

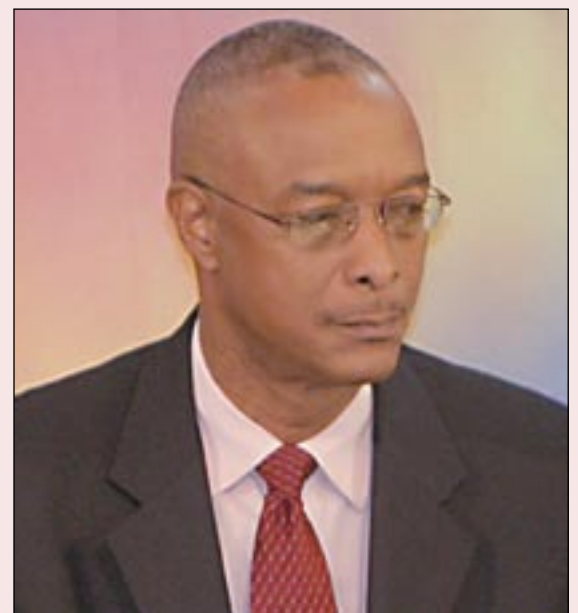


NATIONWIDE

A publication of the Department of Information Services



GOVERNMENT MINISTERS FACE POLLS MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS



“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



PHILIP PIERRE: MINISTER OF TOURISM, COMMERCE, INVESTMENT AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

During his tenure as Minister of Tourism, there has been a boom in the industry as it replaced bananas as the leading foreign exchange earner. There were also significant milestones in his other portfolios of Commerce and Investment.

A Vibrant Tourism Sector

Since assuming office in 1997, the following hotels have either been built or completely refurbished: Sandals Grande Hotel, Coco Palm Hotel, Coco Creole Hotel, Almond Bay Resort, Coconut Bay Resort, Discovery at Marigot Bay.

In addition, a number of hotels have commenced construction and are due to open soon, such as: Cotton Bay, Bay Garden Suites, The Landings.

A new Golf Course is now under construction at Le Paradis, in preparation for the commencement of construction of the hotel.

On top of all of this impressive investment, 160 properties have received incentives for development in time for the 2007 Cricket World Cup and 25 new Bed and Breakfast properties are also expected to come on stream for the World Cup.

Record Visitor Arrivals

Total visitor arrivals to Saint Lucia surpassed 800,000 in 2004. Last year the stay-over arrivals topped 300,000 for the first time in our history.



Hon. Philip J. Pierre

Incentives for Taxi Drivers and Car Rental Companies: The Tourism Ministry also provided special incentives to car rental operators and taxi drivers to allow them to improve their fleet of vehicles.

Reenergizing Manufacturing

Despite stiff international competition, manufacturing has enjoyed four



A new hotel Discovery at Marigot Bay

consecutive years of expansion, fueled by growth in the food and beverage sector. The targeted support for this sector, with the systematic reduction of taxes, the granting of generous incentives, and the implementation of policies to encourage export has yielded positive results. St. Lucian manufacturers are more vibrant and active now than at any other time in recent history.

Boom in Construction

The construction sector is perhaps the area where there has been the most impressive growth performance. Despite significant increases in the cost of building materials caused by fuel-led increases in shipping costs, construction's contribution to Gross Domestic Product has averaged well over 8 percent during our first two terms.

FELIX FINISTERRE: MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS, WORKS, TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

As Communications Minister, Felix Finisterre had to oversee the major rehabilitation of major highways, the development of a tertiary road network and a transformation in the telecommunications sector

Major Infrastructure Improvements

Government invested heavily in developing the tertiary road network because it recognised its importance to economic and social life and its value as an important national asset. Under the tertiary road repair programme (TRRP) the Communications Ministry upgraded the following tertiary roads: La Croix Chaubourg – Desbarra, Monchy – Desrameau, La Bonne, Fond Assau – Chassin, Guesneau – Forestier, Anse La Raye – Venus, East Winds, Cas En Bas & Extension, St. Lawrence Estate, Milet – Tete Chemin, Milet – Venus, Victoria – Martin – Le Riche, Delcer – La Point – Le Riche, Esperance – Raveneau, Estangs – Union Vale – Delcer, Fond St Jacques – Diamond Soufriere, Fond St Jacques – Migny, Chateau Belair, Canaries Valley, Belvedere – Anse La Liberte, Mahaut – Calypso, Mahaut – Six Leiu, Volet to Mahaut, Grace – Augier, Grace – Joyeaux



Hon. Finisterre Felix

– Belle Vue, Moule a Chique, Mami-cou Loop, Dennery, St Josphe – Errard, Des Cartiers – Rain Forest, Bois Canoe

Road, Morne Panache, Bois d'Orange – Windjammer, Paix Bouche – Boguis, Desbarra Road.

3 Major Highways Rehabilitated

We undertook the complete reconstruction of the Soufriere to Vieux Fort Highway; we have commenced the resurfacing of the East Coast Highway and (3) we are widening and rehabilitating the Castries to Gros Islet Highway. We reconstructed the Beausejour Bella Rosa Ring Road.

8,000 New Street Lights: We facilitated the installation of 8,000 new Street Lights. We brought electricity to communities like Bouton that had been left in the dark for decades.

An End to Floods: We undertook Flood Mitigation Projects in Castries, Dennery, Anse La Raye and Vieux Fort.

New Sanitary Landfill: We commissioned new sanitary Landfills at Deglos and Vieux Fort.

Major Waterworks: We embarked on an ambitious Northern Water Supply Project to alleviate the water shortages in the most densely populated part of our island.

Modern Communications: The Saint Lucia Government championed the liberalization of the telecommunications sector, making it possible for almost everyone to own a phone. Today, nearly every citizen owns a cell phone.

Cheaper Telephone Rates: By liberalising the sector we provided the opportunity for a wider section of Saint Lucians to access telephone and other telecommunication services, and to benefit from lower rates for phones.

Our efforts have resulted in the modernization of the economy through the various applications of Information Communications Technology, including the establishment of Call Centres, providing employment for hundreds of young Saint Lucians and allowing more persons to travel on the information super highway.

Better Community Postal Services: We pursued a conscious decision to introduce and implement a door-to-door mail delivery service. The door-to-door delivery has been expanded and to date 40 communities receive this service.

GOVERNMENT MINISTERS FACE THE POLLS MONDAY

Six current Ministers of Government and one Parliamentary Secretary will be seeking re-election to Parliament when St. Lucia holds General elections on Monday December 11th. They are Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Dr. Kenny Anthony; Minister of Tourism, Commerce, Industry and Consumer Affairs, Philip Pierre; Minister of Communications Works and Public Utilities, Felix Finisterre; Minister of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations, Damian Greaves; Minister of Social Transformation, Culture and Local Government, Menissa Rambally;

Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ignatius Jean and the Parliamentary Secretary in that Ministry, Cyprian Lansiquot. Three current Ministers and a Parliamentary Secretary are retiring from Parliament. They are Education Minister Mario Michel, Labour Minister, Velon John, Physical Environment Minister Ferguson John and Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Health, John Odum. In today's Nationwide, the Ministers who will be contesting the elections give some of the highlights of their terms in office.

Meanwhile for the first time in St. Lucian history, an international team

will be observing the country's General elections. The Organization of American States, OAS this week concluded two agreements with St. Lucia Government Representatives that will allow the OAS team to witness the counting and tabulation of votes in the General elections. On Tuesday, the Director of the OAS office here, Paul Spencer signed an agreement with Chief Elections Officer, Carson Raggie that provides the OAS team access to the polling stations while on the same day in Washington, OAS Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza signed an agreement with St. Lucia's Ambassador to the OAS Sonia Johnny that confirms the Privileges and Immunities of the

OAS observers while in St. Lucia.

The OAS presence for the elections is as a result of a request by Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony to the OAS Secretary General. Chairman of the Elections Commission here, Kenneth Monplaisir, told the local OAS Director: "We are very proud at the results of our elections since Independence in that we have run what we consider to be free and fair elections and we are grateful that you are here to put a stamp on what we consider to be our normal situation." The OAS Observer Team is led by former OAS Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Christopher Thomas of Trinidad and Tobago.

DR. KENNY D. ANTHONY: PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE

Repositioning The St. Lucian Economy

Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Dr. Kenny D Anthony has presided over the repositioning of the St. Lucian economy taking it from a situation in 1997, in which it was anorexic, having experienced three straight years of sub-par growth to one where it is currently of the strongest in the region. The mainstay of the economy had been the banana industry but in 1997, when he took over the reins of the economy, agriculture had suffered its fifth consecutive year of decline. The downward trend reflected the decline in banana production and more than 3000 farmers had left the industry amid much strife and bloodshed. The manufacturing sector did not fare much better, having almost died due to its lack of competitiveness. Tourism represented the only flicker of hope on the otherwise bleak horizon.

During his nine years as Minister of Finance, GDP has grown at the following rates: 3.3% in 1998, 3.89% in 1999, -0.29% in 2000 due to a devastating drought, -4.05% in 2001 because of the adverse impact of 9/11, 0.54% in 2002, 3.09% in 2003, 3.99% in 2004 and 5.4% in 2005.

Reducing Unemployment: The advance in economic development has also resulted in a decline in unemployment in St. Lucia. Despite continuing contraction in the banana industry, caused by an increasingly unfriendly external marketplace, the Government has been able to provide new spheres of economic activity and employment for the citizens. This has resulted in unemployment reaching a fifteen-year low of 15.3%.

Reducing Taxes

As Minister of Finance Dr. Anthony was also able to reduce the tax burden on St. Lucians.

Reductions in Corporate Tax: The rate of Corporate Tax from 33.3% to 30%, one of the lowest Corporate Tax rates in the Commonwealth Caribbean.

Property Tax Reduction: Property Taxes of 7%, 8% and 14% of the assessed rental value of property was replaced in 2001 with a single uniform rate of 5%, and for commercial properties a rate of



Prime Minister Hon. Kenny Anthony

0.25% tax on the open market value was established.

Pensioners Exempted: All pensioners are exempted from the payment of Property Tax.

First Time Home Owners Given Relief: In some cases the Government exempted, and in others made reductions for a period of three years, on the Property Tax payable by a first-time home owner. This was meant to encourage and facilitate first-time owners during what is usually a difficult period.

Exemption for Low-Income Earners: We completely exempted from the payment of Property Tax any owner of a property whose household income is less than \$6,000.00 per annum.

New Commercial Properties: The owners of commercial properties that were completed after April 2001 were also ex-



Bank of Saint Lucia

empted from the payment of Property Tax on that property. This measure was intended to help local entrepreneurs who invest in new commercial properties.

Home Ownership Savings Plan: In order to assist young people invest in their own homes, our Government introduced a Registered Home Ownership Savings Plan, which allows for an Income Tax deduction of \$6,000 per year.

No Taxes on Tips: One of our first acts was to abolish the taxes on the gratuities and tips paid to hotel workers.

Employment Tax Credit: In 1998 we introduced an Employment Tax Credit to companies that employ University graduates. This credit allows the company to claim the salary of the employed graduate plus an additional amount of 25% of the total salary paid during the income year.

Interest on Delayed Tax Refunds: Also

in 1998, we introduced a system of interest payments on delayed tax refunds. Where a refund is not paid six months after the date of assessment, the refund attracts interest at the rate of 4% per year.

Incentives for Small Business: We also provided relief on Corporate Tax to small businesses. Where these businesses used to pay a flat rate of 33.3%, we have introduced a sliding scale over 5 years from 15% to 30%.

Student Loan Interest Allowance: Our Government introduced a provision that entitles individuals to a Tax deduction of as much as \$3,000.00 per year on the interest paid on student loans.

No More Exit Certificates: We abolished the requirement for an Exit Certificate from the Inland Revenue Department everytime someone travelled out of Saint Lucia.

Continued on page 6

THE LABOUR CODE

INTRODUCTION

The St. Lucia Parliament recently passed the long awaited Labour Code with the House of Assembly approving it on Monday November 13th and the Senate giving its seal of approval on Tuesday November 14th on. The Labour Code became law after first being introduced four years ago and after extensive consultations between Government and interested public and private sector organizations. The Code collects and consolidates various pieces of legislation into a single document, reforms and modernizes existing labour laws, incorporates into domestic law various ILO conventions which St. Lucia had signed and formulates new laws on some labour issues. Due to the importance of the Code, Nationwide is publishing extracts from it.

SICK LEAVE AND BENEFITS

Sick pay

90. Subject to sections 91 and 92, after not less than six months continuous service, an employee shall be eligible for paid leave at the normal rate of wages for actual illness or physical incapacitation.

Uncertified sick leave pay

91. — (1) Subject to subsection (2), an employee is entitled to be paid sick leave for actual illness or actual physical incapacitation without requirement of medical certification where — (a) each such period of sick leave does not exceed two days; and (b) the aggregate of such periods of sick leave does not exceed twelve days per annum.

(2) Where an employer reasonably believes that any purported sick leave, no matter how short, forms part of a course or pattern of absenteeism and is an abuse of sick leave provisions under this Code, he or she may require an employee to furnish him or her with a medical certificate.

Certified sick leave

92. Where a period of sick leave exceeds two days, the employee shall produce a medical certificate certifying the illness or injury and the duration of sick leave from a medical practitioner for the period commencing on the third day of sick leave in order to be entitled to paid sick leave.

Employer's obligation toward sick pay

93.— (1) During the first two days of leave in any period of sick leave to which the employee is entitled to paid leave, the employer shall pay to the employee the total amount of pay at the normal rate of wages.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), after the first two days of leave in any period of sick leave to which the employee is entitled to paid leave, the employer shall pay to the employee the total amount of pay at the normal rate of wages less any amount to which the employee is entitled as a benefit by virtue of the National Insurance Corporation Act for a period not exceeding three months for any continuous period of incapacity.

(3) In determining any period of inca-

capacity, any period separated by no more than eight weeks shall be treated as one continuous period of incapacity for work, starting on the first day of such period.

Determination of medical matters

94. Where there is an issue relating to — (a) incapacity due to a job related illness or injury leave; (b) abusive sick leave; (c) medical certificates issued for the purpose of sick leave, injury at work, illness connected with pregnancy, illness or injury determined to be sufficient for termination of employment in accordance with this Code; or (c) any other medical matter; the issue shall be determined by the Tribunal having regard to the recommendation of a medical committee established pursuant to section 428.

VACATION LEAVE

Interpretation

95. For the purposes of this Division — “continuous employment” has the meaning given to it pursuant to section 23; “working day” means a day on which the employee would normally work if not on vacation; “year of employment” in relation to any employee means any continuous employment for any period of twelve consecutive months during which the employee has actually performed labour or rendered services for the same employer for — (a) at least two hundred days in the case of employees employed on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly or yearly basis; and (b) at least one hundred and fifty days in the case of employees employed hourly, daily or part-time.

General entitlement to vacation leave

96.— (1) An employee shall, at the end of his or her first year of employment and at the end of each year of employment thereafter, be entitled to annual vacation leave with pay for a period of working days as laid down

under section 97.

(2) Subject to section 100, the vacation leave referred to in subsection (1) shall be computed on working days between Monday and Friday inclusive. Amount of

Vacation leave with pay

97.— (1) The amount of vacation leave with pay shall be the amount the employee would have received had the employee not taken the leave calculated at the rate of remuneration immediately preceding the period of vacation leave.

(2) The minimum entitlement of vacation leave with pay referred to in subsection (1) shall be as set out in the Second Schedule.

Existing rights to vacation saved

98.— (1) Nothing in this Division shall affect any right to vacation with pay acquired by any employee under any collective agreement, employment contract or other agreement existing before the commencement of this Code where such right to vacation with

pay is equivalent to or more than the amount of leave with pay granted under this Division.

(2) Where an employee or a group of employees at a workplace, before the commencement of this Code, was entitled to a period of vacation leave with pay greater than that prescribed under section 97 whether by collective agreement or custom, his or her employer shall not decrease the period of vacation leave due to that employee or at the workplace.

Periods of vacation leave

99.— (1) The annual vacation leave shall be given by the employer and taken by the employee in one period, or separate periods, as agreed to between the employer and the employee.

(2) If the employer and employee so agree, the vacation leave may be taken wholly or partly in advance before the employee has become entitled to such vacation.

(3) The vacation leave shall be given by the employer and shall be taken by the employee before the expiration of

six months after the date upon which the right to such vacation accrues except where, by agreement between the employer and employee, such vacation is postponed.

(4) The employer shall determine the date on which the vacation shall commence and shall give to the employee not less than seven days' notice of such date.

(5) Where the vacation leave or any part thereof has been taken before the right to such vacation has accrued, the right to a further vacation leave shall not begin to accrue until after the expiration of the period of the year of employment in respect of which the vacation leave or part thereof has been so taken.

Public holidays not to be counted

100. Where a public holiday occurs during any period of vacation leave taken by an employee pursuant to section 97, the period of vacation shall be increased by one day in respect of each Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, as the case may be.



Consultations on the Labour Code

Employee not to be terminated during vacation leave

101. Any notice of termination of employment given by an employer to an employee during a vacation leave shall be void and of no effect.

Exclusions from vacation leave

102. A period of vacation leave given to an employee shall not include any period — (a) of sick leave to which he or she is entitled under the terms of his or her contract of employment or otherwise; (b) of maternity leave to which a female employee is entitled under the terms of her contract of employment or otherwise; (c) of disability caused by accident or disease for which compensation is payable under the provisions of this Code or any law in force; (d) for which an employee is called to serve on jury duty or national service or public duty; (e) of off days specific to the employee; or (f) of public holidays.

Employee not to be compelled to forego vacation leave

103. An employer shall not compel an employee to forego the taking of earned vacation leave irrespective of an offer to pay remuneration in lieu of the leave.

Proportionate vacation leave

104. An employer and employee may agree that the entitlement of vacation leave with pay accrue proportionately to the employee during each twelve month period of employment or two hundred days or one hundred and fifty days, as the case may be.

Vacation leave pay upon termination

105.— (1) Where the employment of an employee who has become entitled to vacation leave pay is terminated, and the employee has not taken any or any part of such vacation, the employer shall pay to the employee, in addition to all other amounts due to the employee, vacation leave pay in respect of the period of vacation leave due to him or her at the time of such termination.

(2) Where the employment of an employee who has become entitled to vacation leave is terminated and the employee has taken a period of the vacation leave to which he or she is entitled, the employer shall pay to the employee, in addition to all other amounts due, the corresponding proportionate part of the vacation leave pay referred to in subsection (1).

(3) Where the vacation leave or any part of it has been taken in advance by an employee, and the sum paid by the employer to the employee in respect of such vacation leave or part of it exceeds the sum which the employer is required to pay to the employee under subsection (1), the employer shall not be liable to make any payment to the employee under that subsection, and shall be entitled to deduct the amount of such excess from any amounts payable to the employee upon the termination of his or her employment.

Vacation leave pay upon termination before qualifying period

106.— (1) Subject to subsection (2), where any employee who has been continuously employed for three months or more is laid off or the employment contract is terminated and the employee has not completed the twelve month period necessary for entitlement to vacation leave with pay in accordance with section 96, such employee shall be entitled to vacation leave with pay calculated on the basis of the formula specified in section 96(2).

(2) If an employee has at any time taken any vacation leave under this Part while in the employ of an employer, the employer shall be deemed to have complied with the provisions of this section if the employee is paid promptly, in addition to all other amounts due, the employee's full pay for the period of employment between the day on which the employee became entitled to his or her last vacation leave and the date of the termination of employment.

Records

107. An employer shall keep records of the remuneration, periods of employment and vacation leave of every employee employed by him or her in such manner as deemed satisfactory by the Labour Commissioner.

Complaints

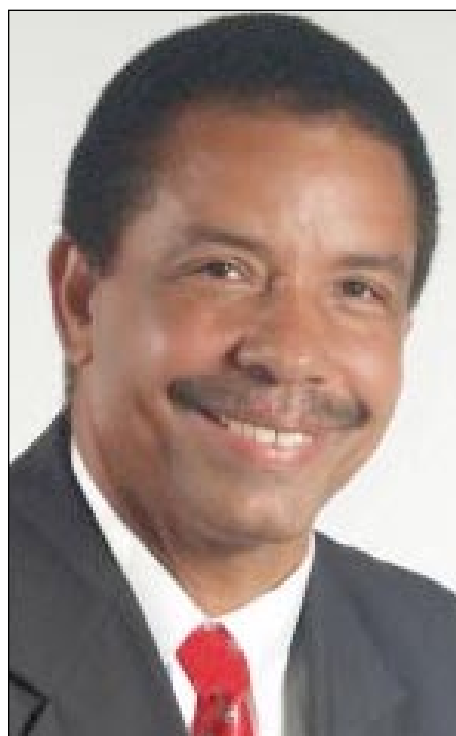
108.— (1) A complaint alleging a violation by an employer of the provisions of this Division shall be made to the Tribunal.

(2) An employer who contravenes subsection (1) is liable, on successful complaint to the Tribunal, for damages and the Tribunal may order the employer to rectify the offending act.

IGNATIUS JEAN: MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES



Hon. Ignatius Jean



Hon. Cyprian Lansiquot

For decades the main component of St. Lucia's Agriculture was the banana industry- the country's major foreign exchange earner so that it went into decline in the late 1990's because of adverse international market conditions, the Government had to stabilize the industry. Hon. Ignatius Jean became Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in 2001 and it was his responsibility to effect this policy of stabilization in the banana industry and modernize the agricultural sector generally. He was assisted in this by Parliamentary Secretary, Hon. Cyprian Lansiquot.

Unprecedented Support for Bananas

We recognised the importance of stabilising the banana industry and modernising it so that it could better withstand the shocks of a competitive and liberal external market. In a little under ten years, we injected over \$120 million worth of support into the banana industry. The debt of the old SLBGA was wiped out; Three modern Inland Reception and Distribution Centres were built; Funds were provided for a Production Recovery Plan; All duties were removed on banana inputs; Assistance was given on three



occasions to fight Leaf Spot disease; A revolving Input Credit Scheme was established; The price of banana cartons was subsidised; \$20 million dollar farm irrigation infrastructure was installed; Support was given for post-Hurricane Lili rehabilitation; A Banana Emergency Recovery Programme costing over \$20 million was put in place.

No Government has ever done more for any single industry in any comparable period in our history.

Growth in Fisheries

We appreciated the importance of providing modern facilities for our fishermen so that they could meet

the growing demand for fish and sea food. So, with the help of the Japanese Government, we constructed three modern, state-of-the-art Fish Landing Facilities in Vieux Fort, Soufriere and Choiseul.

We also installed Fish Aggregating Devices and pioneered Long Line Fishing so that our fishers could exploit resources that had previously eluded them.

Protection for Livestock Farmers

We established quotas for chicken production and pork production in order to allow those industries to grow and profit from opportunities in tourism and hospitality.

Minister of Finance - Continued

No Entertainment Tax: We abolished the Entertainment Tax that people holding dances, shows or other entertainment activities had to pay to Inland Revenue.

Increase in Tax Deduction for Savings in Credit Unions: We increased the tax deduction for savings in Credit Unions from \$3,600 to \$5,000.00

Reduction in Stamp Duties: In 2001, our Government reduced the Stamp Duty on Leases, Share Transfers and certain Banking transactions.

Other Tax Concessions: Over the two terms of our administration, we introduced several other tax concessions: We removed duties on surveillance and security equipment for businesses and households; In 1999, we exempted certain power tools from import duties and taxes; In 2003 and 2006 we reduced Excise Duties on motor vehicles; On several occasions we announced exemptions on taxes on building materials for the refurbishment of business places; To encourage people to buy shares in companies, we introduced a tax deduction in the year of purchase of the shares; We provided tax concessions for the purchase of solar water systems; In 2002 we removed Import Duties and Consumption

Taxes on CD ROMS and Hard Drives

In some cases we exempted, and in others made reductions for a period of three years, the Property Tax payable by a first-time home owner. This was meant to encourage and facilitate first-time owners during what is usually a difficult period.

Exemption for Low-Income Earners: We completely exempted from the payment of Property Tax any owner of a property whose household income is less than \$6,000.00 per annum.

New Commercial Properties: The owners of commercial properties that were completed after April 2001 were also exempted from the payment of Property Tax on that property. This measure was intended to help local entrepreneurs who invest in new commercial properties.

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DAMIAN GREAVES MINISTER FOR HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, FAMILY AFFAIRS AND GENDER RELATIONS

Hon Damian Greaves has been pursuing a revolution in health care in St. Lucia as the Government sought to modernize the health sector. The key components of health sector reform have been the ongoing construction of two new hospitals—a new general hospital and a new mental hospital, both off the Millennium Highway— and a Universal Health Care Programme.

Better Health Services

No previous government has had the courage and vision to address the health care needs of Saint Lucians as comprehensively as we have done. Since 1997, the Government of the Saint Lucia Labour Party has been revolutionising the health care system in Saint Lucia and getting it set to become world class.

Prior to 1997, the daily news headlines were inundated with stories related to problems in the operations of the island’s health care system. People complained about the availability, the quality and the cost of health care. In recent times, such issues have virtually disappeared from the news, as we have expanded the public’s access to quality health care services.

We were able to cause these changes to attitudes by doing the following: We eliminated doctor’s fees at all Health Centres

Better Ambulance Service: We redesigned and improved our Accident and



Hon. Damian Greaves

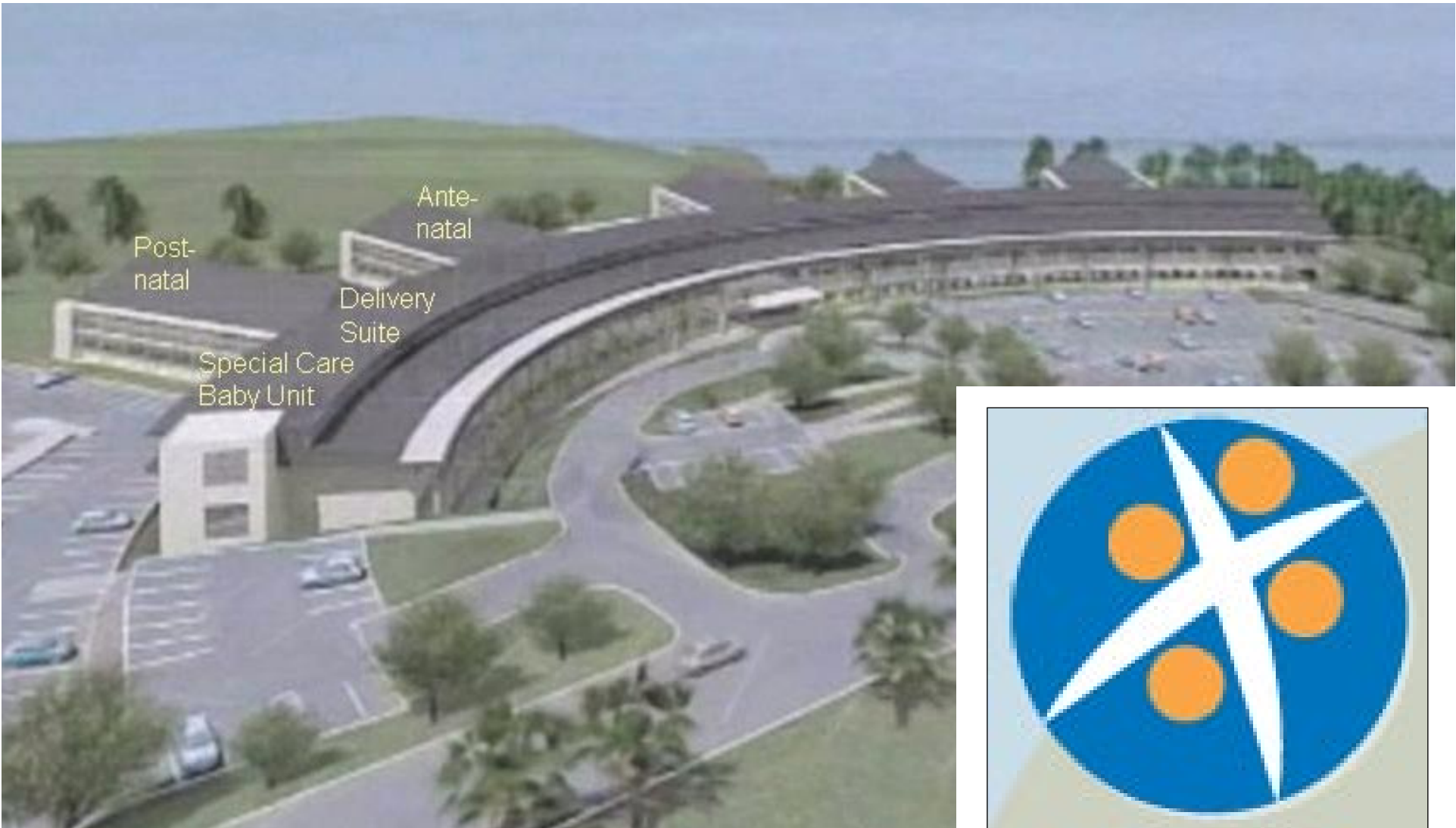


Artist Impression of the New Mental Hospital

Emergency (Casualty) Care Service
Health Centres Repaired: We refurbished 15 Health Centres islandwide
Doctors & Nurses Trained: We trained over 75 doctors and recently provided opportunities for over 250 Saint Lucians to study nursing
Free Diabetes Treatment: We have provided free screening and free dia-

betes and anti-hypertension medication under the UHC Diabetic and Hypertension Pilot Programme
Free Eye Care and Surgery: We screened, free-of-charge, over 8000 Saint Lucians for various eye diseases and made it possible for over 2000 nationals to receive free eye surgery in Cuba. We provided massive in-service

training for all health care workers.
Medical Complaints Commission: We established a Medical Complaints Commission to deal with complaints about health care professionals and workers
Increased Maternity Benefits: We Increased Maternity Benefits.



Artist impression of the New General Hospital



UHC Logo

MENISSA RAMBALLY MINISTER FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION, CULTURE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Hon Menissa Rambally has been in charge of guiding the Government's policies for social transformation in St. Lucia. The main thrust has been in poverty alleviation with the setting up of the of Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) and the BELFUND to tackle some of the aspects of poverty in the society. Cultural matters were also given a boost through the establishment of the Cultural Development Foundation (CDF) which has been giving critical support to local artists, musicians, folklorists.

Protecting the Vulnerable

The neglect of the United Workers Party was perhaps most glaring in how it dealt with the vulnerable people in our society. Our Government identified this group as one in need of special assistance and among other things we undertook the following: Increased Public Assistance; Increased the allowance received by persons on Public Assistance



Hon. Menissa Rambally

by 100%; Homes Repaired for Elderly; Repaired 273 houses owned by elderly persons under a Home Repair and Care of the Elderly Programme

Women's Support Centre: Established a Women's Support Centre to protect victims of domestic violence; Provided financial support to HIV/AIDS positive persons in need; We implemented a national protocol and procedures to address child abuse, resulting in more cases being identified and addressed; Launched a Foster care and Adoption Programme to protect vulnerable children.

No Property Tax for Pensioners: We exempted pensioners from the payment of Property Taxes; We relocated the residents of Black Mallet after the unfortunate land slippage in that area; We rehabilitated the Soufriere and Gros Islet Waterfronts after the passage of Hurricane Lenny and provided assistance to the affected fishermen

No Income Tax for Low Income Work-

ers: We exempted over 5,000 low income earners from Income Tax by increasing the taxable threshold to \$16,000.00.

New HRDCs and Day Care Centres: Our Government constructed 7 Human Resource Development Centres (HRDCs); We built 6 new Day Care Centres

Support for Tens of Thousands with PRF, BNTF & BELFUND: Among other things, we installed footpaths, drains and other community infrastructure to benefit over 15,000 persons in over 50 communities in just the past 5 years via the PRF. Disbursed over 400 low cost loans under the BELFUND totalling in excess of \$4 million to poor, previously unemployed young persons. Provided assistance to over 40,000 persons under the Basic Needs Trust Fund in water supply installations, roads, drains, health care, footpaths, and skills training



Senior Citizens Home



Projects from PRF and BELFUND



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. Dec. 9th to Fri. Dec. 15th 2006
NTN – PROVIDING

INFORMATION YOU NEED

Community Access: The GIS takes you inside the picturesque town of Soufriere - Sat. Dec. 9th, 9:30 a.m.
Hon. Mario Michel reflects on his sojourn as Minister for Education, Human Resource Development, Youth & Sports - Sun. Dec. 10th, 9:30 a.m.

Live Coverage of Elections 2006:

– Mon. Dec. 11th, 9:00 a.m.

The Desmond Skeete Animation Centre - Tues. Dec. 12th, 8:00 p.m.

In Support of the Youth - Wed. Dec. 13th, 6:15 p.m.

Caribbean Collections: A Glimpse of the Fashion World in St. Lucia

- Thurs. Dec. 14th, 8:00 p.m.

The GIS speaks with the Governor General (Kweyol) about her position and other aspects of her life – Fri. Dec. 15th, 8:00 p.m.

Remember to tune in for:

GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.

Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:

Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm :

Konsit Kweyol/Tuesdays at 8:00pm (Kweyol Discussion):

Your Right to Know/Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. (Min. of Ed. Prog).

Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm (Week in Review)

Weflechi/Fridays at 6:40pm - (Week in Review—Kweyol)

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

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