



NATIONWIDE

A publication of the Department of Information Services



Unemployment is top priority
- page 2



PM visits St. Lucians in Cayenne
- pages 2 & 8



Nobel Laureate Week and
Independence coming - page 6

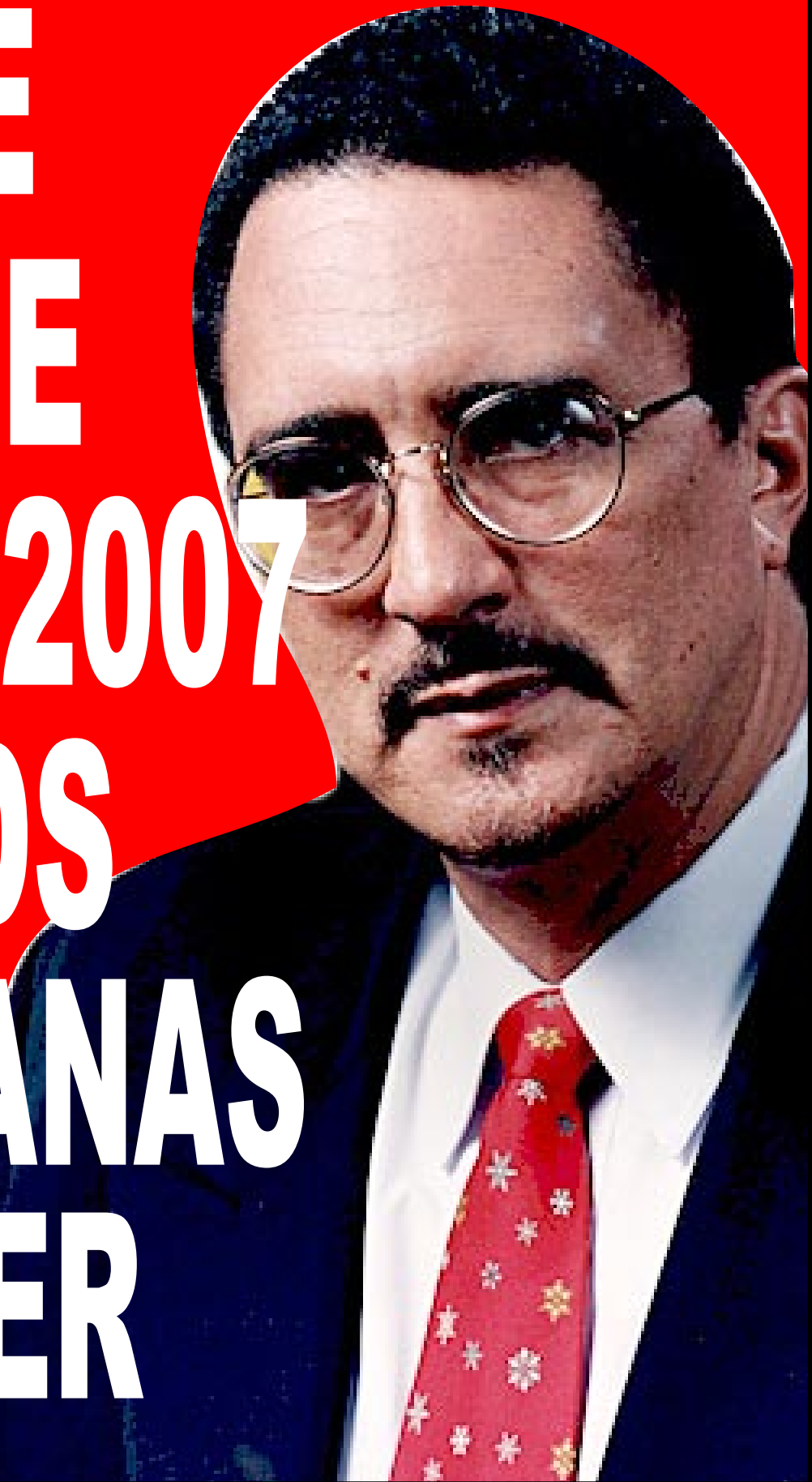


Communities getting attention
- page 6



Full Rehabilitation of East Coat
Road coming - page 3

PM's PRIORITIES FOR 2005: UNEMPLOYMENT CSME CRIME CWC 2007 ROADS BANANAS WATER



“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



Unemployment tops Gov't priorities for 2005

The government of the St. Lucia is hoping to make a significant dent in the unemployment figures this year. In his New Year's address delivered on the weekend, Prime Minister, Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony announced that reducing unemployment was at the top of seven national priorities for 2005.

The second priority according to Dr. Anthony is to finalize Saint Lucia's entry and participation in the Single Market and Economy, whilst the third is to intensify the fight against crime.

"Priority number four is to meet the challenge of hosting the World Cup; Priority number five is to intensify our efforts to repair, and rehabilitate our road infrastructure. Priority number six is to prepare the Banana Industry for the inevitable transition to a tariff only trading regime; and Priority number seven is to improve our water supply and in particular, ease the plight of the Dennery communities," Dr. Anthony said.

In reducing unemployment the government has decided to employ four strategies, which include intensifying investment in tourism, encouraging more investment in the Information Technology Sector, particularly Busi-

New US\$80M Beaches Resort
New US\$120M Resort/Marina
New Discovery Bay Hotel
New Calabash Resort
New Coconut Bay
Bay Gardens expansion
Coco Kreole expansion

ness Process Outsourcing, encouraging self-employment through the establishment of small businesses; and fourthly, expanding opportunities in public sector construction.

According to the Prime Minister, the Tourism Sector is unquestionably a great absorber of labour and investment in this sector, and is exceedingly promising: "The Sandals Chain has already

announced the construction of the new Beaches Property on the Pigeon Island Causeway. According to Sandals, some 250 persons will be employed during construction and on completion some 600 persons are expected to be employed. On January 27, a consortium of local and foreign investors will provide details of their plans to construct a luxury condominium resort/marina at an estimated cost of US\$120 million again, near the Pigeon Island Causeway", the Prime Minister announced.

That project, according to the developers is expected to provide 500 bedrooms in 220 luxury condominiums in a resort setting. It is estimated that 500 jobs will be created during the construction phase and a further 500 tourism related jobs after the resort is opened.

The Prime Minister also pointed to the creation of additional jobs as a result of the expansion and construction of some hotels among them, Discovery at Marigot Bay, Calabash at Marisule, Plantation Beach at Cas-En-Bas, Bay Gardens Hotel, Coco Kreole, and the "Coconut Bay" in Vieux Fort, formerly Club Med, which when re-opens in February, some 300 Saint Lucians are hoping to be employed there.

PM wants increased police presence on the streets

With the issue of crime continuing to occupy the minds of law abiding citizens, Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony has challenged the police to take back the streets by increasing street patrol. The Prime Minister made the call in his New Year's Address to the nation.

Dr. Anthony noted that despite all that had been done, no significant stride would be made in the fight against

crime, unless the police force rid itself of corrupt officers, and a still largely-disappointed public was persuaded to trust the police.

"I know that the vast majority of our police officers are trying very hard. They want us to trust them and believe in them. They need our confidence and support. But let me make one thing clear. We cannot ever eliminate crime altogether. Crime can only be reduced and controlled. That is why this New

Year, we will continue what has begun, but we will also take new steps", the Prime Minister told the public.

Stressing that new legislation would be introduced in Parliament early this year, jointly with other OECS countries, Dr. Anthony said the legislation would empower judges of the Supreme Court to grant authority to the Director of Public Prosecutions, to intercept communications of drug dealers,

whether by telephone or otherwise.

"I also want to see this year, a greater use of proceeds of Crime Act. There are people whose level of wealth is not supported by any legitimate or visible employment, and it is hoped that the Tax department and the police will send a strong message in 2005, that such persons will not be given the opportunity to use their ill-gotten wealth", Dr. Anthony said.

PM pays official visit to French Guiana

Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony pays an official visit this weekend to Cayenne to boost historical ties and deepen existing relations with the French territory where St. Lucians feature in every aspect of life.

The Prime Minister leaves on Saturday for French Guiana, at the head of an official delegation that will include Foreign Affairs Minister Petrus Compton and St. Lucia's Consulate General to the French Antilles Cass Elias.

The visit, which runs from January 23 to 27, will include meetings with St. Lucian nationals and members of St. Lucian Associations in the French territory, which sits on the shoulder of South America.

The Prime Minister, on his first visit to Cayenne, will be met at Rochambeau Airport in Matoury by President of the

Region of French Guiana, Antoine Karam, with whom he is also scheduled to hold talks about strengthening ties between Castries and Cayenne.

The Prime Minister will also hold official meetings with the Prefect of French Guiana, the President of the Regional Council and the Mayor of Cayenne.

Dr Anthony and his delegation have also been invited by the Mayor of Kourou, site of the internationally-renowned Guianese Space Centre, to visit the massive complex from where major European space satellites are launched.

Among the major highlights of the visit, however, will be the Prime Minister's meetings with the St. Lucian community in French Guiana and members of the St. Lucian associations there.

St. Lucian roots go deep in French Guiana. Located in the north-eastern part of South America with Suriname,

Guyana and Venezuela as neighbours, it was heavily populated by St. Lucian migrants, who went mainly in search of gold. Many remained, and over several decades, their numbers are said to have multiplied into the tens of thousands.

St. Lucians and their descendants can be found at virtually every level in French Guiana. President of the Region Antoine Karam's mother, for example, hails from Vieux Fort.



Consul General of St. Lucia to French Antilles Cass Elias (left) met President of the Region of Guiana Antoine Karam, whose mother hails from Vieux-Fort.

PM in Historic Talks With NYC

On Friday, January 7, 2005 history was made when Dr. Kenny Anthony formally met with members of the Executive of the National Youth Council (NYC), becoming the first Government leader to do so.

Indeed, members of the NYC Executive told the Prime Minister during the meeting that was the first time a Prime Minister had held a formal meeting with the island's main youth organization.

The meeting, which took place in the Cabinet Room at the Office of the Prime Minister, took place in a very cordial and friendly atmosphere.

Several relevant issues were discussed, foremost among which was the non-implementation to date of the National Youth Policy.

The NYC representatives expressed concern that the infrastructure necessary for the implementation of the Policy was not yet in place and proposed that steps be taken to ensure it is implemented.

The NYC delegation also informed the Prime Minister of the organization's

intention of establishing a Youth Advancement Centre, to provide a home for the NYC and to enable it to expand the range of services it provides to the nation's youth.

To this end, the NYC is seeking Government's assistance through a donation of Crown Lands on which to construct the Centre, or assistance with the acquisition of a suitable property for that purpose.

The Representatives of the NYC also discussed the organization's intention to embark upon a process of reviewing its constitution.

According to the NYC, review of its constitution has become necessary since it is at variance with the Act of Incorporation which established the NYC. To this end, the NYC has solicited the assistance of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), which will provide a consultant to oversee the process.

The NYC team also discussed with the Prime Minister the possibility of procuring the sum of EC\$ 25,000.00 from the Government for technical assistance towards the process of review-

ing its constitution.

The NYC delegation and the Prime Minister also discussed training opportunities and scholarships for youth activists and those involved in youth work. To this end, the Representatives of the NYC expressed a desire to be officially considered for training under a programme designed by the CYP and facilitated in neighbouring Barbados.

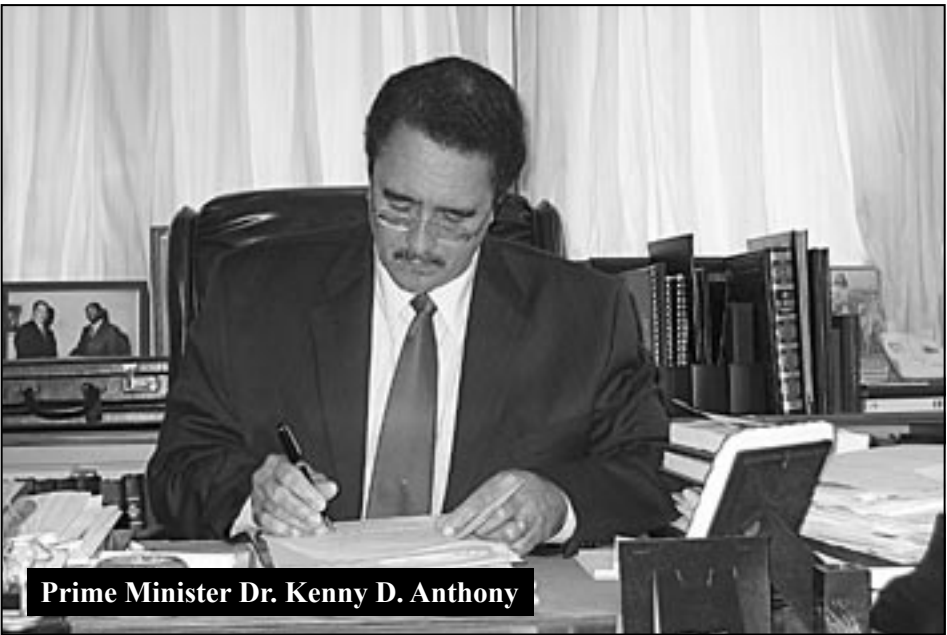
The NYC delegation is of the view that the CYP's training programme, which was specifically designed for Youth Officers, is currently underutilized by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Consequently, they said, the organization wishes to see a better utili-

zation of these training opportunities.

Other issues discussed included a recommendation by the NYC delegation that Government standardize its subvention to the organization and a call for increased collaboration and co-operation between Government and the NYC.

Prime Minister Anthony welcomed the opportunity to hold dialogue with the youth leaders and promised to give due consideration to the issues raised by the leadership of the NYC.

The Prime Minister also promised to provide as much Government assistance to the NYC as possible, to help advance the youth agenda.



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny D. Anthony

Castries to Dennery road to be rehabilitated



East Coast Road rehabilitation hampered by heavy rains

A contract for the rehabilitation of the East Coast Road has been signed between Government and local contractor, C.O. Williams. The agreement, signed at the Ministry's offices at Union will see a total rehabilitation of the road from Castries to Dennery, as well as the resurfacing of the remainder of the route.

The \$5.1 million contract signed Monday is expected to be accomplished through a number of phases. It follows remedial works on the East Coast Road, which has been delayed as a result of persistent showers.

Minister for Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities, Honourable Felix Fenisterre said the stretch of road from Castries to Dennery had been given priority, and that extensive work was expected to be done to its under layers, which have been damaged by an extensive period of rainfall.

Noting that sections of the East Coast, such as Barre d'Isle, Mabouya Valley and Goodlands down to the Valley were very bad, Minister Fenisterre said, "What we have done is work it out in sections, focusing on the worst section from now until budget".

The project will also see the construction of drains, the contract for which will go to smaller local contractors. Owner of the CO Williams, Charles Williams said the company was committed to delivering the quality of roads that would meet the approval of all road users: "We shall perform and we have make all St. Lucians proud of the road works that they have built under our direction, and suffice that we will continue to do so in the future."

Meanwhile, all parties involved are awaiting the end of persistent showers in order for the works to start. The Minister has called on the public to exercise patience, as well as caution during the five to six month duration of the works.

UNDP to assist with poverty reduction

The Government of St. Lucia through the Ministry of Social Transformation will sign an agreement with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Tuesday, January 18, 2005 to mark the commencement of a special project dubbed "Institutional and Capacity Building for Poverty Reduction in St. Lucia."

Tuesday's signing ceremony will take place at the Conference Room of the Cultural Development Foundation (CDF) at Barnard Hill. The 15-month project will be funded through a UNDP grant of over US\$240,000.

The project will assist the Government in advancing its poverty reduction programmes, with specific emphasis on strengthening the capacity of the

Ministry of Social Transformation and allied agencies to enhance data collection and research, allowing for more timely and reliable statistical data for monitoring national poverty reduction and social sector development programmes.

It will also provide disadvantaged communities and individuals with tools and facilities to broaden access

to information through education and training, information technology, and skills development at the community level, as a means of supporting income generating activities, while fostering greater self-reliance.

Selected pilot communities to benefit under the project are Belair, Mon Repos, La Maze and Faux-a-Chaux.

Ectel Launches Broadband Study

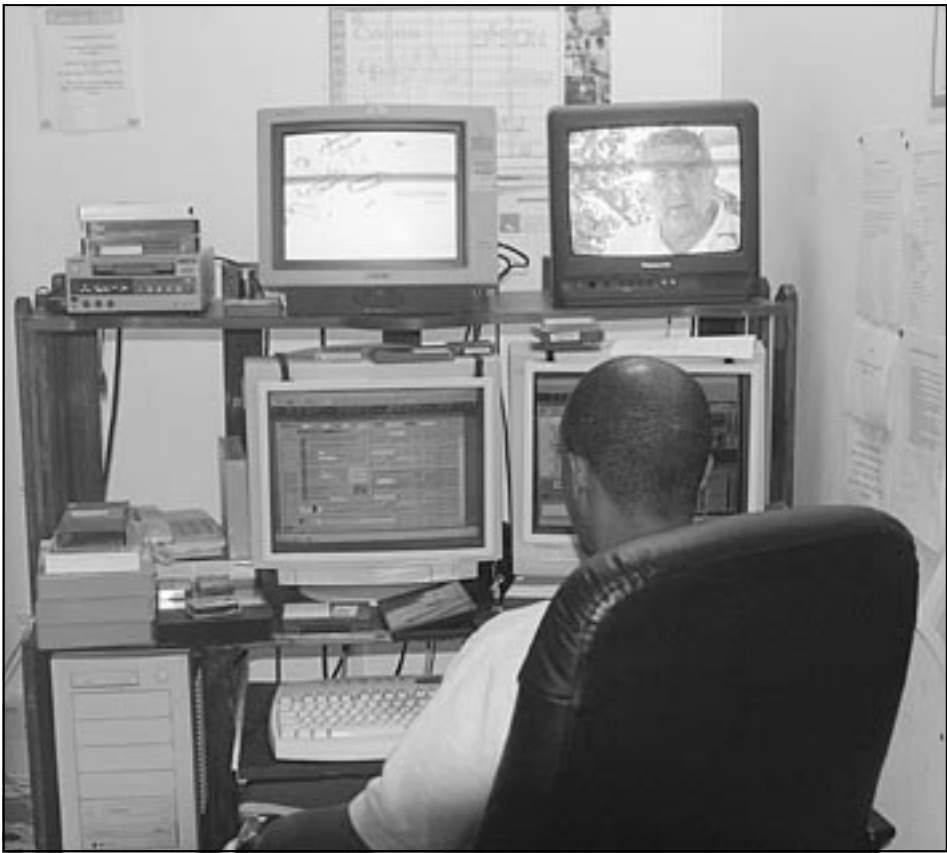
The Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) announces the commencement of a Universal Access Study in the five Member States of Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Universal Service and Universal Access are fundamental principles enshrined in Article 4 (1) (c) of the ECTEL Treaty. In principle universal access means that every person in the community has a reasonable access to publicly available telecommunications services such as telephone and Internet.

The Study is being conducted by Mr. Josbert Kester, an International Broadband Consultant, with developing countries experience. He has participated in similar initiatives in Chile, Peru and South Africa. Mr. Kester is being assisted by Vincentian Telecommunications Engineer, Mr. Apollo Knights. Funding for the project is being provided by the Dutch Govern-

ment, the World Bank and ECTEL. The Study will be conducted between January and April 2005 and will: (1) Examine the current Broadband supply and demand situation; (2) Specify target areas; (3) Survey Market demand for broadband connectivity; (4) Analyse technical solutions and (5) Design the tender process.

Through Universal Access, the Governments of the ECTEL Member States hope to increase affordability and connectivity to the Internet. As a result, this study will focus attention on enhancing Broadband capacity to public places such as schools, libraries, health and community centres, thereby creating a platform for improved access to higher education, tertiary health care and economic opportunities for the people of the OECS sub-region.

The results of the Study will assist the ECTEL Board and Council in formulating a policy position on Broadband connectivity and accessibility in the Member States.



Windward's top banana producer visits UK supermarkets

The Windward's top banana producer for 2002, St. Lucian William Marius has highlighted the importance of proper packaging and handling of fruit leaving the islands, bound for the UK. Mr. Marius was part of a party of four, who recently undertook a tour of Waitrose Superfoods and import depots in the United Kingdom (UK), to understand the processes, which Caribbean bananas go through before

reaching the shelves of supermarkets. The four, joined by an official of WIBDECO saw first hand, Windward Islands' bananas on the shelves of Waitrose, one of the largest buyers of the Caribbean fruit. Mr. Marius said that although he was satisfied to see his fruit being bought by UK consumers, the fruit quality could be better. "When you're down here you produce a green fruit, and when you look at that fruit in the box you think that

is beautiful. But at the end of the day you're seeing a fruit that you have just picked from the tree put in the box, it is still fresh – you cannot see the after effects of the handling. When you reach on the other side and you see the effects of that fruit then you wonder whether you doing enough down here in order to give the market what it is asking for," said Mr. Marius. Assistant Product Manager for WIBDECO, Andrew Hippolyte, who accompanied the team of all St. Lu-

cian winners, said every time the fruit is handled, there is an opportunity for scarring. He said that this was an issue, which for along time now WIBDECO had been attempting to get farmers to understand. "Everytime the fruit is handled, there is a potential bruise or scarring that could be inflicted on the fruit especially, if the packaging is not right, if the stacking of the fruit is not right, if the packing of the fruit is not right," he pointed out. The other members of the party included top Windward's Waitrose Producer for 2004, William Elien, and featured personality on a commercial for the promotion of Caribbean bananas in the UK, Lincoln Henry. The tour of Waitrose took place in December of last year.



Odsan Banana Reception Depot

Town Hall Meeting

Residents, small traders and roadside vendors of Lower La Pansee, Chaussee Rd, Lower Georgeville, New Village, Barnard's Hill, Con-

way, the CDC, Darling Road and the Calvary were invited to a Town Hall Meeting at the Castries Town Hall on Thursday, January 20 from 5:00 p.m.

The purpose of the Town Hall meeting was to discuss plans for improved roads and the better flow of water from heavy rains in the areas of

Chaussee Road, Jn Baptisite Street, Bridge Street, and George V Park. All residents and concerned citizens were urged to attend this meeting.

Fishermen warned to carry safety gear at sea

The Department of Fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has made a strong appeal to boat owners, fishers and the fishermen's cooperative to ensure that all fishing vessels are equipped with the necessary safety gear, especially as the peak deep sea fishing season approaches.

Stressing the necessity for safety gear at sea, Chief Fishers Officer, Vaughn Charles said the essential gear would greatly assist fishers in the event of a mishap out at sea: "Very often the department of fishers has been blamed for not providing fishermen with the necessary safety equipment. We want to call on all boat owners and fishermen and tell them that the responsibility to provide safety equipment rests solely with them. And we are asking those boat owners especially, to take their responsibilities seriously and provide the necessary equipment, as is required under the Fisheries Act.

Mr. Charles said an inspection routine carried out recently found some fishing vessels without safety equipment, resulting in the guilty persons being charged for the offence.

Last year the Department of Fisheries had to respond to a number of eventualities at sea which it would not like repeated.



Fishing boats berthed at Castries Fisheries Complex



Duston St. Omer

CDF, C&W Focus on Dunstan St Omer

It's been a great month so far for St Lucia's finest living artist. Last week, Hon. Dunstan St Omer was presented as the featured artist in the National Visual Arts Exhibition, organised by the Cultural Development Foundation, CDF. He was also immortalized as the latest artistic luminary to grace the cover of Cable & Wireless' Services Directory, all this within 24 hours.

The two agencies, CDF and Cable & Wireless collaborated to give St Lucians the opportunity to meet the 77-year-old master. Mr. St Omer was present from 6:30 Wednesday evening, 19 January, at the National Cultural Centre, to sign copies of the 2004 / 05 Services Directory.

Mr. St Omer, St Lucia's foremost visual artist and the designer of the national flag, is pictured on the cover of the Directory with 'Passion,' a painting dedicated to his daughter, Digna. The painting is part of his 'Madonna' series, several examples of which are on show at the CDF exhibit.

Described by Fred Walcott, Cable & Wireless' Chief Executive, as "a living example of what it means to be a true home-grown genius," Mr. St Omer has inspired generations of young St Lucian artists. He was a part of Cable & Wireless' Schools Christmas Greeting Card Schools' Competition, and is championing the revival of the Independence Arts Exhibition.

Basic Needs Trust fund begins the implementation stage of its Fifth Programme

The Basic Needs Trust Fund, the Flagship Poverty Reduction Programme for the Caribbean Development Bank, has begun the physical implementation stage of its Fifth Programme. The first contract issued is for the Renovation of the Toilet and Bath facility on Front Street, Anse La Raye. The contract was awarded to Mr. Nathaniel Frederick and was signed at the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) Office on Wednesday, December 29th 2004. The renovation will not only benefit the residents of Anse La Raye,

but also the patrons of the popular Anse La Raye Fish Friday Festival. This is the first step in the reduction of poverty through socio-economic initiatives and community empowerment. The renovation of the toilet and bath facility will begin in January 2005 at near cost of \$65,000.00.

On Friday January 14th 2005, a second project was signed which will benefit the South. The contract for the Fencing of the Vieux Fort Special Education and Pre School Compound on New Dock Road was awarded to Larry Cadette, a resident of the area. This sub project will provide teachers

and students with a safe learning and teaching environment. This sub project is scheduled to commence late January 2005.

Other projects which have been approved by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and will be implemented in the year 2005 are:

- Bisee/North Rock Water Supply Improvement
- En Bas Morne/Balata Water Line Installation.
- JnBaptiste Hill Inner Relief Road Upgrade.
- Field Land and Indian Lane Road Construction, Coolie Town, Castries.

Trade Skills Development, Boys Training Centre and Reconstruction of the Trade Workshop

Fencing of the Special Education and Pre School Facility, New Dock Road, Vieux Fort.

The total cost is some \$2.1 million EC. Some \$5.5 million EC worth of subprojects is currently being appraised by the Caribbean Development Bank.

These are just the initial projects of the programme. The programme is set to conclude in 2010. A projected amount of \$14.4 million EC has been set for the benefit of St. Lucia.

Independence Anniversary starts with Nobel Laureate Week

Saint Lucia's 26th Anniversary of Independence will be observed on February 22nd under the theme, "Working Together With Pride to Build Our Nation".

Independence celebration begins with activities to mark Nobel Laureate Week from January 23 - 29, hosted by the Office of the Governor-General. Nobel Laureate Week puts the spotlight on the achievement of Nobel laureates, Sir Arthur Lewis and Honourable Derek Walcott.

Activities throughout that week will focus on the theme, "Creativity: The Path to Excellence" and will include lectures, and an evening of poetry and music with the Writers Association, among others.

Acting Chairperson of the Standing National Independence Anniversary Committee, Glenda Polius said,

"There is also the Derek Walcott Lecture on Wednesday the 26th of January. The Grand Finale is scheduled for Saturday 29th January in a drama production, "Open Balconies" by Miss Florita Nicholas to be held at the National Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m. We will also be staging the National Sports Awards, on February 19th followed by the annual Concert of Praise and Inspiration on Sunday 20th February, at the National Cultural Centre commencing at 5:00 p.m. The National Ecumenical Service will take place on Friday 18th February, at a time to be confirmed."

Other activities include the St. Lucia Athletics Association's Independence Track and Field Meet, the customary Independence Day Parade, the Prime Minister's Cocktail Reception, Order of Saint Lucia Investiture Ceremony, and a number of other activities island wide.



Nobel Laureate Committee at work, headed by Governor-General, Dame Pearlette Louisy (R). From left - Lyndel Archibald, Petronilla Deterville, Carolyn Simmons, George Jude (taking picture), Angela Clarke on the Governor-General's right. Other members are Margo Thomas, Jacques Compton, Yves Renard, Ann Jn. Baptiste and Fortuna Anthony Husbands.

UNDP recognises Government's commitment to reducing poverty

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding involving the Government of Saint Lucia, the United Nations Development Programme and the Poverty Reduction Fund has been viewed as further commitment on the part of Government, to work in tandem with the UN's Millennium Project to combat global poverty.

Speaking at Tuesday's (January 18th) signing ceremony, UNDP Representative Rebecca Arias said the United Nations was confident that the Government would play its role in promoting social values to help reduce poverty at the community level.

"We look forward to working with all partners in the implementation of this initiative and in making this project the key initiative, around which we can promote social development, poverty reduction, and the achievement of the Millennium Development goals. And I am sure that with the commitment of the government of Saint Lucia and in particular, the commitment of the Ministry of Social Transformation and its dynamic Minister, I am sure that we will achieve this goal," the UNDP Representative said.

Four communities have been identified to benefit from the institutional and capacity building project for poverty reduction in Saint Lucia. They are now being assessed prior to the implementation of a series of literacy and information technology and Communication workshops.

Minister for Social Transformation, Honourable Menissa Rambally said her Ministry was cognizant that research and continuous assessment must characterize these projects: "Today we are getting the assistance of the UNDP to be able to target specifically, these vulnerable groups that we have discovered within our communities, to allow us to further reduce that percentage of our population that live below a certain line that we want to call an acceptable way of living."

HCU to reengineer and retool

The Hospitality Credit Union (HCU) has taken the lead step to incorporate re-engineering and re-tooling, as key ingredients in re-shaping the credit union's corporate plans for the next three years.

Last week, the decision makers of the credit union met with Trinidadian consultant, Mahindra Satram-Maharaj to undertake an Organizational Diagnosis of the Hospitality Credit Union.

Treasurer of the Credit Union Mr. Elvis Alcee, said the executive body wanted to revamp the organization to become CSME ready "I think we have operated in the past in an adhoc manner, this time we are establishing a structured organization so when we move we can find ourselves prepared for the CSME, and the organization has to be cognizant of that. Globalisation is at our doors, we cannot run away from it."

Moreover, Mr. Alcee said that as a financial institution, the credit union wanted to strengthen its capacity to better serve its membership.

Meanwhile, the Managing Director of Mahindra Satram- Maharaj and Associates, who administered the Diagnostic Plan, said it was an opportune time for the Hospitality Credit Union to undertake this restructuring process. He further recommended that other corporate entities conduct similar exercises.

"CSME and FTAA recognising what is taking place in the European Union, we've got to get our act together. There's no two ways about it. All institutions, all financial institutions need to look at corporate re-tooling and corporate re-engineering. We have to start now; in fact we should have started yesterday from a national perspective, because CSME and FTAA mean that we are competing with the world," said Mr. Satram-Maharaj.

Basic Needs Trust Fund helping communities

Anse La Raye



Vieux-Fort



Coolie Town



OECS holds workshop for small and medium sized businesses

Export Development Unit (OECS/EDU) through its USAID sponsored Small and Medium Enterprise Development Programme (SMED) is hosting a two-day workshop at the Bay Gardens Hotel, St. Lucia on Monday 24, and January 25 2005.

The USAID SMED Programme was designed to provide assistance to address constraints faced by Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's) in the Eastern Caribbean. Several OECS companies have benefited from services imparted by the programme in Strategic Planning, Upgrading Enterprise Capability, Productivity Tools, Development of Business Procedures, Marketing, Computer and Information

Technology, Financing, and Training in a number of areas.

The proposal for convening this workshop came from a recently held two-day seminar (14 & 14 Dec 2004, in Dominica) at which model companies from the OECS who had benefited from the SMED Programme were present.

During the two-day period in Dominica, there were discussions between the company representatives and the full complement of SMED staff on the areas of benefits during the execution of the Program, and areas for which greater consideration could have been given, and suggestions for the future of Business Development in the Caribbean Single Market and Economy

(CSME) era.

The Enterprises felt that there was urgent need to convene a forum at the earliest opportunity to communicate the findings and key considerations to national focal points and strategic partners who provide several components of support towards the region's business development.

This Workshop entitled "Exploring Opportunities to Develop Strategic Alliance and Financial Options for the Advancement of Competitiveness in the OECS." will bring together strategic partners from across the region. Ministry of Trade Officials, Chambers of Commerce, Development Foundations Financial Institutions, OECS, USAID and IICA among others have

been invited to participate.

This cross sectors representation of commerce in the OECS, will provide the participants with an opportunity to explore the contributing and constraining factors in their development: (1) To bring winning companies and strategic partners under the same roof; (2) To have success stories told by the beneficiaries themselves; (3) To have enterprises discuss their perceived priorities with government officials and others making representation on their behalf and (4) To set the discussion tone to make things happen for entrepreneurs.

A Proceedings Document containing information relating to observations, concerns, recommendations and plans for the advancement of entrepreneurs in the region will be prepared for presentation to all parties.

The workshop will present a major opportunity to concretize alliances, development of clusters and explore collaborative opportunities.

OECS promoting onshore services to yachters

The Secretariat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States has been holding a series of meetings with the yachting community of the OECS islands. The meetings are being held to examine areas where Onshore Services to Yachters can be developed and strengthened.

Communications Officer for the OECS Secretariat, Kendol Morgan

said there had been much sharing of experiences and expertise with the islands, such as the British Virgin Islands, where the yachting sector is doing very well.

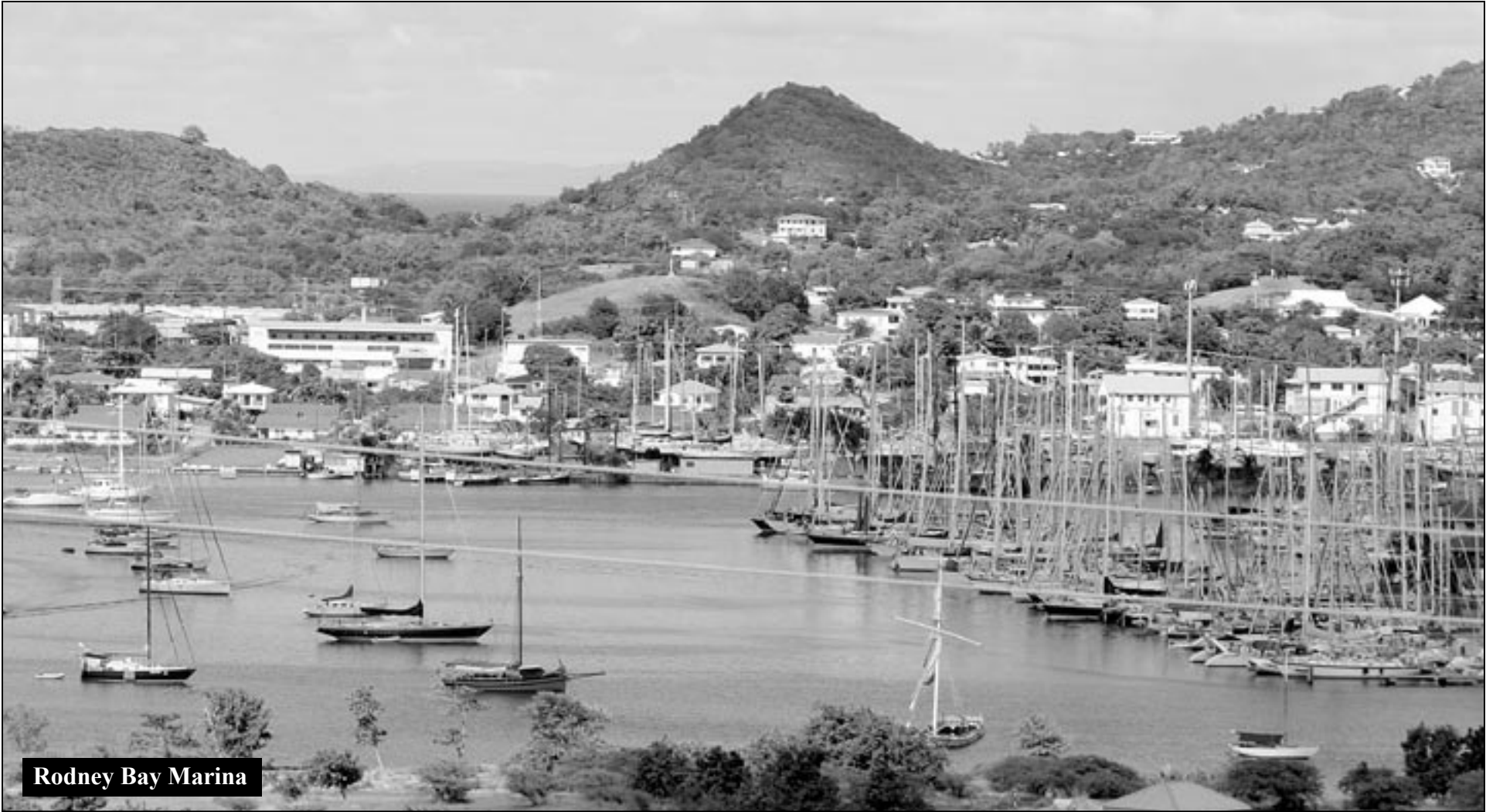
"The British Virgin Islands have made a major success of the yachting sector and they have been very happy to share the experience of the success with the rest of the Caribbean. So there

is no need to re-invent the wheel. OECS member states are now looking at ways to improve facilities onshore and benefit from a number of the activities related to the yachting industry."

Mr. Morgan said over the years there had been an increasing demand for support services by yachtsmen. This he added was another aspect of the industry that the OECS would like to see grow by leaps and bounds.

"In most of the islands, there are significant facilities on shore, because they realise the economic potential. It's just that they are not exploited fully and they have to be further developed in order to ensure that the islands reap maximum benefits."

Tortola, the largest island of the British Virgin Islands, is a popular location for Caribbean yachting.



Rodney Bay Marina

Workshop to assist in developing healthy eating habits

A two-day inter-sectoral meeting comprising health officials and practitioners, together with representatives of the public and private sectors and the youth is now underway at the Bay Gardens hotel. The meeting, which is being co-ordinated by the Ministry of Health and Human Services is to develop a food-based Dietary Guidelines Project, as a means of assisting persons in developing healthy eating habits.

The food-based Dietary Guide-

lines Project is funded by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the Government of St. Lucia, with technical assistance from the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute. The project, which will be launched on World Food Day on October 16th, 2005 will be implemented in Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent and St. Lucia.

However, Chief Nutritionist in the Ministry of Health, Merlyn Severin said the guidelines to be adopted must be inexpensive, and culturally acceptable: "We cannot just import guidelines

of another country, because one of the difficulty we might have is that it may not fit our habits/lifestyle, so that is why we did food consumption survey among the population, and we went from adolescent to adults to understand how they eat, what they like, what they would like to see, how they got their information, and so we are going to come up with recommendations".

According to Mrs. Severin, the project was driven by the increasing availability of foods on the market for consumption, and the indiscreet use

of some of those foods: "And what we are seeing, because more food is available, people are getting fatter and fatter, and as people get fatter and fatter, we have more chronic, non-communicable diseases like diabetes, hypertension, heart disease. So we have to halt it now".

Mrs. Severin said the Co-ordinators are confident that the project will achieve its goal. A follow-up to the St. Lucia meeting will take place in St. Vincent.

PM's Cayenne visit: Reaching out to St. Lucians in the French Antilles

Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony's official visit to French Guiana, where thousands of St. Lucian and their dependants reside, will be the first by a St. Lucian Prime Minister in the country's 25 years of Independence.

The visit, which begins January 23 and ends January 27, also represents a continuation of the current St. Lucia Government's outreach to the French Antilles, with which St. Lucia has rich historical ties spanning two centuries.

St. Lucians and their dependants in the French-administered territory have over the years been clamouring for closer ties with the land of their birth. Many still have historically unresolved immigration problems, while others are interested in a better understanding of St. Lucian citizenship and national-ity issues.

A major issue for all, however, has been the appointment of a diplomatic or consular representative of St. Lucia to attend to such issues.

The desire for official representation was largely achieved on St. Lucia's part in January 2004, when Prime Minister Anthony announced the appointment of former Agriculture Minister Cass Elias to his current position as Consulate General with responsibility for relations with the French Antilles

of Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana.

Mr. Elias is himself a fitting example of St. Lucia's close and direct relations with distant Cayenne. Born in St. Lu-



St. Lucians in Cayenne turned out in large numbers to get news from their homeland

cia, his father has lived in Cayenne for more than 40 years. The former St. Lucian Cabinet Minister also has three brothers and a sister who were born in French Guiana.

Prime Minister Anthony's first major outreach to the French Antilles was

in 1999, when he paid a similar official visit to neighbouring Martinique.

As a result of an agreement with Paris negotiated through the French Embassy to the OECS, which is based in Castries, the Administrative Councils in Martinique have been granted a certain level of "devolution" that allows for bilateral agreements with Government entities in St. Lucia.

In 2000, St. Lucia opened its Consulate General in Martinique to promote relations between the two neighbouring islands. In the case of Cayenne, however, distance and the absence of structures has been a significant factor impeding closer relations over the years.

St. Lucians in Cayenne have kept their culture alive and embedded it into the folk culture of French Guiana, a vast territory several times the size of France. But this is also a vastly underpopulated territory that is rich in minerals and forests.



Vive La Woz! The late Foreign Affairs Minister, George Odum (at right) danced to the songs of St. Lucia during the 1999 visit



Representatives of the St. Lucian Association in Cayenne sport their national colours during the 1999 visit by the Government delegation

The population of Guiana reflects a multi-cultural mosaic of descendants of diverse people and customs.

The country boasts a strong representation of France at the administrative level, with French and other European nationals dominating the commercial heights of the territory's economy.

But there is also a significant historical presence of other persons from countries as far apart as former French colonies in Africa, Vietnam, China, Indonesia, the Arab States, Guyana, Haiti and St. Lucia.

The Guiana Chamber of Commerce four years ago expressed interest in doing business, if the authorities in Castries and Paris would make travel time and costs shorter and cheaper. But both wishes have proved elusive over the years.

However, contact between St. Lucia and French Guiana continues at a people-to-people level. Relatives and friends travel to and forth, utilizing air links via Martinique.

An increasing number of persons now come every year for the annual St. Lucia Jazz Festival, which is covered by teams from radio and TV stations in Cayenne.

The last official contact at Governmental level was a visit by a delegation led by the late Foreign Affairs Minister George Odum, in the year 2000.



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. Jan. 22nd - Fri. Jan. 28th, 2005

The CSME and Its Impact on the Local Music Industry – Sat. Jan. 22nd 9:00 p.m.

· NOBEL LAUREATE DAY - ALL DAY PROGRAMMING - Sun. Jan. 23rd from 6:15 p.m.

· SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Live In-Studio Panel Discussion: "The CARICOM Single Market & Economy – Echoes of Sir Arthur" Mon. Jan. 24th, 8:00 p.m.

· Triumph of A St. Lucian Spirit: A feature on Hon. Derek Walcott - Mon. Jan. 24th, 9:00 p.m.

· Special Presentation: Sir Dwight Venner Speaks on the Performance of the ECCU and Prospects for 2005 - Tues. Jan. 25th, 8:00 p.m.

· The Ministry of Social Transformation presents "Miss Tiny Tots 2004" – Wed. Jan. 26th, 9:00 p.m.

· The Role of the Arts in the Community – Thurs. Jan. 27th, 7:30 p.m. – Part 1

· The Role of the Arts in the Community – Fri. Jan. 28th, 7:30 p.m. – Part 2

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.

www.stlucia.gov.lc

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

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