposed Vehicle Weights Control System** – Wed. August 24th, 8:00 p.m.

• **The Hidden Truth About Whales** – Thurs. August 25th, 7:10 p.m.

• **Soil Erosion & The Impact on Coral Reefs** – Fri. August 26th, 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.

[www.stlucia.gov.lc](http://www.stlucia.gov.lc)

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