

\$107 MILLION BANANA ASSISTANCE



NEVER BEFORE SO MUCH SUPPORT See page 3



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SAINT LUCIAN AUTHORS RELEASE BOOK ON ELECTIONS

The University of the West Indies has saluted the intellectual contributions of two Saint Lucian scholars who on Saturday May 20th launched their new publication “General Elections and Voting in the English Speaking Caribbean 1992 to 2005.” The launching ceremony took place at the University Centre on Morne Fortune, with University Resident Tutor Matthew Roberts applauding the work of the authors, former lecturer in the Department of Government, Sociology and Social Work at the Cave Hill Campus Dr. Tennyson Joseph and Cynthia Barrow-Giles Head of this Department. Dr. Don D Marshall of the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, described the book as an analytical and insightful work.

“Let me first say that the production of any scholarly work should be greeted with celebration and praise and I want to begin by saying we should begin this fine piece of scholarship. It is pioneering in character, even though as it is, they drew inspiration from the work that had been done by Pat Emmanuel; on its own terms, it has to be recognised as part of the pioneering work of the late Pat Emmanuel.”

Co - author of the text Cynthia Bar-



Dr. Tennyson Joseph

row Giles said the book addressed many of the burning issues of the day and captures both established and new political trends.

“We also felt when we spoke with Ian Randall about two years ago that there were significant developments taking place in the Caribbean in terms



Dr. Cynthia Barrow-Giles

of democracy and governance and that some of those things needed to be included in this work. And two of the things we felt very strongly about were the need to discuss the lack of transparency, in terms of the finances of political parties and that political party financing had become very important,

not just in the Caribbean, but internationally and the Caribbean countries needed to look very seriously at the system that we presently employ because we felt that it was very opaque and that there were in fact possibilities of the system being invaded in a way we would not wish to have; and so therefore some accountability and some transparency were important. So we felt it important for us to track what was taking place in the Caribbean.”

The book also discusses Low Voter Turn Out and Voter Apathy, Integrity Legislation and Women in Politics. Ms. Barrow Giles singled out the gender imbalance in Caribbean Politics as being of particular interest.

“Beyond that precisely because we have concerns about the gender imbalance in politics, in economics and in society generally, or social systems generally, we also felt it important for us to improve the initial work which Patrick Emmanuel had done on Gender in the Caribbean. So what you will note if you look at the Pat Emmanuel’s original document you will note that in fact that hasn’t been a significant presence of women in parliaments throughout the region”.

The scope of the book extends to several territories of the region including the OECS, Guyana, Anguilla, Montserrat, Belize and Bahamas.

NEMO CALLS FOR BUSINESS DISASTER PLANS

In what has become an annual event the NEMO (The National Emergency Organization) Secretariat is triggering its National call for Business Disaster Plans.

According to NEMO, Disaster Management is not only about hurricanes, but it is also about securing the corporate activities of businesses. Statistics shows that fifty percent (50%) of companies that suffer an internal disaster (e.g. fire, computer virus attacks) do not reopen for business. This is mainly as a result of the absence of a plan to continue operations after the event.

Additionally, in light of the implementation of the CSME together with the fact that many companies trade on the Security Exchange, it has now become necessary for businesses to assure their investors that there are procedures in place to secure their business. One of the essential things to have in place is a “Continuity of Operations Plan”, meaning “Continuing a business after a hazard has impacted”. The objective is to introduce Disaster Management as a component of Business Planning.

NEMO, however does not focus its attention on commercial houses only. “Every intuition has an obligation to ensure that its people and property

are taken care of.” Dawn French, Director of NEMO says. “This is why we have worked with Embassies, Churches, Press-Schools, Farmers and Boat Owners.” In the coming months NEMO will work with the Airports as it prepares for the annual simulation as well as hospitals and Banks. It is the mandate of NEMO and; the moral and financial obligation to be prepared for what may come.

In light of the above, and in keeping with the Employees [Occupational Health and Safety] Act No. 10 of 1985 and a number of other Statutory Instruments NEMO repeats its call for Disaster Plans to be submitted.

Hurricane Ivan in Grenada, the Dominica Earthquake of 2004 together with the Guyana Floods of 2005 illustrate in a tangible manner the need for a Continuity of Operations Plan.

Miss French lamented the fact that too many small businesses are not taking the threat of losing their business to a disaster seriously.

Should assistance be required for the writing or reviewing such a plan the NEMO Secretariat stands ready to assist.

NEMO may be contacted at (758) 452-3802.

Suriname to receive Flood Assistance from Caricom

The Eighteenth Meeting of the Caribbean Community Council of Ministers got underway in Georgetown, Guyana on Friday 19 May, with Trinidad and Tobago announcing its willingness to assist Suriname in the wake of heavy flooding in that Member State of the Community.

The Council, comprising Ministers responsible for CARICOM Affairs, was set to finalise a range of issues which are likely to come before the Conference of Heads of Government on 3-6 July in St Kitts and Nevis at its 27th Regular Meeting.

At the opening ceremony of the one-day Council Meeting, Chairman of the Community Council, Senator Knowlson Gift, Foreign Minister of Trinidad and Tobago took the opportunity to express sympathy to the government and people of Suriname as they combatted the effects of the recent severe flooding in that country. He announced that his country was prepared to assist that

CARICOM Member State with similar equipment to that provided to Guyana in January 2005 when that country also suffered from disastrous floods.

The Minister noted that the Community, through the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) was involved in providing assistance to Suriname.

The Trinidad and Tobago Foreign Minister gave an overview of matters which he said the Council hoped to address. The Chairman said he looked forward to receiving an update on the situation in Haiti following last Sunday’s inauguration of President Rene Preval.

Deputy Secretary-General of CARICOM, Her Excellency Ambassador Lolita Applewhaite emphasised the importance of the Council as the second highest decision-making body in the Community. Ambassador Applewhaite also referred to the Council’s responsibilities as the body to which all other ministerial organs reported and pointed

out that within the reports to be considered by the Meeting lay “matters which directly affect the well-being of our citizens such as health, education, employment, the last of which is affected by our trading relations within and outside the Community.”

In that regard, she alluded to the success of last week’s two summit meetings in Europe, CARICOM-Spain and the European Union/Latin America and the Caribbean Summits, during which the Community received indications of strong support for its development plans.

The Deputy Secretary-General noted in particular that Spain had signalled its interest in joining the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) through its announcement of a contribution to the Bank’s Special Development Fund and the willingness expressed in both meetings by the Europeans to consider support for the regional Development Fund, a key element of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).



Edwin Carrington
Secretary-General CARICOM

These indications, she said, were timely, given the current pressures faced by the Region in the aftermath of adverse decisions to the critical agriculture sector by the EU and the World Trade Organisation. The Deputy Secretary-General noted that “effective transformation of this sector is absolutely necessary if we are to survive globally.”

Government's Unprecedented Support For The Banana Industry



Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony

When the St. Lucia Labour Party government was elected to office in 1997, it assumed the reins of power at a time of crisis and turmoil in the local banana industry occasioned by industrial action by farmers for control of the industry and declining banana prices and production levels. The decline had partly been initiated as a result of challenges by the United States and Latin American countries at the World Trade Organization to the preferential regime under which Caribbean bananas were exported to Europe. The eventual success of these challenges accelerated the decline and the Labour Party government was faced with the challenge of trying to rescue an industry that was the mainstay of the St. Lucian economy. The Government has poured an unprecedented level of financial support to the industry in an attempt to stabilize it and turn it around but has been accused by its opponents of being responsible for killing the industry. In his 2006 – 2007 Budget Address, Prime Minister Dr. Kenny Anthony responded to the those critics by reviewing the level of support that his Government has rendered to the industry. The following is the excerpt of his Budget Address on the Banana Industry and on other initiatives to be taken to facilitate agricultural development in the country.

Managing Adjustments In Agriculture

Mr. Speaker, seldom has a Budget Statement been presented in the last nine (9) years when there has not been some mention of support for the banana industry. Indeed, I have stated on many occasions that this administration has extended greater assistance to banana farmers than any other Government in history.

Review of Government Support to the Banana Industry

Perhaps this is as good a time as any to review the level of support that we have provided to the banana industry since coming into office in 1997: (1) This Government wrote off \$44 million of debt owed by the former St. Lucia Banana Growers Association (SLBGA), followed by the forgiveness of \$700,000 of outstanding trade payables owed by the SLBGA; (2) To facilitate the emergence of an unencumbered private banana company, fully owned by the farmers of this country, we secured \$3.65 million from the European Commission for the retrenchment of SLBGA staff; (3) \$16.3 million of European Commission grant funds were used to fund the banana production recovery plan (PRP), which was aimed at arresting the decline in banana production and farmer migration that had occurred prior to this Government's assumption of office in 1997; (4) In order to stimulate improvements in the post-harvest handling of bananas and improve the overall quality of the fruit

reaching the United Kingdom, Government constructed three modern Inland Reception and Distribution Centres (IRDC) at a cost of \$12.5 million; (5) Between October 2000 and March 2001, \$2.5 million was provided to fund Leaf Spot control; (6) At the end of 2000, \$1.4 million was provided to the banana industry to facilitate a reduction in the price of banana cartons by \$1.00; (7) In April 2001, \$3.5 million was made available by the Government to the Banana Industry Trust for the establishment of a Revolving Input Credit Scheme; This was supplemented by a further amount of \$3 million in 2005; (8) Government sought and obtained special leave from the European Commission to utilize funds under the 1995 STABEX Transfer, totalling approximately \$2.5 million, to finance Leaf Spot control activities between April 2001 and December 2001; (9) Over \$20 million was mobilized under the European Union's Special Framework of Assistance 1999 and 2000 programmes for the banana industry, primarily to allow for the installation of off-farm drainage and irrigation infrastructure in Roseau, Cul-de-Sac, Mabouya Valley, Canelles and Marquis; and (10) This Government has foregone significant revenue from import duties and taxes by providing 100 percent exemption of Import Duty and Consumption Tax to banana farmers on production inputs.

Despite all of this assistance, there are still some who, for selfish and short-sighted political gain, would have us believe that this Government has "killed" the banana industry in Saint Lucia. I am sure that there are many other industries that would beg a Government to 'kill' them with over \$107 million in direct assistance and millions more in indirect support over a nine-year period. But some persons have old habits of riding the backs of our farmers for personal gain and for them these old habits die hard.

The fact remains, Mr. Speaker, that the banana industry throughout the English-speaking Caribbean has taken a beating, and one only has to look at what has happened to production in Jamaica, Grenada, Dominica, and St. Vincent to understand that declining production is a fact of life. Grenada has abandoned the banana industry. Production has declined in every single island. In fact, declines have been sharper and more severe in neighbouring countries.

So, if this Government has killed the banana industry in Saint Lucia, then it has also killed the industry in Dominica, St. Vincent, Grenada and even as far as Jamaica.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, to hide our own shortcomings, we try to point out the deficiencies, real or imagined, in others and this appears to be the strategy being applied by our 'old friends with no ideas'. We all know the Kweyol saying: "Pwan douvan avan douvan pwanou".

Mr. Speaker, true to form and consistent with our philosophy of doing all within our power to protect our banana farmers and give our industry every chance to survive in an increasingly harsh and competitive global marketplace, this year we will extend further support to the banana industry.

More Support for Farm Irrigation

Those of us familiar with the banana industry will know that one of the serious constraints to profitability is the cyclical pattern of rain-fed production. Simply put, when it rains we get more production than we can market profitably, and during the dry season we do not get the volumes that the market is demanding. We have high volumes when market prices are depressed and insufficient production when market prices are favourable. This has been a feature of the banana industry for decades, yet nothing was done about it until this Government took office in 1997.

So far, using the provisions of the 1999 and 2000 SFA allocations, off-farm irrigation and drainage infrastructure has been

installed in Roseau and Cul-de-Sac. However, we have found that although farmers are interested in the possibilities and opportunities that on-farm irrigation provides, they are slow to make the investment due to diminished cash flows and heavy debt obligations. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I propose to make available \$1.4 million to fund the installation of on-farm irrigation equipment in the areas where the off-farm infrastructure has been established. The Banana Emergency Recovery Unit (BERU), which will work in tandem with the Banana Industry Trust (BIT) in executing this programme, has estimated that there will be a 30 percent increase in production in the areas that will benefit from this infrastructure.



In order to provide this project with the breathing space that it will require to succeed in the long term, and more importantly, allow the beneficiary farmers some level of initial relief, the Ministry of Agriculture, BERU and the BIT will collaborate with WIBDECO, through a Memorandum of Understanding, to provide support to these farmers for the costs of diesel, oil, and equipment maintenance. In keeping with the dictates of the European Union market and the supermarkets to which we supply our bananas, the assistance provided under this project will be targeted at those farmers who are certified as EUREPGAP/Fairtrade compliant, have a farm size of a minimum of 4 acres, and have maintained a minimum historical production over the past two years of 10 Large Carton Equivalents (LCE) per week per acre.

We are confident that with this initiative, together with the recently announced support from WIBDECO for Leaf Spot Control and fertilizer subsidy, Saint Lucia's banana industry will receive the assistance that it requires to maintain market share in the United Kingdom. *Never before, Mr. Speaker, has so much been done for the banana industry. These are the indisputable facts.*

Line of Credit to Facilitate Agricultural Development

In 2005, Mr. Speaker, Cabinet approved a generous package of incentives to the agriculture sector in an effort to spur further activity in non-traditional agriculture. It is important to note that the new agriculture incentive regime encourages the formation of farmers associations and provides 100 percent waiver of import duties on a broad range of farming equipment and inputs to those associations. Farmers who do not belong to such cooperatives or associations are entitled to a 60 percent waiver of duties associated with the importation of farming equipment and inputs.

Mr. Speaker, while these programs have had some impact, the decline in the agriculture sector and in particular, the volume

of bananas exported have continued. The performance of banana agriculture is largely related to the harsh and uncompromising nature of the external trading environment. The non-traditional agriculture sector has been affected by weak marketing and institutional arrangements and limited access to capital.

Developments on the international banana market signal the need to strengthen domestic linkages between tourism and agriculture. As the preferential trading framework that we operate within is phased out, we must become creative and explore all avenues to improve value added within the agriculture sector. The growing tourism industry presents an opportunity for participation of the local farming community in that sector through significant absorption of domestically produced crops and other agricultural products.

Mr. Speaker, while the supermarkets and hotels in Saint Lucia have been purchasing from our local farmers, several factors have militated against further expansion of that trade. Access to finance continues to be one of the main factors impacting on the development of the sector. Commercial banks and other financial institutions assign very high risk to agricultural activities and are very reluctant to lend to farmers. For instance, in 2005 commercial bank credit to the agriculture sector declined by 7.0 percent and represented a mere 1.2 percent of total credit to the economy. Similarly, Mr. Speaker, commercial bank credit to agriculture declined by 3.2 percent in 2004, representing 2.0 percent of total credit.

As a result of rising oil prices, the cost of inputs has increased, thus impacting on the competitiveness of the domestic agriculture sector. The absence of formal marketing arrangements and weak farmers' associations have also had a dilatory effect on output of the agriculture sector.

Mr. Speaker, farmers have been complaining about a very strange practice by hotels in Saint Lucia. The complaints suggest that some hotels have been utilizing a 90-day payment cycle rather than a 30-day cycle to pay farmers for their produce. This practice places further strain on the financial affairs of farmers. Our Government feels that it is grossly unfair that the hotels, which in many cases have been granted generous incentive packages, should withhold payments to farmers with minimal sources of income for a full 90 days. To the credit of the St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association, an effort has been made in recent times to engage the farmers in discussion to arrive at a mutually satisfactory solution.

Our Government recognizes that it cannot intervene directly to ameliorate all of these problems. However, we are of the view that the provision of appropriate incentives to relevant institutions can ensure that private sector institutions and the market produce outcomes that will support greater integration between the tourism and agriculture sectors. Mr. Speaker, in the light of this, Government proposes to implement the following initiatives during financial year 2006/07: (1) A tax credit system to commercial banks that will encourage growth in credit to the agriculture sector. This credit system will be implemented over a three-year period. The Government will exempt 75 percent of interest income earned on agricultural loans from payment of Corporation Taxes. This will be phased down to 50 percent in 2007 and 33 percent in 2008. (2) A line of credit of EC\$2 million to the newly established Chamber of Agriculture to facilitate development of the industry. The line of credit will be utilized for the following purposes: (a) To establish a warehousing, sorting, packaging and storage facility; and (b) To establish a financing mechanism that will allow the entity to operate as an intermediary between farmers/farmers associations and the hotel sector.

Mr. Speaker, I expect that these new initiatives, coupled with the existing Agriculture Incentive Regime, will assist in strengthening inter-sector linkages, thereby spreading the benefits of the tourism industry to farmers and rural communities.

ALMOND MORGAN BAY HOTEL OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED



PM Anthony unveiling the plaque to open the hotel



Mr. Ralph Taylor



Minister of Tourism of Barbados

The Almond Morgan Bay Resort which has been in operation in St. Lucia for six months was formally opened on Saturday May 20th 2006 at a gala ceremony attended by top tourism officials from St. Lucia and Barbados. The property, which is regarded as an important asset in the development of the island's tourism industry, is part of a string of hotels owned by the Almond Resorts chain of Barba-

dos. The decision by the company to expand to Saint Lucia has been considered not only as a subscription to the Caribbean Single Market, but as a reality of Caribbean integration.

Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Kenny Anthony, who delivered the feature Address at the resort's launching, lauded the company's efforts to have Saint Lucians trained at Almond properties in Barbados. After six months in operation, guest appreciation at Almond

Morgan Bay is said to be above 90%, a figure on par with top world resorts. Chairman of Almond Resorts Ralph Taylor has attributed this achievement to the resort's staff.

"Employees worked beyond the call of duty—day and night, in sun and rain, to achieve the objective. I can only tell you that I have never seen so many people run around in mud and pouring rain, trying to get a hotel to open in what was an impossible time frame," the celebrated

hotelier said.

Taylor expressed his gratitude for Government's input by way of concessions and facilitation of the resort's smooth entry into St. Lucia. He described Saint Lucia as being more than just pitons and the most logical choice for investing outside of Barbados. In 2005 Almond Resorts took over from the St. James Club, formerly Wyndam Morgan Bay, which had put the property up for sale.

ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE DR. KENNY D. ANTHONY ON THE OCCASION OF THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE ALMOND MORGAN BAY RESORT THE TOURISM SECTOR: ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ECONOMY

Expectations and Performance of Tourism

The tourism industry is poised for further increase despite persistent threats imposed by rising oil prices and terrorism. Global trends in tourism are positive, and expectations are that Saint Lucia and the rest of the Caribbean region will continue to harness positive returns from tourism into the foreseeable future.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is against this background of an optimistic outlook for the tourism industry that we have gathered together to celebrate the official opening of the Almond Morgan Bay Resort.

This is a momentous occasion for the Almond Resorts chain for it marks the expansion of the hotel brand into the CSME arena. I am pleased to welcome the Almond Resorts Chain to Saint Lucia and I derive much pleasure from the fact that Almond Resorts is an authentic Caribbean brand. This demonstrates to the rest of the world the ability of our Caribbean entrepreneurs to achieve world-class standards and compete internationally in the tourism industry.

I am very happy to celebrate the opening of this resort, and the improvement and expansion of this specific property. It is indeed a joyous occasion for the Almond Team, for the people of Saint Lucia, and for the Caribbean region.

In 1991, the first Almond Beach Club was opened in St James, Barbados, having been acquired from the former Divi Hotel. In the intervening years, a second property, the Almond Beach Village, was established in St Peter, Barbados.

Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Company, Mr Ralph Wendal Taylor, is to be personally commended for his vision and expertise in the achievements of this company. Ralph Taylor initially established himself in the area of

hospitality accounting and financing and took the bold step to become a professional hotelier. He is credited with introducing the all-inclusive resort concept to Barbados and proving its success. Today, Ralph Taylor is demonstrating that Almond is well on its way to becoming a CSME Brand.

I am aware that Mr Taylor's interests are not limited to his personal business. He is involved in tourism at the national and regional organizational levels. He has served on several national tourism associations in Barbados, and he is a long-standing Director and a former President of the Caribbean Hotel Association.

It is an asset for Saint Lucia's tourism industry to have someone of the calibre and stature of Ralph Taylor as an operator as we continue to chart the development course for the industry. Ralph Taylor has proved to be a reliable partner of the people of Saint Lucia.

This evening's celebration marks the culmination of months of hard work and planning, to bring this hotel plant into operation. The timing and completion of the project appears to be perfect; ahead of the dreaded hurricane season and the anticipated Cricket World Cup inflow of visitors. I wish to salute Mr Ralph Taylor and his competent team and I personally congratulate all who have been involved, from planning to completion, for a job well done.

For every thing there is a season ... seedtime and harvest

I wish to place this occasion in the context of our overall national objectives and to focus our attention on this subject for a while.

As a nation, Saint Lucia has invested a great deal in tourism over the past decade, and in recent months, we have intensified our efforts to grasp the opportunities presented to us by the Cricket

World Cup event, which is planned for next year, 2007.

Our goals and aspirations for tourism do not rest solely on the Cricket World Cup, but we are looking beyond, to a vibrant and sustainable industry that can continue to grow and diversify and produce meaningful contributions to our national economic development.

This is what it is all about. The ultimate end to all our efforts and endeavours, is that the tourism industry impels the socio-economic development of our country.

At the policy level, the tourism industry has benefited from reforms in the global arena, which have created a platform for investment facilitation and growth despite increasing international anxiety, turbulence and security threats.

Ironically, it is evident that the same global economic policy changes that have caused the demise of the banana export industry have nourished the tourism industry and caused it to thrive.

Integration of the international financial markets and regularization of financial management practices at the global level have resulted in increased foreign direct investment flows into tourism, while at the same time, the liberalization of international trade and commercial services has eroded the preferential markets for agricultural products such as sugar and bananas.

The differentiating factor is that tourism services are more amenable to investment by transnational corporations and the achievement of international competitiveness due to size of operations, which makes economies of scale transferable across borders. By contrast, our small size, our mountainous terrain and land tenure pattern generally inhibit large-scale agricultural operations and makes this primary industry less attrac-

tive for foreign and domestic investment.

Consequently, we have witnessed a trend in tourism's growth and economic significance over the past decade coinciding with the decline of the agriculture sector. The result is that tourism presently leads the way as the largest contributor to the Gross Domestic Product and to national employment. In 2005, the Tourism Sector surpassed the Agricultural Sector as the main provider of jobs.

The empirical evidence shows that in 1995 tourism had just barely eclipsed agriculture in terms of its contribution to the GDP; Agriculture accounted for 10.58% of GDP and tourism accounted for 10.62%.

Five years later in 2000, agriculture accounted for 6.94% of GDP while tourism's share had increased to 12.65%

Another five years onwards in 2005, Agriculture's share of the GDP had further contracted to 3.36 % and tourism accounted for 13.55 %. In 1995 Agriculture's share of GDP was 10.58%; in 2000, 6.94%; in 2005, 3.36%. For tourism its share in 1995 was 10.62%; in 2000, 12.65%; in 2005, 13.55%.

I must also emphasise that the tourism industry is also leading the way in attracting vital investment capital into the economy.

Over the past decade, the tourism industry expanded significantly, both in terms of the value of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and also in visitor arrivals and expenditure. Both government and the private sector have played their roles in investing in the industry.

Government investment in tourism has been significant and in a variety of ways - through selective financial input and guarantee, through marketing and institutional support, human resource development and capacity building, and

through the provision of liberal fiscal incentives and trade concessions and infra-structural developments.

In my 2005-2006 Budget Address, I reported that approximately EC\$1.8 billion in investment was earmarked for tourism developments (including the upgrading of this property). This level of investment was equated to approximately 142 percent of the country’s annual Gross Domestic Product.

The combined investments of the public and private sectors can be likened to seeds sowed towards future harvests in tourism. Considering the scale of the investments recently made and given the prognosis for growth and general optimistic expectations, one anticipates bountiful harvests in the sector.

Now more than ever, we must carefully readjust our socio-economic policies and strategies to ensure that opportunities for growth and development that redound from the sector, are optimized while they accrue.

To whom much is given, much is expected

Amidst such high expectations for the tourism industry, we must acknowledge and be thankful for the Almighty God’s bountiful blessings. We must also do our

en to be a viable focal point for our diversification efforts for many sound reasons. Some of the more critical considerations to justify the tourism focus relate to: (1) The potential that tourism offers for increasing employment opportunities, and spreading tourism benefits to a broader cross-section of society; (2) The many opportunities for diversification of the tourism product; (3) The ability to marry other goals such as preserving national heritage and the environment; and (4) The ability of the tourism sector to influence growth in other economic sectors through inter-sector linkages.

To sum up the position, Government has expended a great deal of resources in tourism with the intention that the tourism industry will generate significant beneficial economic impacts at all levels.

Considering the fact that for more than a decade tourism has maintained the position as the leading economic sector (in terms of its contribution to the GDP), it is useful for us to take a moment to ponder the following questions:

How much do tourists spend in the different districts/ communities throughout the country?

What proportion of sales by local businesses is due to tourism?

The Unbalanced Growth Theory

The current economic realities facing Saint Lucia is akin to what is referred to in the economics literature as the “unbalanced growth theory”. Unbalanced Growth Theory (was propounded by Hirscham, “The Strategy of Economic Development; 1958” and) rests on the assumption that policy makers can select and create a lead sector in the economy, through the injection of investment and capital resources and other policy support measures. The lead sector recognizes backward linkages whereby the inputs which are used in this lead sector must be produced by other domestic industries – the lead sector also creates demand from other sectors and industries. Within this economic model, the lead sector also recognizes forward linkages emanating from it, whereby the products produced by that sector are used as inputs for other industries.

State support is seen as necessary to initiate large-scale investment in a leading sector. It is thought that such support would create the necessary external economies to induce supplying client industries, which would in turn stimulate a secondary wave of investment and entrepreneurship.

sation of liberalized international trade, the tourism sector has clearly emerged as the leading economic sector.

There is clearly little to be gained from engaging in lengthy debates about whether Government should support tourism, or whether tourism should be supported more or less than agriculture (or some other productive sector).

While the theoretical analyses continue even now, there is reasonable consensus on the key determinants of growth in the context of a tourism-led economy. The key policy prescriptions that we can effectively implement to charter a positive development course include the following:

(1) Implementation of effective strategies to ensure a continued high level of investment capital flows into the tourism sector. Investment capital is the fuel that generated expansion in the lead sector;

(2) Constantly creating, expanding and strengthening the linkages between the tourism sector and other sectors of the economy and the ancillary services to tourism. This is critical to ensure that the lead sector truly leads. That is, that growth in the lead sector creates significant direct, indirect and induced effects in sales, incomes and employment with-



Professor Hilary Beckles Cave Hill, Barbados



St. Lucia’s Tourism Minister, Philip Pierre (L) and Mrs. Berthia Parle President CHA

part as entrepreneurs and policy makers to ensure that the anticipated benefits of tourism are wisely managed.

I therefore propose to use this celebratory occasion to examine the role of tourism in the macroeconomic context and to contemplate our collective responsibilities for the prudent management of the sector in order to achieve our common development goals

As the leading sector in the economy, there are many serious implications for tourism, both in terms of its roles and responsibilities. I have pointed out that this is not technically speaking a new role for the tourism industry, for it is ten years ongoing since the sector has shown such prominence. Admittedly, the first five years (1995 – 2000) were relatively “tumultuous”, as the sector, and by extension the national economy, experienced the difficult processes of adjustment to the new international trade order and its immediate effects on the banana industry.

Our initial response to these economic shocks could be described as “stemming the pain” rather than “consolidating the gains”. Essentially, at that time, we placed emphasis on implementing social recovery programmes to soften the impact of the decline of incomes from agriculture.

In the last five years, the Government of Saint Lucia has placed equal emphasis on economic diversification programmes to build new and sustainable alternative livelihoods (especially in the rural communities). The tourism industry has prov-



Government Ministers from L-R Ignatius Jean, Menissa Rambally and Philip Pierre

What proportion of the food requirements of hotels is supplied by local producers?

How much income do tourists generate for households and businesses in the different geographic areas?

How many jobs does tourism support in the main districts/ areas?

How much tax revenue is generated by tourism?

By considering these basic questions we are, in essence, conducting a rudimentary economic impact assessment of the tourism industry.

Literally speaking, an “unbalanced economy” does not sound as though it is something to be wished for. However, for small open economies, we do not even have the latitude to choose to be “unbalanced”. Changes in the international economic environment inadvertently dictate the economic realities that we must contend with, and lead sectors tend to emerge in response to the external economic stimuli. Consequently, under previous bilateral trade arrangements, the banana export industry was the lead sector. Under the current dispen-

in the country in backward linked industries such as agriculture and manufacturing and services to tourism businesses;

(3) Productivity enhancement and capacity building to increase the rate of employment/ labour absorption.

Public Private Sector Partnership in the Tourism Led Economy

In the tourism sector-led economy, the State is increasingly subject to the same kind of efficiency pressures as private entrepreneurs, and its role is to induce rather than to repair disequilibria. There is a common interest among the public and private sector in seeking to maximize the economic returns from their tourism investments. Having sowed much into tourism, the Government and people of Saint Lucia, including the hoteliers, must justifiably expect a harvest.

The private sector must therefore play a pivotal role in pursuing the broader development goals of ensuring continued growth and sustainability of the economy.

This means the businesses in the dominant sector must actively cultivate vital inter-sector linkages with business in other sectors, both vertically (i.e. backward and forward linkages), and laterally, that will help build a more integrated and stable economy. These symbiotic business relations will serve to create secondary economic effects and sustained growth in the long term.

FEATURE ADDRESS BY CABINET SECRETARY OF SAINT LUCIA, DR. JAMES FLETCHER, TO THE XXVIII ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE CARIBBEAN CUSTOMS LAW ENFORCEMENT COUNCIL SANDALS GRANDE HOTEL, GROS ISLET

EXTENSION OF FRONTIERS TO SECURE AND FACILITATE TRADE

Start of Nationwide Story

Although our Comptroller of Customs and Excise has already welcomed you to Saint Lucia, I wish to add my own welcome to all of the participants in this 28th Conference of CCLEC. Although the timing of this Conference has caused you to miss the first day/night One Day International cricket match in the Caribbean and the 15th Saint Lucia Jazz, I am optimistic that you will still find much in Saint Lucia, outside of this Conference, to interest you.

Government of Saint Lucia Support

Mr. Chairman, let me begin my affirming the strong support of the Government of Saint Lucia for the work of the Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council. It might be an opportune moment to indicate to this Conference the initiatives that have been pursued by the Government to demonstrate that support:

Since September 1995, the Government of Saint Lucia has provided a home for the CCLEC Secretariat, and continues to facilitate the operational activities of the Secretariat;

The Government has supported the membership of the Saint Lucia Customs and Excise Department on the Executive Committee of CCLEC;

Government has never failed to respond to the requests from CCLEC to commit the resources of the Saint Lucia Customs and Excise Department to the projects and activities of CCLEC. In particular, Saint Lucia Customs continues to provide assistance with the facilitation of training for officers in other CCLEC member countries in the area of enforcement and trade;

The Government supported Saint Lucia's application to join the World Customs Organization (WCO) on 1st July, 2005, confirming our commitment to embrace the highest standards of trade facilitation and to aggressively tackle illicit trading activities. To this end, our Customs Department has signed a Letter of Intent with the WCO on the "Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade"

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to state that the Government of Saint Lucia will continue to contribute to Saint Lucia playing an active role in the work of CCLEC.

Achievements of CCLEC

In doing a little research on CCLEC, I discovered that it was established informally in the early 1970s to improve the level of cooperation and the exchange of information between its members in the Caribbean. A key pre-occupation of your work then, as it is now, was the interdiction of drugs. I also noted that in 1989, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that focused on the prevention of smuggling and other offences in the Caribbean Zone was subsequently developed, and at the last count, thirty-six (36) countries had become signatories to this MOU.

Much has happened since your early meetings three decades ago. Terms like globalisation, trade liberalization and international terrorism were virtually non-existent when you first came together as a group. Passenger and cargo travel were complicated only by the complexity of the connections that had to be made to get from Point A to Point B and not by the intense scrutiny and security checks that have now become an inescapable feature of travel. In short, the world in which we lived was vastly different then to what it is now, and similarly, the work of the Customs Officer was significantly different.

In response to this changing environment, CCLEC has itself adapted its mandate to the point where it now invests considerable effort in the training of Customs officers, the enhancement of cooperation among members, the improvement of the business systems of its members, and the development of mutual and beneficial partnerships with allied agencies. This certain-



Dr. James Fletcher

ly indicates that your Council has its eyes firmly focused on the future as it seeks to improve the resources and the operations of Customs and Excise Departments around the Caribbean.

Most, if not all of our Customs and Tax administrations in the region play a seminal role in revenue collection and protection. As a result, these organisations contribute significantly to the realization of Government's fiscal and economic policies. This role becomes even more important in transitioning economies such as ours, where the overwhelming dominance of monoculture agriculture is being replaced by services. Our revenue agencies must, therefore, function with the highest levels of efficiency and effectiveness, but they can only achieve this if carefully planned capacity building measures are rigorously pursued and the agencies themselves are driven by zealous, but sound managers, who understand the strategic imperatives that underpin successful businesses. Fortunately, in Saint Lucia, we have been blessed with two such managers – one who recently retired at a relatively young age, and the other who has confidently strode to the wicket to continue the prolific innings. Mr. Chairman, if I may be allowed to do a little trumpet blowing, I am pleased to report that the quality of the resources that can be found in all of the levels of our Customs and Excise Department indicate that in Saint Lucia, we have invested wisely in our human resources.

The Twin Goals of Security and Trade Facilitation

Mr. Chairman, to the uninitiated like me, the twin goals of increasing security and facilitating trade almost appear to be mutually exclusive. How does Customs, as the border check point, together with the Department of Immigration, increase security so that it responds adequately and effectively to the increasing sophistication of illicit traders and international terrorists, while at the same time facilitate the more efficient movement of cargo and persons?

In doing a little research on this perplexing issue, I found out that larger organizations like the U.S. Customs Service, which evolved into U.S. Customs and Border Protection, before being further assimilated into the Department for Homeland Security, have addressed this by extending their zone of security beyond the actual physical borders, so that the borders became a secondary or even a tertiary line of defence, but not the first or primary line. Initiatives such as the Container Security Initiative (CSI) and the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) are aimed at developing strategic alliances in identifying, isolating and intercepting threatening cargo, while facilitating the movement of low-risk cargo. Therefore, critical resources

are targeted at high-risk cargo.

Such an approach is logical and forms the basis of the WCO Framework of Standards to Secure and Facilitate Global Trade. That Framework, as I understand it, has four basic elements: (1) It harmonizes the advance electronic cargo information requirements on inbound, outbound and transit shipments; (2) Each country that joins the Framework commits to employing a consistent risk management approach to address security threats; (3) The Framework requires that at the reasonable request of the receiving nation, based upon a comparable risk targeting methodology, the sending nation's Customs administration will perform an outbound inspection of high-risk containers and cargo, preferably using non-intrusive detection equipment; and (4) The Framework defines benefits that Customs will provide to businesses that meet minimal supply chain security standards and best practices.

In an earlier life, I served as Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and this WCO Framework reminds me of the successful approach used in The Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade. The aim of PIC, which it often achieves, is to promote a shared responsibility between exporting and importing countries in protecting human health and the environment from the harmful effects of certain hazardous chemicals that are traded internationally.

For this approach to work effectively, Customs to Customs and Customs to Business partnerships must be established and consolidated. Mr. Chairman, while these may be time-consuming to establish, I do not believe that we have much of a choice. The illicit traders and the international terrorists operate within a highly connected and sophisticated global network. We cannot fight these threats with insular and disjointed approaches. Moreover, the scarce resources at our disposal dictate that they be used optimally and efficiently. As we enter into a Caribbean Single Market and Economy and eventually into a Free Trade Area of the Americas, trade will become even more frequent, liberal and complex. The survival of businesses will depend increasingly on gaining quick access to units of production and on efficiently disposing of the outputs of production. Customs must become a facilitator in such an environment, but it must also keep a watchful eye for those who seek to exploit the fast-paced nature of the transactions. Mr. Chairman, this is where your challenge will lie.

ICC Cricket World Cup

Our region's capacity to facilitate the rapid movement of people and cargo will be tested next year when we host the 2007 ICC Cricket World Cup. As the Chairman of Saint Lucia's Local Organising Committee for the ICC Cricket World Cup, I have more than a passing knowledge of the challenges that organizations such as our Customs Departments will face.

We will be expected to facilitate the mass movement of thousands of cricket fans from countries as diverse as Pakistan, Kenya, Ireland, Australia, The Netherlands, Scotland, Canada, Zimbabwe, South Africa, India, Bangladesh, New Zealand, England, and Sri Lanka, in addition to supporters of the West Indies and Bermuda cricket teams. Sixteen warm-up matches spread out over four countries in five days, followed by an Opening Ceremony two days later, when all sixteen teams and their supporters converge in Jamaica for one frenzied day of activity, and then to the actual tournament comprising fifty-one matches in eight (8) countries, compacted into a period spanning the 13th March to the 28th April, 2007, will fray the nerves of everyone involved. When you superimpose on this the fact that some of the airports that will be used are not currently physically capable of processing thousands of visitors over a 48 hour period, then you begin to under-

stand the enormity of the challenge. And I have not even mentioned the significant movement in cargo of player's gear, telecommunications equipment that has to be dismantled at one venue and re-assembled at another venue in another country, sometimes within a 24 to 48 hour period, video replay screens that must travel between countries, promotional material from the sponsors who have invested millions in the tournament, which must be set up at each venue, all of which overnight will become the concern of the Customs Departments. And as if that were not enough, you will have to be on the lookout for unauthorized material and merchandise that would cause Ambush Marketing infringements that could cost the region millions of dollars in fines. Mr. Chairman, we will need a significant amount of planning, capacity building and networking if we are to pull this one off, and as of today, there are only 291 days to the start of the tournament.

Mr. Chairman, I note that on Thursday, your morning session is devoted to Cricket World Cup 2007. Please do not underestimate the volume of work that is required in this area, and I hope that one of the outcomes of this meeting will be a template that will allow for the smooth facilitation of teams, officials, media and sponsors, or TOMS as they are called, and the tens of thousands of supporters, while at the same time addresses the security concerns that accompany this mega event.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by stating how pleased I am to have participated in this Opening Ceremony. I am convinced that Customs Departments have a significant role to play in economic development and in national security, and I am heartened that CCLEC is playing its part in coordinating activities in these areas.

Your task over the next few months will be extremely demanding, but I have little doubt that CCLEC and the national Customs Departments will rise admirably to the challenge and will play their part in ensuring that we host "the best Cricket World Cup ever", thereby allowing our countries and our region to reap the maximum possible economic benefit from the event.

It is a bit unfortunate that the public does not always appreciate the tremendous value of Customs to our society, and I wish to encourage you to redouble your efforts at public education and sensitization.

In Saint Lucia, our Customs and Excise Department has embarked on a mini reform to upgrade its standards. It has chosen the theme "Making it happen for our Country, our Department and Ourselves through Collective Responsibility". The Department has also embarked on a new Strategic Plan for the next five years. The ASYCUDA++ system was introduced late last year and will be completely rolled out next month. The impact should be a smoother and quicker clearance of goods through Customs, and consequently, a more satisfied clientele. I was pleasantly surprised recently to see television advertisements informing the public of the commitment of the Saint Lucia Customs Department to providing the highest quality of service to its customers.

All Customs Departments need to develop an effective public relations strategy to inform public opinion and win over public support. You must highlight your achievements and successes and work to dispel the negative perceptions of your respective organisations. If people understand what you are doing, why you are doing it, and are comforted that you are being fair and objective in the performance of your duties, then they will be more accepting. And of course, a pleasant demeanour, even when you must apply the law, does not hurt. I thank you for the opportunity to address you this morning and I wish you a very successful Twenty-eighth Conference.

Cabinet Expresses Condolences Over Death of Bro Dominic Brunnock

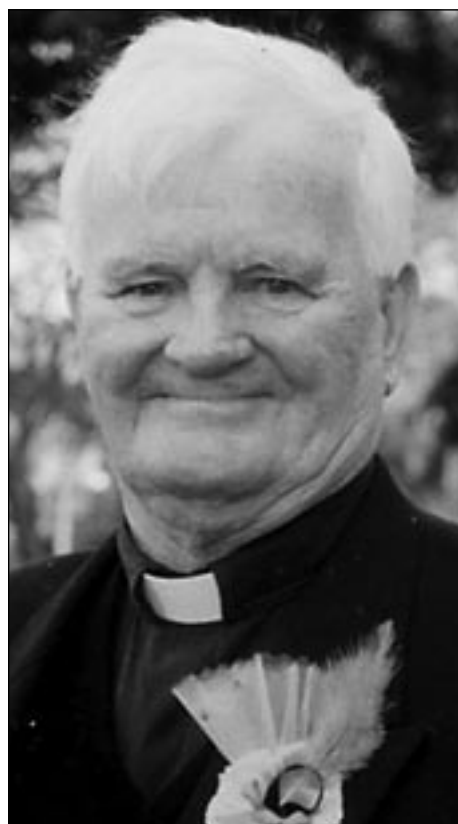
The Cabinet of Ministers on Monday expressed condolences and deep regret over the death of Bro. Dominic Brunnock, a Presentation Brother who gave over two decades of service to Saint Lucia.

At Monday's cabinet meeting presided over by the Prime Minister, the Members of Cabinet expressed sorrow at the death of the former Presentation Brother, who touched the lives of so many Saint Lucians in the field of Education and sports.

Bro. Brunnock, who was a co-founder of the Centre for Adolescent Renewal and Education (CARE), first arrived in Saint Lucia in 1964 and for many years he taught at Saint Mary's College.

He was honoured by the Catholic Church with a Papal Award for his services to the church. But he was also honoured by the Government of Saint Lucia for his long period of service to education and the upliftment of the social life of the island's young people.

In February 2005, Bro Dominic was named on the list of recipients of National Awards announced by Her Excellency the Governor General, Dame Pearllette Louisy. He received the Saint



Bro. Dominic Brunnock

Lucia Medal of Honour (GOLD) "for eminent service of national importance to Saint Lucia."

Brother Dominic died on Saturday in his homeland, Ireland.

Bro. Patrick Dominic Brunnock was born on 26th December 1927 in County Tipperary, Ireland. He took his first vows as a Presentation Brother in 1947 and in 1956 volunteered to come to the West Indies taking up duties in Trinidad at Presentation College, San Fernando (1956-64).

He was transferred to St. Lucia in 1964 and taught at St. Mary's College until 1973, promoting not only the academic programme of the school but also developing the College's Sports programme and Inter-Schools Sporting Competitions.

While in St. Lucia, he was appointed Regional Superior of the Presentation Brothers, a position he held until 1976. From St. Lucia, Bro. Dominic was transferred to Barbados (1973-81) and then to Grenada (1981-83) and back to Barbados (1983-89).

Upon retirement he returned to his community in Chaguanas, Trinidad (1989-93), from where he worked with Fr. Gerard Pantin's SERVOL programme for marginalized youths. Bro. Dominic was so moved by the experience that he dreamt of bringing the programme to Saint Lucia. On the 26th April 1993 that dream became a reality, when, assisted by Bro.

Barry Noel, he opened the first Centre for Adolescent Renewal and Education (C.A.R.E.) in the community of Marchand, with sixteen trainees.

For eleven years as Executive Director, Bro. Dominic saw C.A.R.E. blossom into an institution providing a second chance at education to three hundred and fifty (350) young St. Lucians annually. Upon his retirement in 2004, Bro Dominic had given twenty-one (21) years of dedicated and untiring service to the young people of Saint Lucia.

For his loving service and devotion, the Roman Catholic Church awarded him the Papal Medal "Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice." On the 22nd February, 2005 as part of the National Independence Awards, the Government of Saint Lucia awarded him the Saint Lucia Medal of Honour (Gold) "for eminent service of national importance to Saint Lucia".

Bro. Dominic left St. Lucia for Ireland on the 30th May 2005 and was hospitalized in his homeland on the 6th June. He never left hospital, succumbing to a number of complications which led to the amputation of one leg. Bro Dominic died at the Mary Mount Hospice in Cork City at 10.00a.m. on Saturday 20th May, 2006.

Stamp Issue For Mindoo?

Discussions are underway to memorialize the late cricketing icon – Francis "Mindoo" Phillip who died on May 5 from stomach cancer. One contributor to a local radio programme recently came up with the idea to honour Phillip in a stamp to coincide with the Cricket World Cup, so his legend can travel around the world.

Phillip was involved heavily in local sports, especially cricket,

the discipline for which he was best known. It was the President of the St. Lucia Football Association who first expressed the thought of memorializing the late Mindoo Phillip in a stamp. Wilkie Larcher was speaking on a local radio programme when the idea came to him. Larcher says creating a stamp will make Mindoo international, even though he did not get the opportunity to play on the West Indies team

Post Master General – Philomene St.

Clair considers the idea excellent and says the Post Office will do all it can to make the stamp happen. Mindoo's widow, Helen Phillip, is also in favour and has given the Post Master General permission to pursue the idea. Mrs. Phillip has also agreed to make a photo of Mindoo available for the stamp issue. The Post Master General says she will speak with other members of the Stamp Advisory Committee – SAC about including a Mindoo stamp for the Cricket World Cup.



The late Francis Mindoo Phillip

THE TOURISM SECTOR: ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO THE ECONOMY

Continued from page 5

Tourism's role as the leading sector of the economy should not be limited to the consideration of the statistical significance of its contribution to the GDP. The sector operates within the global services industry whereby the operators are continuously exposed to international standards and modern management/marketing techniques.

In this era of globalisation, the entire economy faces the challenge of adjustments to rapid changes and the struggle to maintain international competitiveness in this dynamic context. As a lead sector, tourism can do much to assist other sectors of the economy in improving efficiency and competitiveness through business linkages and partnerships, including the following approaches:

(1) Creation of joint ventures and investment financing schemes to redistribute investment flows into critical areas. For example, joint projects can be developed in areas where such co-investment arrangements would enhance the attractiveness of other sectors and/or business projects to investment inflows;

(2) Implementation of collabora-

tive human resource development and training programmes with other businesses in other sectors and in ancillary support industries to help in upgrading skills and standards;

(3) Creation of viable trading relationships in all areas of the business in order to foster greater inter-sector linkages especially in with agriculture sector;

(4) Pursuit of joint promotion and advertising with local businesses to create opportunities for them to promote their services within the largest establishments;

(5) Development of activity-based programmes and business oriented initiatives with local communities so that tourist can participate in and enjoy community/local livelihood experiences in a safe and acceptable manner;

(6) Creation of a more authentic Saint Lucian tourism product or visitor experience through active promotion of the following core features of the destination: Local cuisine, Natural heritage and culture, Arts and Entertainment, Handicrafts and souvenirs.

The above measures are not exhaustive, but in addition, it is imperative that the economic benefits of tourism

be distributed as widely as possible throughout the country especially in those areas that have been most acutely affected by the demise of bananas.

Through the Heritage Tourism Component of the Private Sector Development Programme, the Government of Saint Lucia had commissioned several studies to determine the potential for business development in non-traditional tourism areas and specific niche areas such as: Heritage tourism; Cultural based enterprises; and Community based activities with the view of encouraging new, creative enterprises to enter the tourism industry. These new areas of business intervention will potentially diversify the tourism industry and enhance the visitor experience. The private sector must however take the initiative in taking these potentially attractive business ideas to their logical next steps.

The Real Challenge

The real challenge is for the lead tourism enterprises to move beyond customary limits of providing social support and charitable donations, to stepping boldly forward and establish mutually beneficial business relationships with enterprises in the other sec-

tors of the economy, and in the ancillary support services areas. The intention is not to displace the local entrepreneur, but, to effectively bring together the local knowledge and authenticity, on the one hand, and the required investment capital and quality standards on the other.

The tourism industry requires quality services and amenities and a vibrant economy in which to thrive, and businesses in general do well in an environment where there are healthy input-output relationships among them. This is a mutual objective of the private sector and all businesses must work together to achieve it. As international market barriers are broken down, we cannot afford to maintain internal obstacles to business within the national economy. Indeed, we must do all within our power to fully exploit all the opportunities that emanate from our internal markets.

As the lead economic sector, it is now the responsibility of the tourism sector to demonstrate leadership in this area and to begin to develop creative mechanisms to deepen and strengthen the inter-sector linkages within the economy. I thank you.

NTN RESCUES LOCAL CRICKET FANS



The Government owned National Television Network (NTN) came to the rescue of cricket fans in St. Lucia, starved for live broadcast coverage of West Indies current matches, when on Tuesday, it relayed coverage of the One Day International cricket game be-

tween a resurgent West Indies and the visiting Indian team at Warner Park in St. Kitts. This historic feat for NTN came after a negotiated special US \$15,000 arrangement between NTN, Cricket World Cup St. Lucia Inc and the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC), the company

selling the broadcast rights to West Indies cricket. Prior to this, neither the other local television stations nor the radio stations had been broadcasting matches in the Indian tour or the previous tour by Zimbabwe a couple of weeks ago and listeners to local radio sports talk shows had been calling upon the authorities to do something about the situation.

Director of Information Services Mr. Embert Charles explained that the deal was brokered via the collaborative efforts of key players.

"We realised, and speaking of we, that is, the Chief Executive Officer of World Cup Cricket Incorporated Ernest Hilaire and myself, that up to very late on the 22nd we were not going to have cricket through the commercial media. In fact we had discussions on the weekend and I was advised that you better go ahead perhaps there will be some funds through the efforts of Cricket World Cup to meet the costs of paying for the rights; so as a result we entered into negotiations with the Caribbean Media Corporation and we were able to realise what we felt was a comfortable arrangement."

Having missed only the first two games in the series, Mr. Charles says there is a lot more to be gained now

that Saint Lucia has landed the CMC deal.

"Some of the basic conditions of a contract like this is that you have obligations to carry some of the advertisements of the main sponsors of the game, you also have the freedom to do other advertising but not competing advertising, there is also the obligation to carry other elements of cricket that are not part of the India series. For example we are obligated to carry what is called the KFC Cup in November this year. There is also what is called the black out for any games that are being played in the host country."

Host countries are normally permitted to broadcast games only after matches are completely sold out. The Director of Information Services also noted that the contract does not allow for sub-letting which is to say signals cannot be provided to anybody else for re-broadcast. However, St. Lucian cricket fans are now assured that there will be live coverage of the remainder of the Digicel 2006 Home Series, West Indies vs India.

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE BCG LAUDED



The new Replay Screen



The new Venue Operations Centre

Saint Lucia continues to be applauded for its proactive stance in getting ready for the 2007 Cricket World Cup. The latest commendation comes after the country was singled out for its preparation for the 2007 event by an International Cricket Council Venue Assessment Team.

Ali Bacher, who was Director of the Organizing Committee for World Cup Cricket 2003 in South Africa, attended the region's first one-day international day/night cricket match at St. Lucia's Beausejour Cricket Ground recently, says St. Lucia will make the World Cup proud in 2007.

"I was here last April, it is a lovely ground—its a new ground and I think your leadership is good here, very good. I think in any sport structure if your leadership is good, it filters through."

The newest addition to the Beausejour Cricket Ground was the installation of a state of the art display screen. However the screen used for the match between West Indies and Zimbabwe will not be utilized for the World Cup as the island has sourced its own system—the latest model, which should be ready in time for the 2007 event.

Stellavista Technologies Limited—the manufacturer of the appliance who won the bid to supply the system for St. Lucia was on hand to ensure all went smoothly. Chief Executive Officer of Stellavista Technologies Limited Muris Tabakovic said:

"I will train local people here because the very big chunk of cost is actually deleted if you can use local people. In India we were actually pleasantly surprised how quickly they learn how to do scoring, because you must understand it is not only screen, it is scoring software that was approved and

used for ICC World Cup. There is also added jobs to be done about mixing producing dealing with ICC rules very strict too—cannot make mistakes about that."

Stellavista Technologies, who supplied electronic display screens for the last Cricket World Cup held in South Africa in 2003, is hoping to bid for the contract to provide screens for the 2007 staging of Cricket World Cup Matches, in other venues. The display screen used for West Indies/Zimbabwe match was later used for main stage jazz events of St. Lucia Jazz.

UHC LAUNCHES DIABETES PILOT PROJECT MONDAY

The official launching of the Universal Health Care (UHC) Diabetes Pilot Project will take place at the NIC premises in the Parking Lot outside the NIC Building, Waterfront, Castries on Monday May 29th starting at 4.00pm. The Project will provide FREE screening and FREE medicine/treatment for diabetics. After the formal opening ceremony FREE screenings will be done at the NIC and the members of the public are reminded

to bring along their national ID Card in order to benefit from Monday's screening. Meanwhile the UHC programme has announced that FREE screenings and treatment of persons with Diabetes will start on May 29th at health centers and hospital and other locations in various communities around the island. Persons wishing to participate in those programmes are again reminded to present their national ID cards



THIS WEEK ON NTN

Sat. May 27th to Fri. June 2nd, 2006
NTN – PROVIDING INFORMATION YOU NEED

Do you need specific information about pensioners? Then find out from pensioners themselves - Sat. May 27th, 11:30 a.m.

Youth Agenda: The government of Saint Lucia details its efforts for assisting young persons - Sun. May 28th., 10:30 a.m.

The NIC explains the concept of the Emerald Housing Development and fields questions from potential buyers - Mon. May 29th - 9:00 p.m.

Repositioning Agriculture: The Agro-Tourism Link - Tues. May 30th 6:15 p.m.

The Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) - Strategizing for Gender Equality - Wed. May 31st., 6:15 p.m.

Get the inside details of the National Community Foundation's Services during 2005 - Thurs. June 1st, 8:30 p.m.

REBROADCAST: Town Hall Tuesday with Hon. Philip J Pierre - Fri. June 2, 9:00 p.m.

Remember to tune in for:
GIS News Breaks and Kweyol News daily from 6:30 p.m.

Issues & Answers/Mondays at 8:00pm:

Interview/Tuesdays at 6:15pm :

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

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

Take 2/Fridays at 6:15pm

(Week in Review)

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

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

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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>