



NATIONWIDE

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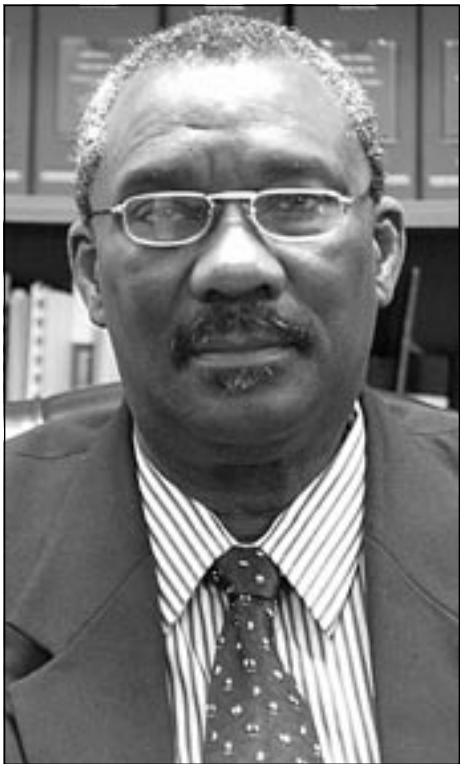


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Firemen's Concerns Being Addressed



Senator Calixte George



The old central fire station in Castries

With the island's firemen trickling back to work at the end of a suspected mass sick-out, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security says all the issues of concern raised by the protesting fire officers have been or are being addressed.

The majority of fire officers reported sick leave and stayed home to force attention to their concerns. Among the concerns expressed were: excessive working hours, disparities in vacation leave, lack of appointment of a Fire Chief and a Deputy, alleged asbestos leakages at three fire stations and relocation of the central fire station in Castries.

Home Affairs and Internal Security Minister Senator Calixte George says all of these issues have been or are being addressed.

The Minister says the matters of excess working hours and disparities in

vacation leave for officers of same rank are being addressed by the Ministry of the Public Service, while the Public Service Commission (PSC) is addressing the matter of appointment of a Fire Chief and Deputy.

Senator George says the Government regards the asbestos claims as an urgent health issue and he has received the immediate permission of the Prime Minister to investigate and remove the offending material.

The Ministry of Planning, the Minister says, has been informed of the urgency of this matter.

Regarding relocation of the Central Fire Station on Jeremie Street, the Home Affairs Minister acknowledged that previous studies had recommended such a move and said it was under consideration as part of the government's continuing programme of relocating, rebuilding and renovating fire stations around the country.



The new Gros Islet fire Station

Acting PM Hails Return of Carnival's Fun Ships

And he urges taxi drivers, vendors to brace for the opportunities

Acting Prime Minister Philip J. Pierre says the return of the Carnival Destiny to Port Castries "will bring with it significant potential benefits" for the island's taxi drivers and vendors, who should "brace for the opportunities" after long clamouring for its return to Saint Lucia.

Mr Pierre also says the cruise sector "is poised to significantly improve" in the current financial year over that of the year just ended.

The Acting Prime Minister, who is also Tourism Minister, announced last week that Carnival Destiny, a 2,642 passenger cruise liner, will on January 7, 2007 launch a new Caribbean schedule from Puerto Rico, with Saint Lucia among the five new Caribbean stops.

Mr Pierre said the 101,353-tonne mega-ship, which calls at several tropical destinations with high-spending passengers, will spend an entire day in Saint Lucia.

During that time, he said, over 2,642 visitors will have an opportunity to visit various locations around the island by taxi and purchase local souvenirs from vendors in Castries and beyond.

Carnival Cruise Lines is the world's largest cruise line and Saint Lucia was

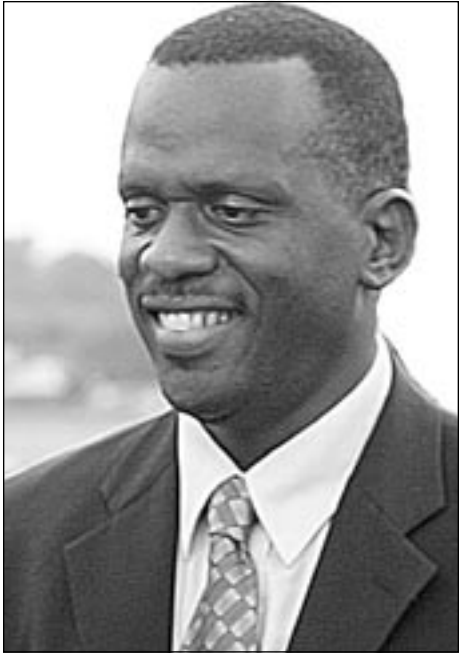


Cruise Ships in the Castries harbour

dropped from its schedule following the company's post-September 11, 2001 destination reviews. Spurred by calls from local taxi drivers, vendors and other tourism operators, Prime Minister Dr Kenny Anthony and Mr Pierre led a delegation to Florida late last year to negotiate a return of the "fun ships" to Saint Lucia.

Following the meeting with Carnival's chief executives, the minister said on his return home the prospects "sound and look good".

In a press release last month announcing the return of Carnival Destiny to Port Castries, Jill Potash, Carnival's Business Development Manager, said she was "excited" about the change in



Hon. Philip J. Pierre
Minister for Commerce, Tourism,
Investment and Consumer Affairs

the itinerary to include Saint Lucia and Antigua.

Ms Potash described Saint Lucia as the "Crown Jewel of the Windward Islands".

Meanwhile, the Tourism Minister says "there are already clear signs" that 2006 will see a substantial increase in cruise tourism.

According to Mr Pierre, "barring unforeseen circumstances, projections are that cruise calls will increase by over 25% during the year, following a slump in the numbers last year."

THE YOUTH AGENDA

IN THE 2006-2007 BUDGET ADDRESS PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE, DR. KENNY ANTHONY OUTLINED THE GOVERNMENT’S PROGRAMME FOR THE YOUTH OF THE COUNTRY. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE DETAILS OF THE YOUTH AGENDA

Mr. Speaker, unemployment hurts primarily our young people. This continues to be the case, despite the significant reduction in unemployment these past few months. We must continue our efforts to re-educate, re-tool and re-skill. That responsibility is assigned to the National Skills Development Centre. This financial year, NSDC will receive a total allocation of \$3.72 million.

More Investment In Skills Training

Approximately \$2 million of this amount will be made available for NSDC’s programme of skills training. This will supplement the amount allocated to the Youth Apprenticeship Programme.

The NSDC has been authorised to target immediately some 700 persons for training in a variety of skills. I have requested NSDC to target communities where unemployment is particularly high.

Training will be provided in the following areas: Office Administration, Cosmetology, Bar Tending and Waiting, Housekeeping, Electrical Installation, Masonry and Steel Bending, Plumbing, Early Childhood Development (preschool), Tiling, Tour Guiding, Sewing and Drapery Design, Introduction to Graphic Design, Electronic Appliance Repair and Data Entry.

Stipends will be provided to trainees to encourage their attendance in all training workshops. These stipends will be paid at a flat rate of \$400 per trainee, per month, inclusive of meal allowances.

As announced in my New Year’s Address, the National Skills Development Centre will initiate a programme of training for young persons in the eastern and southern parts of the island for future employment in the Tourism and Hospitality Sectors. The National Skills Development Centre will initially target some 350 persons and will commence training this cohort towards the end of the year.

Human Resource Development Programme

An allocation of \$1.2 million has been made for a Human Resource Development Programme. This programme, which is currently being finalised by the NAO’s Office, in conjunction with the European Commission Delegation, focuses on formal tertiary level training and informal entry level training and follows the broad strategy developed for human resource development through skills training in rural sectors, as outlined in the Education Strategy for 2005-2010.

The Programme is designed as a long term development approach, combining training with job search assistance and other employment services. This should assist in the creation of a more skilled and marketable labour force, better equipped to embrace the challenges of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy, the effects of globalisation and the contraction of the banana sector.

The programme, which has a three year implementation period, has two main components. The first component

offers pre-university certification at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. Under this intervention, the Ministry of Education will determine the priority areas which will be supported. It is anticipated that between 150 and 200 young persons will benefit from this programme. Upon completion of the training programme, graduates will be encouraged to participate in the Youth Apprenticeship Programme (YAP) and the micro and small business start up capital and funding from the BELFUND and the OPSR. This component shall receive an allocation of \$650,000.

Continuation of YAP

The third component of the programme will support the ongoing Youth Apprenticeship Programme currently being undertaken by the NSDC. This component will seek to provide on-the-job training experience for 150 young persons over a period of one year. An allocation of \$520,000 is earmarked



One of the many multi purpose courts built by Government

for the YAP.

The age group of 18-25 years is being targeted, as that age group has the highest unemployment rate. The project will be open to unemployed persons who have left the formal education and training system, graduated from training with organisations such as NELP, CARE, NSDC and graduates who have benefited from other HRD training programmes.

Sports Investment

In addition to the above mentioned initiatives for our young people, the Government has allocated \$3.5 million

to sports development. Of this amount \$840,000 will be allocated to the construction of new playing fields and the upgrading of existing playing fields. A sum of \$765,000 has been allocated to finance repairs to six multi-purpose courts and the construction of two new courts at the Vieux Fort Senior Secondary School, Campus B, and Pavee. Additionally, \$200,000 will be made available to upgrade national sports facilities at the Mindoo Philip Park and Vigie Sports Complex to provide offices and facilities for national sporting associations.

Statement on the Post of National Authorizing Officer



Dr. James Fletcher

The Cabinet Secretary, Dr James Fletcher, has issued the following statement on the appointment of a new National Authorizing Officer for European Union grant funding for St. Lucia.

Wilfred Pierre is not the first NAO appointed by the Government of Saint Lucia, and neither is he the first to be changed. Mr. Dwight Venner, Mr. Ausbert d’Auvergne, Mr. Cletus Springer, Mr. Bernard La Corbiniere and Mrs. Alison King Joseph have all served successfully as NAOs. So the changing of an NAO is not new, neither is it unusual.

The NAO is not a position on the Permanent Establishment. It is a position designated by the Prime Minister to allow the holder to fulfil responsibilities under the various Memoranda of Understanding between the Government and the European Commission. Prior to a few years ago, this position was not a paid position. The NAO, prior to Mr. Wilfred Pierre, was a Permanent Secretary who carried out his or her

responsibilities, in addition to his/her normal public service duties, and did not receive any additional financial benefit. Two or three years after assuming the position of NAO, Mr. Pierre requested that the European Commission Delegation pay him an honorarium, on top of the salary that he receives from his substantive Grade 19 position of Director of Special Projects Initiatives, and this request was granted.

The European Union is the largest single donor of grant funds to the Government of Saint Lucia. Therefore, the programming of these funds has a very direct and significant impact on the national Budget process. Unfortunately, because of the location of the Office of the NAO in the Office of the Prime Minister, there has been a disconnect between the work of that office and the Ministry of Finance. Additionally, the senior programme officers in the Office of the NAO are mostly senior officers in the Ministry of Finance, and their period of secondment to the NAO’s Office has come to an end. Therefore, in order to ensure that there is greater

congruence between the work of the Office of the NAO and the national Budget process, the Office of the NAO was shifted on 1st March, 2006 out from under the responsibility of the Office of the Prime Minister and placed under the responsibility of the Director of Budget in the Ministry of Finance. This shift also allows the senior programme officers in the NAO’s office to continue to function as Programme Officers in the relocated NAO’s Office.

It stands to reason, therefore, that the new NAO should be someone appointed to a position in the Office of the Director of Budget in the Ministry of Finance.

The new NAO will be Mr. Donovan Williams, who is a trained sociologist, an experienced public administrator, having served as Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Social Transformation, and who acquired significant experience with the requirements of donor agencies during his tenure as Executive Director of the Poverty Reduction Fund. Mr. Pierre will revert to his substantive Public Service position as Director of Special Projects Initiatives and will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of Cabinet decisions and reporting to Cabinet on the implementation of critical Capital projects, consistent with the job description of his position.

The Head of the EU Delegation in Barbados has been informed of these changes and in addition to welcoming the placement of the NAO’s Office under the Ministry of Finance, he has agreed to visit Saint Lucia at the end of this month to hold comprehensive discussions with the new NAO on Saint Lucia’s EU grant portfolio, including a few time-sensitive matters on which the NAO’s Office has been a bit tardy to respond.

PM Converses with the Nation



Caption

Hello Saint Lucia, I know many of you will either have attended the opening of the 2006 Jazz Festival on Friday night, or you would have been to Fond D’Or on Saturday, or you would have been part of the first Jazz on Campus at my old school, Campus B, Vieux Fort Secondary School. This week, there will be jazz everywhere, every day – whether on the Square, at Pointe Seraphine, or elsewhere.

I know you will also be tempted to spend your hard-earned income to go to as many places during this Jazz Week. You deserve some fun and entertainment. However, you need to be careful. When the Festival is over, you will, once again, face the full realities of life. One of these realities is the cost of living. It is this subject that I want to return to and share some thoughts with you.

Reducing the cost of energy

This Government, as indeed every Government in Caricom, has had to face the spectre of constant increases in the prices of fuel, food, electricity and other necessities. It is not easy to keep the cost of fuel, household energy and food within reach of the average person. Everywhere in the region, the complaints are loud and frequent.

Sometimes, we have subsidized the price of fuel at the gas pump to the tune of millions of dollars per year, just to ensure that motorists do not have to pay the increases each time the price of oil increases on the world market. Yet, this comes at a cost, because the Government loses millions of dollars of revenue to finance our recurrent expenditure and to fund development projects. It is a vicious cycle.

A subsidy on LPG

Government also loses substantial revenue on cooking gas. The Government has continued its policy of subsidising the cost of cooking gas, in an attempt to reduce the cost of living to consumers. The current subsidy on LPG is 59 cents per pound, which, in effect, amounts to a subsidy of \$14.75 per 25 pound cylinder.

In other words, as I said in my Budget Address, every single time someone buys a small cylinder of cooking gas for \$28.20, the Government is paying \$14.75 – more than half the price. This is to ensure that the price of that cylinder remains at a level that those Saint Lucians who use small cylinders of cooking gas, can afford. Without that



Bottles of LPG

subsidy, the cost of each 25-pound tank of cooking gas would cost you, not just \$28 dollars, but over \$42.00.

Similarly, we have kept the prices of basic commodities like rice, flour and sugar within reach. We have been able to ensure that the prices for sugar, rice and flour have not increased since this Government assumed office in 1997. Government, as you know, imports and retails these items and absorbs the movements in the prices of these commodities from time to time.

Deliberate government policy

In effect, some of these prices are kept in check by the deliberate intervention of the government. We continue to do the best we can to keep prices down as much as possible for those who can least afford the increases. The real question is this: How long can these policies continue in the face of mounting increases in the prices of imported goods?

This question invites me to revisit an issue I also raised in my Budget Address.

Cost of living challenges

A frequent topic on our Talk Shows is the issue of rising retail prices. I pointed out that no citizen is immune and all have been affected.

All kinds of reasons had been offered for this phenomenon. Some said it was because there was no competition in the supermarket business. Some said it was because Super J enjoys a monopoly. Others blamed the absence of price controls. Still others said that the increases in prices have to do with “greed”.

by most, they have poured scorn on the people who will benefit most from these measures by derisively describing the Budget as a “Chicken Back Budget.”

The tax regime

Despite Government’s intervention, some prices will continue to increase. Some will seek, as always, to blame Government and the taxes on imported goods. I believe it would be helpful if I explain the regime of taxes that applies to food items and why the prices of some items will be seen as increasing

percent, 5 to 15 percent and exceptionally, 0 to 25 percent.

One commodity group that has attracted considerable interest in recent times is milk and dairy products.

Several citizens have approached me to complain about recent increases in the price of milk. However, you would be surprised to know that Government charges no Duty on milk and milk products. There is, however, a 5 percent Consumption Tax.

In effect, contrary to the popular belief, the increases in the price of milk and milk products have little or nothing to do with increases in Duty.

Service charge

There is one other tax we need to bear in mind. It is Service Charge. A Service Charge applies to all goods entering Saint Lucia. It was introduced in 1989, well before this government took office. Currently, it is set at 5 percent.

A balancing act

When determining the respective rates, the challenge I have is to balance the rates in such a way as to protect the interests of Caricom and local producers, while simultaneously safeguarding the interests of the consumer.

Take an item like tomato ketchup. The duty imposed on this commodity is 30%. If CARICOM had to reduce the duty on tomato ketchup, then ketchup imported from outside of CARICOM would become cheaper, competing directly not only with Baron’s and other locally produced ketchup, but with all other ketchup produced in CARICOM.

The same applies to whole chicken. Chicken is a staple in our diet. If Government decided, for whatever reason, to reduce the CARICOM-imposed rates of duty on whole chicken, then we might as well say goodbye to locally produced whole chicken. That’s because the imported chicken would become considerably cheaper than our locally produced chicken.

By the way, contrary to what “Sir John” propagates, the Government does not charge or impose any Import Duty on chicken backs, wings or legs. However, Consumption a Tax of 5% is applied to these items – that is, before the Budget.

The price control myth

Then, there is that other myth about price controls keeping prices down. That may be so, but not in all cases. It may work with flour, rice and sugar, simply because Government imports these commodities and bears the fluctuations in the costs involved. But, contrary to the popular view, price controls do not prevent increases in the retail prices of commodities.

Price Controls normally limit the profit mark-ups that a retailer is allowed to enjoy. Thus, if the importer is compelled to pay more for the items from abroad, for example, because the cost of fuel has increased, then the price of the items will still show increases on the shelves, even though the profit margin is controlled.

Rising Cost

I do not wish to down-play the chal-

COMBATTING THE RISING PRICES OF BASIC GOODS

lenges that face us. Everywhere in the region, Governments are contending with increases in the cost of living, particularly in respect of food.

Every Government has had to cope with rising inflation. There is no doubt that the increases in the price of fuel are primarily responsible for this inflationary spiral. The price of fuel has led to higher costs of production and

A challenge

As usual, some make it appear that prices in Saint Lucia are the highest in the region. “Things are worse here,” is their cry. But is it? I’ll tell you what. I will ask our Statistics Department to compare the prices of basic items in our food basket with the identical items in the other islands. I will then disclose the results to you.

little we can do to change the price of oil. That, frankly, is not good news, but it is reality!

Let me end as I began by saying: Do enjoy as much as you can of the Jazz festival. But remember, do not ignore the realities that confront us.

And during this Jazz Week, please take some time out to spare a thought

and say a prayer for Francis Mindoo Phillip, our late great cricketing hero, who died on Friday after a long illness. He will miss the Cricket World Cup next year, but we miss him now -- and we will miss him then. May his good soul rest in peace. Next time, I shall offer a tribute to him. So, until next week, God Bless, be of good cheer -- and take care.



Customers at a local supermarket

expectedly, higher shipping costs. So long as the price of fuel continues to increase, so long will the price of imported goods continue to increase.

Lowering costs even more

How then do we deal with this situation? I have indicated that the Government will remove the rate of Consumption Tax on some items, and reduce the Consumption Tax on others.

Indeed, there will be no Duty and Consumption Tax on the following items: Chicken Backs and Necks, Chicken Wings, Chicken Thighs, Breasts, Leg Quarters, Legs, Chicken Drumsticks, Turkey Backs, Necks and Wings, Turkey Drumsticks, Evaporated Milk and Powdered Milk.

The Consumption tax will be reduced to zero in the case of the following items: canned tuna fish, canned mackerel, canned sausages, red kidney beans and disposable diapers. The rates of Duty will however remain.

But the respite may well be short-lived. Even though Consumption Taxes have been reduced to zero on some items and in others to lower rates, consumers will continue to experience increases once the importers have to pay more for the goods imported from abroad.

Remaining committed until

As I said in the Budget Address, if the cost of oil continues to increase as it has been these past few weeks, we may have to review the extent to which we can continue to pay the cost of keeping those prices lower than they actually should be. We have to understand that we are in the midst of an energy crisis.



Goods from Baron Foods – a local company

A word of advice

At the end of it all, we must all face reality. The unprecedented increases in the price of fuel will continue to cause pain to consumers. The pain will be particularly felt when we buy imported foods. One way to fight the increases is to grow more of our food and consume more of what we grow. I will repeat what I said earlier, only because I want you to understand what we face. Increases in the price of oil will cause increases in the price of shipping, and haulage. These increases will be reflected in the prices we pay for manufactured goods. So, buy local, let’s grow our own food as much as possible, because there is



The Headquarters of LUCELEC – the light and power company

PM in Spain for Latin- Caricom- European Summit Talks

Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony is in Spain for talks with the Spanish Prime Minister on improving relations between Caricom and the Spanish Republic.

The Prime Minister left the island yesterday for Madrid, where he will join other Caricom Heads of Government in meetings with the Spanish Prime Minister, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero.

The Caricom leaders and their Spanish host will be holding discussions on several issues of bilateral and multilateral interests, aimed at increasing the links between Spain and the Caribbean Community.

In the case of Saint Lucia, Prime Minister Anthony says the island has been attracting interest from an increasing number of Spanish investors and the meeting with Mr Zapatero will help set the stage for taking the expressions of interest to another stage.

From Spain, the Prime Minister and his colleague Caricom Heads of Government will travel later this week to Austria, where they will participate in another meeting aimed at improving trans-Atlantic relations between Europe and the developing countries of the Western Hemisphere.

The meeting in Austria will be between representatives of the Heads of Government of the European Union and the leaders of Latin American and Caribbean states.

Before leaving, Prime Minister Anthony said the Caricom leaders were anxious to meet their EU counterparts to discuss with them the effects of loss of preferential treatment for basic commodity exports to Europe from the region.

He said: “I don’t think the EU leaders sufficiently grasp the enormity of the social and economic dislocation that has resulted from a loss of pref-

erential treatment for products such as bananas and sugar.”

The Saint Lucia Prime Minister said the first meeting between European and Latin American and Caribbean leaders was important “to sensitize the new European leaders in particular, who, frankly, don’t seem to care about the loss of preferential treatment for Europe’s former colonies.”

“We need to sensitize them too about the fallouts, because Europe did not take us seriously enough when we first warned many years ago of the disastrous consequences for our economies of the new trading arrangements and the impacts of the new terms of global trade,” said Dr Anthony.

Prime Minister Anthony is due to return home over the weekend.

In his absence, the Acting Prime Minister is Hon. Philip J. Pierre.



Hon. Dr. Kenny Davis Anthony

EU FINANCING FOR REGION’S DISTANCE EDUCATION NETWORK



EU Commission delegate Per Eklund and Caricom Secretary General Edwin Carrington signing the agreement

Tertiary institutions in Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) will be brought into the fold of distance and e-learning via the Caribbean Knowledge and Learning Network (CKLN) through the financial assistance of the European Union (EU).

On Wednesday 3 May, CARICOM Secretary-General and Secretary-General of the Caribbean Forum of ACP States (CARIFORUM), H.E. Edwin Carrington signed a Financing Agreement with the European Commission Delegate to Guyana H.E Per Eklund, in the amount of Euros 2M. The grant funds will facilitate the provision of affordable distance education for CARICOM nationals.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Secretary-General Carrington said the CKLN represented a major step in “ad-

ressing and solving the problems of connectivity in and outside the Region and access to quality education by all CARICOM Citizens.” He noted that quality education was also critical to the development of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), the Caribbean’s attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the building and sustaining of a Caribbean information society.

In his remarks, Ambassador Eklund said, “the Caribbean, like many other regions, has to educate and to keep its human resource base, as well as to attract trained nationals back, if it is to develop economically and to have a trained, competitive labour force. It needs this to enable it to face the challenges of the 21st century and to be able to react to the dynamics of the global knowledge economy. The CKLN, for

which we are hereby granting €2M, is in this context an extremely important Institution.”

The CKLN was launched in 2004 at the CARICOM Heads of Government Meeting in Grenada by Dr. the Hon Keith Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada and CARICOM Head of Government with responsibility for Science and Technology.

The main objectives of the CKLN are to enhance the competitiveness and productivity of the Region’s labour force by developing human capacity to access and utilise affordable Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Additionally, the project will address the need to upgrade and diversify the skills and knowledge of the Caribbean people by improving the technical environment and ability of institutions to deliver cost-efficient

and effective ICT-based education and training. Thirdly, the project is designed to significantly enhance the region’s ability to access international communication networks cost effectively. In addition to working with tertiary institutions across the Region, the CKLN offers further education opportunities to underserved communities: adults who work fulltime, women at home in charge of their families, and the populations of small island states– people who have little or no access to tertiary education facilities.

Activities completed under the project to date include institutional strengthening of eleven (11) tertiary institutions in nine (9) Member States, a labour market survey, policy workshops and the training of key personnel in the Education sector. Contact: piu@caricom.

Saint Lucia and UK Agree to Transfer Prisoners

The Governments of Saint Lucia and UK Governments have concluded arrangements to introduce a bilateral Prisoner Transfer Agreement to allow nationals of each country convicted in the other to serve their sentences in their home state.

The agreement will allow British nationals serving a prison sentence in Saint Lucia and Saint Lucian nationals serving prison sentences in the UK to serve out their sentences in their home country – once all parties agree to the transfer.

The agreement encourages social rehabilitation of prisoners by giving them the opportunity to complete their sentences in their own countries.

For example, it will allow British nationals serving sentences at the Borelands Correctional Facility in Saint Lucia to complete their prison terms in the UK. Vice versa, it will also allow for Saint Lucians serving sentences in the UK to complete their terms in their home country.

However, it also contains safeguards to prevent the transfer of prisoners, if doing so would impact on national security, which is an important point for



Senator Petrus Compton

the Saint Lucian Government.

But one of its stronger points is that the agreement also promotes the rehabilitation of prisoners by allowing them to serve their sentence in a more familiar environment, where they can have better access to visits by family

and friends.

Minister of External Affairs Senator Petrus Compton and UK Foreign Office Minister Lord Triesman signed the agreement on April 27 in Barbados and it will come into effect as soon as both countries complete the legal and constitutional pro-

cesses needed to bring it into law.

Resident British High Commissioner in Saint Lucia Kelvin Green said after it was announced that he was “pleased that the agreement is being put into place.”

“It is also a step forward in the humane treatment of offenders by allowing them to serve their sentences in their home country,” said Mr Green.

The agreement was announced one day after Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony met Baroness Patricia Scotland, Minister of State for Criminal Justice at the British Home Office, last Tuesday (May 2).

The Baroness called on Dr Anthony at the Office of the Prime Minister for discussions on issues of mutual security interests to Saint Lucia and the United Kingdom.

She discussed with the Prime Minister, among other things, a range of issues related to matters of Security, Justice, Law and Order, where the UK and Saint Lucia share a number of common problems and concerns.

While here, the Baroness also called on Attorney General Philip La Corbinere

PM and Baroness Discuss Saint Lucia-UK Security Cooperation

Just one week after the Governor General disclosed new security initiatives in her annual Throne Speech, Prime Minister Dr Kenny D. Anthony discussed Law and Order issues with a top representative of the British Government.

Baroness Patricia Scotland, Minister of State for Criminal Justice at the British Home Office, last Tuesday (May 2) called on Dr Anthony at the Office of the Prime Minister for discussions on issues of mutual security interests to Saint Lucia and the United Kingdom. She also called on Attorney General Philip La Corbinere.

Baroness Scotland, accompanied by British High Commissioner Duncan Taylor and Resident British Commissioner to Saint Lucia Kelvin Green, came here following the April 26-28 UK/Caribbean Ministerial Forum in Barbados.

She discussed with the Prime Minister, among other things, a range of issues related to matters of Security, Justice, Law and Order, where the UK and Saint Lucia share a number of common problems and concerns.

In particular, she highlighted the work being done in the UK to reform the Criminal Justice System, where a National Criminal Justice Board has ensured a more united and concerted approach to addressing problems in the system.

The Prime Minister and the Baroness also discussed methods to deal with domestic violence.

The meeting came a week after Her Excellency the Governor General of Saint Lucia, Dame Pearlette Louisy, disclosed in Her Throne Speech to a Joint Session of the Saint Lucia Parliament that the Government is seeking British support for local Law and Order efforts.

Dame Pearlette explained that in view of the security requirements for Cricket World Cup 2007 and the rising levels of violent crime, Government had approached the UK Government to assist with recruiting seven highly experienced former British police officers, on a two-year contractual basis, to serve in the Royal Saint Lucia Police Force.

These officers, the Governor General said, “will be essential elements of the Government’s strategy to build capacity and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Force.”

The recruited British officers, Dame Pearlette explained, “will help enhance local intelligence capacity, develop a research and development capability, improve public relations and relations



Baroness Patricia Scotland

with the community, introduce better management systems and processes, make better use of management information and provide more effective and comprehensive training.”

“Equally important,” she added, “they will assist the Government in its police reform agenda, which will include an anti-corruption programme.”

She said “new and additional posts will be created” to accommodate these officers.

Based on discussions with the UK Government, Dame Pearlette said, the recruited officers will be assigned responsibilities in Crime and Intelligence, Management of Professional Standards (including Anti-Corruption), Crime Analysis and Crime Management, Research and Development, Investigations and Community Policing.

Saint Lucia is the third country in the region, after Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, to make use of the expertise of British police officers within the national police force.

The initiative has been welcomed by the business and tourism industry in Saint Lucia.



The meeting between Prime Minister Anthony and Baroness Scotland. In attendance British Government officials

As the BCG BOASTS NEW FEATURES

HISTORIC MATCH AT BEAUSEJOUR

On Wednesday, St. Lucia’s Beausejour Cricket ground was the venue for a historic occasion in West Indies cricket history as the West Indies and

Zimbabwe played the first official day- night 50 over cricket match at the Ground. The match was also used by the local organising committee of

the 2007 Cricket World Cup to put in place and test some new features for the hosting of the World Cup at the BCG. Nationwide brings you pictures

of some of these additions. By the way, West Indies won that historic game by 10 wickets replying to Zimbabwe’s 152 all out without losing a wicket.



The Lights



The new replay screen



The new pronenade from the Bella Rosa Road to the Ground



Security checks



The party stand



Action from the match: Zimbabwe at the crease



The new Venue Operations Centre



A section of the grounds with the replay screen



THIS WEEK ON NTN

RSL joins NTN for PM’s Appearance on Nation Beat

Having presented the unprecedented billion dollar Estimates of Expenditure recently, Prime Minister of Saint Lucia, Hon. Dr. Kenny Anthony will present St. Lucians with the opportunity to quizz him on issues of concern to them. The prime minister will engage the public on many matters, including the upcoming World Cup Cricket. In that regard, an update will be provided on the country’s preparations to host the world’s second biggest sporting event. Issues pertinent to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, will come up for analysis. Banana recovery projects geared towards enhancing the qualitative and quantitative output of banana farmers will be evaluated. In addition, crime prevention measures currently being undertaken by government and many other issues of importance to the socio-economic progress of the country will be discussed. In any event, the main purpose of the programme is to allow citizens to dialogue with the prime minister. As such, the direction of the programme, more than less, will be dictated by issues raised by callers to the programme. The live 2 hour call-in programme begins at 8 p.m. on Tuesday May 16th on NTN with Radio St. Lucia carrying the broadcast simultaneously.

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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