



# NATIONAL REVIEW



## PRIME MINISTER KING BRINGS JOY WITH TOYS!!!

Prime Minister Stephenson King brought happiness and good will to hundreds of children around Saint Lucia earlier this month, presenting them with toys, ensuring that the tiny nationals would share in the cheer of this time of year.

In collaboration with Benjamin Weng, President of the Care 2 help Charitable Association

(CHCA) of New Jersey and through the assistance of the embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) 1,420 toys were donated to less fortunate children from around the island.

Mr. Weng had donated toys to the less fortunate children in Saint Lucia in for the last two years, but this year's donation was by far the largest to date.

In addressing the children at the recent

handing over, Prime Minister King said he was happy to light up the lives of Saint Lucian children, particularly at this time of year.

In pictures, the delighted children hug their new toys as the Prime Minister caringly presents the toys with Taiwanese Ambassador Tom Chou and President of Care 2 Help Charity looking on. Representative of the St. Lucia Red Cross, Terencia

Giallard, one of the benefactors is seen in picture as well.

Prime Minister King along with his wife hosted a grand christ-

mas party for children from special schools for "differently able

children" around the island on Wednesday, December 9.



**"Take 2" - A fifteen minute news review of the week. Every Friday at 6.15 p.m. on NTN, Cablevision Channel 2.**

Government Notebook  
A fresh news package daily on all local radio stations



## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO ST. LUCIA LABOUR PARTY STATEMENT ON SAINT LUCIA NATIONAL MENTAL WELLNESS CENTRE

The Government of Saint Lucia is both amazed and amused at the content of the St. Lucia Labour Party's Statement issued on November 20th, 2009 under the caption: "SLP calls for PM King to Explain how Government Plans to Equip Psychiatric Hospital". The statement in question issued by the SLP exposes the level of desperation and disconnect that resides within the Party and its leadership in particular.

Firstly, Government notes that the tenor of the SLP statement contradicts and flies in the face of the spirit of comments made by Former SLP Health Minister, Damien Greaves, who last week commended both the Chinese and Taiwanese Governments for their contribution to completion of the new National Mental Wellness Centre.

In their attempt to once again "hurl political mud" and to ridicule the achievements of Government, the wheels seem to have fallen off the Labour Party "Wrecking Truck".

Moreso, the Labour Party and its leader have once again blundered in distorting the correctness of history. The SLP Statement, which was issued from the Office of the Leader of the Opposition states as follows: "The Taiwan Government has refused to provide the financial resources to complete the Hospital with the number of beds originally planned and agreed between the Government of St Lucia and the Government of the People's Republic of China, ....". The Labour Party statement further declared: "The Taiwanese alteration to the agreed plans, their massive reduction of the number of rooms from the planned 150 intended to 84, ...." One can assume from the excerpts quoted above, that the Labour Party and Dr. Anthony have once again mis-spoken. As the documented facts clearly show that what the Taiwanese Government delivered was in fact a 104 room facility, not 84 as was claimed in the SLP Statement.

The further claim in the statement of a reduction from the "planned 150 rooms" is grossly misleading and a shameful attempt to obscure the truth. Examination of the signed agreement (Ref. Pg. 2 of agreement attached) between the Labour Party Government

at the time and the Peoples' Republic of China show clearly that the quantity of beds agreed to was one hundred and four (104) and not 150 as indicated in the SLP statement. Ref. Article 3 – Project Scope and Construction Contents of the agreement, which was signed on September 19th, 2005. Did memory once again cheat Dr. Anthony and the Labour Party?

With regard to the existence of an Auditorium as part of the Wellness Centre Complex, it must be noted that this was an additional facility, which was not part of the original design. The Auditorium was built as a gift to the Government and People of Saint Lucia by the Taiwanese construction company, Holdyear at a cost of EC \$300, 000. The existence of the Auditorium is therefore one of the many improvements to the Hospital effected by the Taiwanese. The Auditorium is a vital inclusion, which will allow for the conducting of training workshops and seminars related to the business of mental health.

The Government of Saint Lucia is openly proud and firmly appreciative of the contribution made by the Government of Taiwan towards the completion of a new and improved Saint Lucia National Mental Wellness Centre.

The Taiwanese contribution amounted to the following:

- EC \$13 million to cover infra-structural works as relates to the core scope of work.
- Furniture amounting to EC \$250, 000; and
- Construction of the Auditorium at a cost of EC \$300, 000.

Now to the big question or theme of the SLP's Press Release, i.e. Prime Minister King Explaining how Government will "Equip Psychiatric Hospital". The SLP should be informed that the new "Psychiatric Hospital" is adequately equipped. The Centre will begin full operations in February of 2010. This is after finalization of two remaining undertakings, i.e. commissioning of the Laundry and the completion of cup boarding works for the kitchen to serve the Facility.

In addition an Operational Structure for the Centre will shortly be submitted by the Ministry of the Public Service to Cabinet for approval. The new structure being proposed differs fundamentally from currently obtains as it embraces and provides practical linkages to Government's concept for Primary Health Care and Community Outreach.

The Government of Saint Lucia is well advanced in its plans for operation of the Saint Lucia National Mental Wellness Centre.

Projections are to have the Facility declared open in February, 2010 as part of our nation's 31st Independence Celebrations. On that occasion, attempts will once again be made to get Opposition Parliamentarians to respond to formal invitations and to attend the grand opening.

Plans are also in place to invite the public to participate in an "Open Day" event during the month of February, following the opening of the Centre. This "Open Day" will be geared at showcasing this impressive and state-of-the art Facility.

In preparation for the opening of the Centre, Government has employed a proactive approach and has sought the assistance of two Canadian health agencies: Dalhousie University and Capital Health in providing training for staff who will be involved in running the new Facility.

Exchanges have been held involving personnel from the Canadian agencies in question and St. Lucian counterparts. The Canadian team is scheduled to return to Saint Lucia near the opening of the Facility to provide additional hands-on orientation and training.

The Wellness Centre when in operation will usher in a new and revolutionary approach to mental health management. This approach will emphasize the concept of Community Mental Health, with linkages to the Police and Community Mental Health Aides, who have been trained as part of a Primary Health Care policy. As part of this strategy, a proactive approach will be utilized to ensure that the relevant care and services are provided at the household and community levels.

Government assures all Saint Lucians of its commitment to deliver an improved and modern mental health care service.

The new Saint Lucia National Mental Wellness Centre, which will be declared open in February, 2010 will provide impetus for the advancement and management of the approach and vision of the Government of Saint Lucia.

## Announcement By Prime Minister Stephenson King On The VAT Policies

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am pleased to announce that the Cabinet of Ministers, at its meeting on 18th November 2009, approved a number of policies related to the implementation of the Value Added Tax in St. Lucia.

Before I give details on the approved policies, let me provide you with some brief background information to the introduction of VAT in St. Lucia. You will recall that discussions on the introduction of VAT within the OECS started as early as 2003. This policy was reiterated in the 2007/08 budget address by the former Prime Minister and Minister for Finance the Honourable Sir John Compton. In fact, by introducing the VAT, the Government of St. Lucia is abiding by the decision taken in July 2003 by the Monetary Council, the highest decision making body of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, to approve the implementation of the VAT in the ECCU as recommended by the OECS Tax Commissioners.

Since the decision of the Monetary Council, Antigua, Dominica and St. Vincent and Grenadines have already implemented VAT, while St. Kitts and Nevis, like St. Lucia, is preparing to do so soon. Grenada has already committed to implementing the VAT in February 2010.

As stated by the then Prime Minister in the 2007 Budget, and as has been repeatedly emphasized by the VAT Implementation Team, the VAT will not be an additional tax but will replace a number of other indirect taxes.

Cabinet by Conclusion No 1074 of 29th November 2007 approved the establishment of the Value Added Tax Implementation Project Office with the mandate to prepare St Lucia for the implementation of a VAT system in the most effective manner. The staff of the project office has done a tremendous amount of work in educating the public on VAT and how the new system works. However, specific information on how the new system will affect individual taxpayers has not been disclosed as the VAT policies were only recently approved by the VAT Steering Committee and Cabinet.



**Prime Minister  
Hon. Stephenson King**

With the approval of the VAT policies, the project office staff will now be in a position to meet the various stakeholders including the business community, trade unions, churches, sports and social clubs and other community organizations to explain in precise terms how the VAT works and the likely impact on the membership of these organizations.

As part of the public sensitization Cabinet has mandated that the staff of the project office demonstrate the impact of the VAT on the prices of a typical basket of goods and services so that the public will be better informed of how VAT is likely to impact on them. A White Paper has been prepared for public consultation and will be used in disseminating information on the VAT policies during the consultations.

I take this occasion to ask members of the public to avail themselves of the opportunity to be educated about VAT and to ask the pertinent questions at the various presentations.

*Continued on page 3*

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Government views the introduction of VAT as part of its strategic policy response in modernizing the tax system and thereby building the resilience of the economy to vulnerability and external shocks.

The need for this strategic approach has become even greater in light of the impact of the global recession which calls for greater resilience in the structure of our economy and to build the fiscal space necessary for Government to provide the kind of policy response required.

The VAT has been proposed as the preferred option as this tax is

considered a more efficient, simplified and modern form of indirect taxation. The VAT, which is a tax on consumption, is a broad base tax resulting in increased revenue, and reductions in relatively high tax rates.

The policies that have been approved by Cabinet are as follows:

1. A standard VAT rate of 15 percent and a rate of zero percent for goods and services in the zero-rated list. These goods and services include goods produced for exports and agricultural inputs.
2. A VAT registration threshold for companies transacting business to the value of

EC\$120,000.00 per annum.

3. The replacement of the following taxes/fees with VAT:
4. Consumption Tax
5. Motor Vehicle Rental Fee
6. Mobile Cellular Telephone Tax
7. Environmental Protection Levy
8. Exemption from the payment of VAT on a list of supplies including basic food items, financial services, medical services, prescription drugs or medicines, education services, day care services and local transportation with a driver, among others.
9. Specific rates of hotel accommodation tax based on a grading system for hotels.

10. Adjustment of excise tax rates on motor vehicles and other products with ad-valorem rates to keep the effective rates of tax on these products unchanged after the introduction of VAT.
11. Strengthening social safety nets to better target assistance to the poor and vulnerable in our society.
12. The provision of options to importers during the transition phase just prior to implementation of VAT to avoid businesses falsely claiming input tax credit during the early stage of implementation. Details of the options will be disclosed at a later

date after further consultations on the issue.

13. The location of the VAT Unit within the Inland Revenue Department.
14. The establishment of a special VAT Refund Account in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Administration Act.

Let me therefore re-affirm Government's commitment to implementing the VAT.

However, the date of the commencement of VAT in St. Lucia will be determined and announced once Cabinet has considered the report on the outcome of discussions of the draft White Paper. I thank you.

# Forensic Lab Opens!



Fully funded by the Government of St. Lucia, the island's 6-million-dollar state-of-the-art Forensic Science Laboratory officially opens next week.

The facility located at Tapion, Castries is expected to serve St. Lucia and where necessary, offer assistance to the other islands of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

The Forensic Science Laboratory will primarily provide technical assistance and training; evaluate and analyze evidence; interpret results and provide expert testimony related to physical evidence recovered from crime scenes.

The objective of the facility is to provide reliable and timely scientific support services by performing forensic analysis of evidence supporting the criminal justice system

The Forensic Lab will operate several departments including: **Chemistry** - Analysis and identification of unknown substances (drugs, and other chemicals), analysis of gun-shot residue and restoration of obliterated markings (e.g. vehicle engine markings)

**Toxicology** - Examination of body fluids and organs to determine the presence or absence of drugs and poisons and determi-

nation of Blood Alcohol Levels.

**Serology** - Identification of bodily fluids (blood, saliva, semen) and microscopic analysis for spermatozoa identification.

**DNA** - DNA analysis for human identification and paternity testing in civil proceedings.

**Trace Evidence** - Fabric/material damage assessment and examination and microanalysis of hairs, fibres, paint and glass.

The main customer of the Forensic Science Laboratory would be the Royal St. Lucia Police Force, however newly appointed Director Yannis Charles said with the introduction of DNA analysis

a much anticipated service which will be offered to the local public and the other OECS countries would be paternity tests. This she said would be a source of revenue generation and would provide a certain level of sustainability for the facility.

"Crime solving is a team effort. Both the investigative and scientific aspects are important; however, the scientific aspect supports the investigative aspect in that it either confirms or disproves the case circumstances put forward by the investigators. The quality of the result obtained is only as good as the quality of the evidence submitted." She explained.

With the introduction of DNA services Charles added, "It is hoped that the rate of solving cases such as homicides and sexual assaults would be improved. However it must be noted that DNA analysis is a comparative science in that there must be a suspect to compare his/her DNA to that found at the crime scene, so even with DNA analysis the investigators now need to become even more diligent in ensuring that a suspect is identified.

"The methods used in the forensic lab are based on sound scientific principles so each case must be approached in an objective, scientific manner with a high degree of integrity. The forensic lab has a responsibility to perform services in a manner responsive to the demands of its stakeholders (the police, the prosecution, the victim, the suspect and society)"

The current Government has invested in excess of EC \$6. Million in effecting adjustments and providing equipment that would allow the Lab to function more efficiently as a modern state-of-the-art facility. In addition Government has arranged for the staff of the facility to benefit from DNA training that would be conducted in January of next year for a minimum period of six (6) months. This training is critical to enable certification of trainees and accreditation of the Facility's ability to do DNA testing by the US Federal Bureau of Investigations. The initial operational cost for the Forensic Laboratory is estimated at approximately quarter of one million dollars. The Government is committed to maintaining the high standards and integrity of the new Forensic Laboratory. The multi-million dollar Forensic Science Laboratory officially opens its doors to business on Monday, December 21, 2009.

# Just "InTime"

## The Brave New World of Learning

The InTime Project is finally underway nationwide. Put simply, this three-year project will utilize radio and television for educational purposes in ways never before experienced in St Lucia.

In addition, every Primary School on the island will be provided with sufficient computers to enable every child to enjoy the benefits of a minimum of three online sessions a week. And if that was not enough, locally produced material will dramatically lower the cost of books to parents and pupils.

With the approval of the Prime Minister and his Government, as well as the support of the Minister of Education and his team, the implementation process has

exercised, 6 books per year to each pupil enrolled in the project, e.g. 6 PlayTime books for Kindergarten, one each of SumTime, SpellTime, HealthTime, RhymeTime, a Grammar Workbook and Vocabulary Workbook for each grade at Primary level, testing and monitoring programs, a learning management system, an administrative educational management system, an online additional resource library, and upon final implementation, access to an international exchange net for the sharing of new resources and experiences, workshops comprising school administrator training (management systems), teacher training (integrated computerized learning & data input), teacher train-

ing; the InTime Project for St Lucia was born.

Few will dispute the assertion that the standard of English and Maths is not what we would like it to be. No matter how tirelessly teachers toil, resources, money, time, space, etc. are limited commodities in St Lucia as well as worldwide.

The InTime Project is a high profile, already successful, proven initiative with far-reaching educational, social and economic impact that demonstrates a decisive approach by educational authorities to challenges such as illiteracy, new technology, rising cost, etc. that face nations not only regionally but also worldwide.

The In-Time Project seeks to address several major problems

Workbook, a Grammar Workbook, Health Studies and Kindergarten. The books may be used in school or at home. One unique feature is that wherever there is internet access available, pupils in the project will be able to access the workbooks on line so there will be no need for them to carry books back and forth between home and school. The program is even available on all personal mobile phones with internet access.

The management system tracks such items as: attendance, behaviour, home details, personal details such as allergies, vaccinations, etc. Behavioral problems or learning disabilities will be spotted early enabling early remedies to be applied. Authorities can, at the touch of a button, check the status of each school in the country.

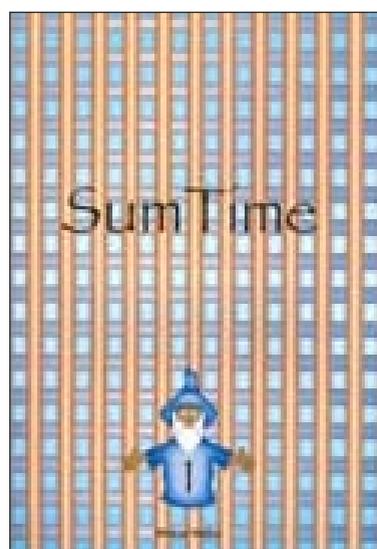
The Intime Project is an "open-source" system in which updates, improvements and additional programmes suggested by users

the management systems will result in significant savings in time and money.

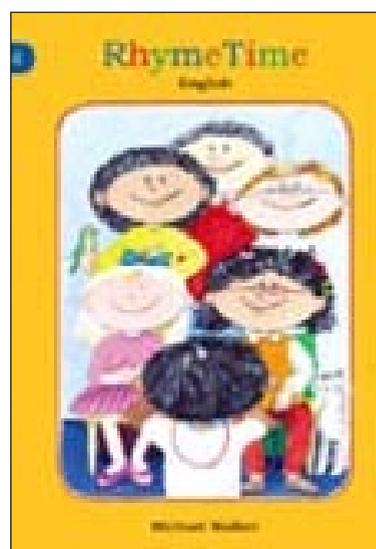
InTime is a home-grown project that creates work opportunities for St Lucia in the fields of book publishing, video production, the printing industry, teacher training and the export & marketing sectors.

The project will be available at little or no cost to institutions such as hospitals, clinics, prisons, government offices, etc. The whole program, once adopted, will continue to offer free educational and entertaining content to the whole nation through national television, radio and online.

For the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Trade, St Lucia will become an exporter of educational TV at no cost to the Government: a major public relations opportunity for St Lucia. For the Ministry of Tourism, InTime will be a TV & Internet showcase of a modern St Lucia available to



Mathematics



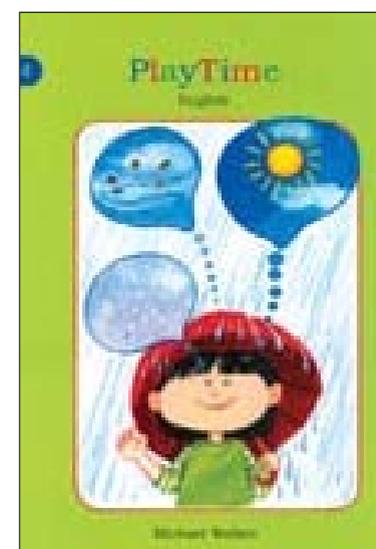
English



Health



Literacy



Play Time

begun; LIME has undertaken to provide and maintain Broadband Internet Services to all Primary Schools at no cost and the Government of Taiwan has agreed to supply every Primary School on the island with the required number of computers.

The project is being spearheaded by Michael Walker and his team at Emtooco who are providing Educational Content, Teacher Training, Project Management as well as all the television shows.

For those of you who would like a sneak preview of what is in store, just type in [intime.candw.lc](http://intime.candw.lc) in your browser (no www. because this is a temporary local service) and you will be directed to the start page. Click on any book and off you go!

Michael Walker and his team will provide online access and royalty-free copying or download rights to the following: educational videos for television: no less than 2 x 30 minutes per day on NTN; online workbooks and

ing (methodology), "in-service" school visits, on-going review / adaptation of systems and assistance in augmenting the program with "local" products, i.e. print & video materials. All the above is included in the fee for books – a set of 6 books for EC\$60, and no hidden costs!

The Government of Taiwan has, in addition to supplying computers, agreed to support the project by providing funds for the first year.

Many of you may still remember the 150 Bonjou Sent Lisi programs on NTN in which Germaine tried to teach Judy and Michael the basics of St Lucian Creole. The lessons demonstrated that Kwéyòl is a real language that follows rules just as other languages do. But after the Bonjou Sent Lisi adventure, Mr. Walker felt it was time to utilize his wealth of experience from decades of teaching at all levels from Kindergarten to Universities in almost every corner of the

that beset our society. Firstly, illiteracy is a serious problem that leads to a lack of self-esteem, a diminishment of career worthiness, a lack of job opportunities and even, in some cases, a resort to a life of crime. Secondly, too many children are left behind. Thirdly, the cost of education is escalating; teaching materials are becoming more expensive; new technology, although essential, is out of reach for many educational systems. Fourthly, even if the hardware for new technologies is affordable and available, the content is often irrelevant, inaccessible and expensive. Fifthly, remedial work is difficult with few additional learning materials for the pupils to practice with. Sixthly, it is essential for educational systems to have correct and reliable "real time" statistics upon which to base their decisions.

The In-Time Project presently comprises the following subjects: Mathematics, English Language, Spelling & Literacy, a Vocabulary

are available to all.

Although the project was initiated under the previous government during the time of Minister Mario Michel and Dr Didacus Jules, our present Prime Minister and our Minister of Education and his team have shown the wisdom and foresight to endorse the program wholeheartedly, as indeed has the Government of Taiwan through its incredible generosity.

The project impacts upon almost every Ministry and many aspects of everyday life: For Government, the project supplies real-time Management Systems that can be adapted to needs other than those required by the Ministry of Education for whom it is a showpiece of proven, innovative technology & teaching environment; a teacher-training tool, and a practical, economically viable solution to the introduction and utilization of modern technology. Real-time information upon which to base decisions through

tourists via NTN & The Visitors' Channel in hotel rooms.

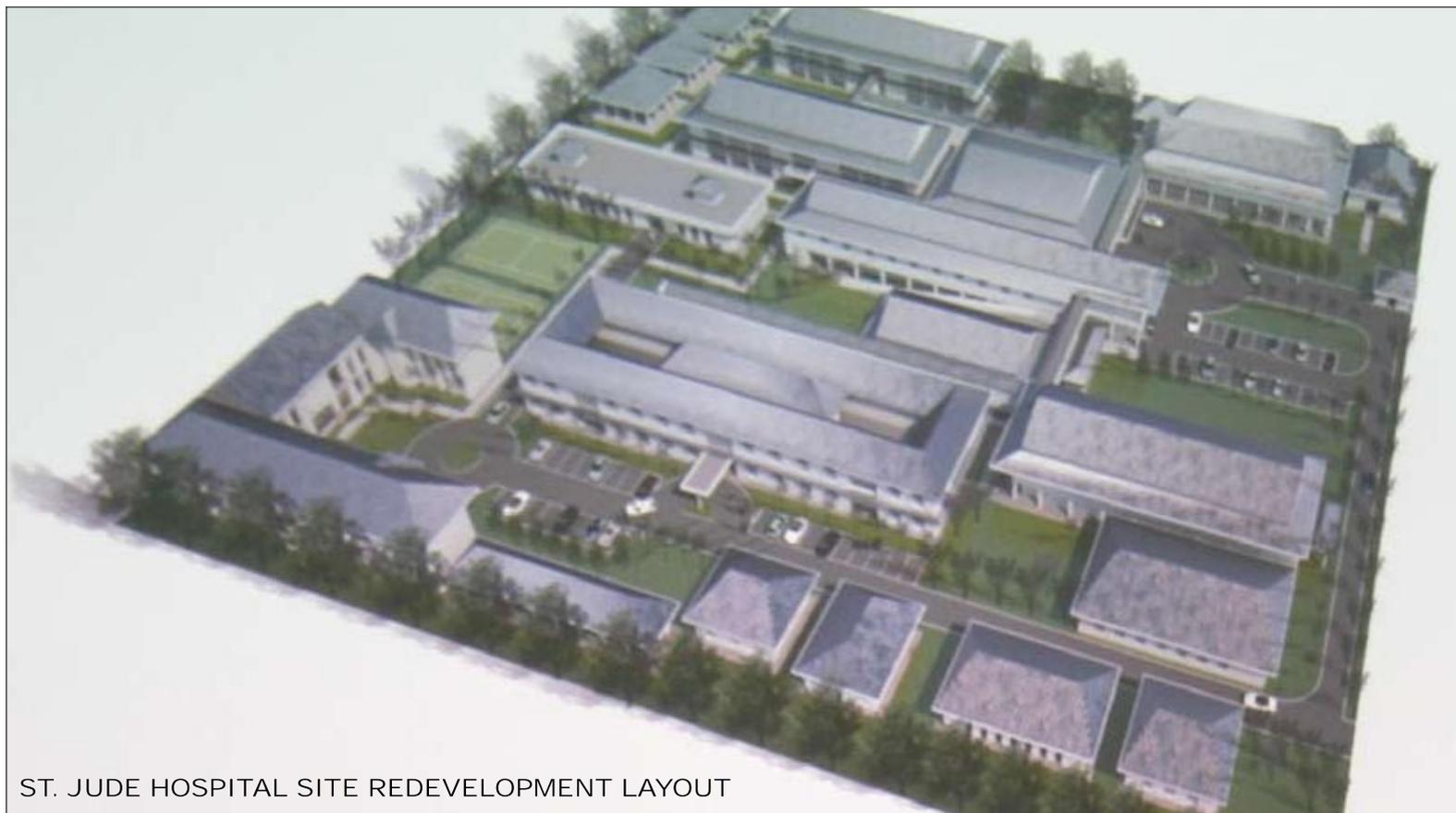
For the Ministry of Health, specialist courses such as HealthTime promote healthy lifestyles. The system will be available to clinics, health centres and hospitals for viewing in waiting rooms, etc.

For the Ministries of Education, and Social Transformation, Youth & Sports there are several advantages: the alleviation of inequalities arising from illiteracy, and the provision of structured educational programmes for Boys Training Centre, for example. For Communities and Adult Education programmes, the project will help eradicate the stigma of illiteracy and encourage people to rethink their attitudes to lifelong education.

For less than what we spend on foreign books annually, the InTime Project represents a brave new world of sustainable, practical, locally produced, readily available, technological innovation in the service of the people of St Lucia.

## Statement By Prime Minister Hon. Stephenson King Re: Status Report And Update On

# St Jude Reconstruction Programme



ST. JUDE HOSPITAL SITE REDEVELOPMENT LAYOUT

Ladies and Gentlemen, during the early hours of Wednesday, November 9th, 2009, I was awoken to the news that our beloved St. Jude Hospital was ablaze. As duty and the responsibility of leadership would demand, I immediately sought to mobilize a team of Government Ministers before heading to the scene of the fire in Vieux Fort. On my arrival at about 3:30 a.m. the gravity of the disaster that faced our nation was very apparent.

Unfortunately, 3 Saint Lucians lost their lives in that fire. I wish to again extend sincere condolences to the bereaved families of those who perished.

Notwithstanding that bleak and tragic scenario, I was impressed with the determined and positive approach by all who responded to the St. Jude fire. Our nation will forever be indebted to these individuals who volunteered their services. The display of national spirit, which was so apparent on the morning of September 9th, 2009, was a demonstration of what is possible when we rise to the highest level of service and love for fellow man and country.

As a Government, we undertook the challenge of moving forward with St. Jude with every degree of seriousness and commitment. Our immediate objective was to restore the health services in the South within the shortest possible time. In this regard, we sought to

examine all possible options. We however concluded that the most cost beneficial option at our disposal was to house the medical facility at the George Odlum National Stadium.

Once we got the medical services operational again, we set about to initiate an aggressive programme geared towards the reconstruction of St. Jude Hospital. With this in mind, a St. Jude Task Force was established on September 11th, 2009 under my chairmanship as Prime Minister. The mandate of this task force was to raise awareness, gather funds and support from the community as well as from overseas, and to facilitate a speedy design and reconstruction project. In undertaking this project, Government presented a clear vision, that of the reconstruction and modernization of the new St. Jude Hospital as a world class health care and teaching facility with International accreditation standards.

To date there have been visits and contacts made with a number of friendly Governments and agencies as well as international health organizations.

These interactions were focused on the provision of either financial or technical support. In this regard the assistance of the Pan American Health Organisation, United Nations Procurement (well known as UNOPS), the United States Army South-

ern Command, the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute, the Ministry of Communications and Works, Ministry of Physical Planning, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Economic Development has been very instrumental in moving us forward towards the achievement of our vision.

The contributions of Saint Lucians and Saint Lucian organisations in the US and United Kingdom must be noted along with assistance provided by our friends in Martinique and Guadeloupe.

As I have indicated, a number of friendly Governments have come forward with assistance and or promises of assistance. These include: the European Union, Canada, Australia, the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan), United States of America and Venezuela among others. The Government of Taiwan is committed to the reconstruction of the Surgical Ward and the provision and the procurement of major equipment.

To date through local fundraising a total of approximately EC \$1.8 million dollars have been raised. This effort is ongoing and all Saint Lucians are encouraged to contribute.

Over the last five (5) weeks we have made significant strides towards the attainment of our vision for the reconstruction and modernization of St. Jude Hospital. In October, Government

received a technical delegation from Taiwan which presented a Master Plan for St. Jude Hospital. This plan was subjected to rigorous review by the St. Jude Hospital Task Force, and very shortly, detailed technical specification will be completed. Government will spare no effort to start the rebuilding process early in the New Year.

I must take this opportunity to publicly thank the Taiwanese Government for the technical and other assistance which they have provided thus far. Government is hopeful that the first phase of the new St. Jude Hospital will be completed within a period of 18 months.

The major concern of the presence of asbestos and the threat of related contamination has been effectively addressed through the technical assistance of the Caribbean Environmental Health Institute. Government is therefore pleased to inform the public that all asbestos residues have been removed from the site and disposed of safely, and further air quality sample tests have produced negative results, or an indication of a clean environment. Government wishes to further report that operations of the St. Jude Hospital at the temporary site at the George Odlum Stadium have been running without any major hitches.

Government is also sensitive and mindful of the disadvantage to our sportsmen and women be-

cause of the location of the St. Jude Hospital operations at the George Odlum Stadium. This is a situation that has been brought about as a result of a national disaster, which demands the implementation of emergency measures.

Government is comforted by the fact that our sportsmen and women have displayed understanding and support during these trying times, and therefore, I must thank them for their understanding and patience. Government has recognized the need to provide alternative sporting venues and in this regard, the Ministry of Social Transformation, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports will upgrade and enhance a number of sporting facilities in various locations in the south of the island.

I am pleased to announce that consideration will also be given during next year's budget for further support to the Ministry of Sports' National Sporting Programme.

In the coming weeks the St. Jude Hospital Task Force will be initiating a number of activities and events that are geared towards galvanizing even further the solidarity and support of Saint Lucians towards the goal of reconstruction of St. Jude hospital. One of the main events will be the St. Jude National Rally, which will give nationals the opportunity to pledge and contribute to the St. Jude Hospital reconstruction effort. The rally is scheduled for February, 2010 and will form part of the official programme for our 31st Independence anniversary celebrations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, during the morning of September 9th, 2009, I made the bold pronouncement that "Out of the Ashes a Phoenix will Rise". I can now declare with even greater confidence that this Phoenix is about to soar with brilliance and supreme pride. There is no doubt that out of the ashes of St. Jude has arisen commitment and determination, goodwill, resilience, resolve and love.

As we move to this next phase, our actions will be guided by a master plan that has come out of intensive review and consultation. I wish to make a special call to all Saint Lucians to come forward and be counted by indentifying in a tangible way with the St. Jude reconstruction effort.

In January Government will be undertaking a "ground breaking ceremony" which will mark the commencement of construction work. It is my hope that somewhere in the near future we will look back with pride at our achievement as we herald the rise of this great phoenix in the south, a new and state-of-the-art St. Jude National Hospital. I thank you.

# Eye on the Constituencies



Hon. Arsene James  
MP for Micoud South

project cost approximately \$ 186,000 EC. The Ti Rocher Multi Purpose Court was also blessed with a changingRoom facility that includes showers, toilets, and storerooms. The La Courville

Community has been remembered again by the construction of a Multi purpose Court which is on going. This will be one of the biggest and modernized court, with toilet and recreational

facility at its basement. The water sector in Micoud South, which has been a public cry for poor quality and water shortages is being reviewed and a sum of approximately \$ 415, 000.00 dollars

has been given to WASCO to help to alleviate this problem- Thanks to the Taiwanese. A 100,000 gallon tank has been imported and is now ready to be installed in Ti-Rocher in Micoud South.



The Dugard/La Courville Road Rehabilitated



The Calypso/Chic Road Rehabilitated



The La Courville/Ti Rocher Road Rehabilitated



The Ti Rocher/Calypso Road Rehabilitated



Construction of Road Drains



Desruisseaux Multi- Purpose Centre Rehabilitated



The internal part of the Desruisseaux Multi- Purpose Centre rehabilitated including the purchase of 200 folding chairs and tables



The fixing of Stage, renovating cupboards and rehabilitating Toilets inside the Desruisseaux Multi- Purpose Centre



Walkways, Steps, Balcony walls and corridor of the Desruisseaux Multi- Purpose Centre Rehabilitated



Construction of a Multi purpose Court at La Courville



The soon to be La Courville Multi purpose cell walls are constructed ready for backfilling



The soon to be La Courville Multi purpose court retaining walls and basement being constructed



The soon to be La Courville Multi purpose is backfilled



External section of the Desruisseaux Multi- Purpose Centre was also rehabilitated and water tanks installed



Ti Rocher Court with Changing Room Facility Constructed

The Micoud South Constituency benefited tremendously during the first two years of this present administration. Four of the worst roads in the area that were forgotten during the reign of the Saint Lucia Labour party were rehabilitated. They included, the Dugard/La Courville Road, the La Courville/Ti Rocher Road, the Ti Rocher/Calypso Road and the Calypso/Chic Road.

The road projects were government supported projects and the people from the constituency were eventually spared the agony and pain as they used to suffer as they commuted these roads.

Further Assistance was immediate with the injection of grass roots projects by the Taiwanese Government. Mr James upgraded many of the feeder roads by providing quarry waste material to fill the holes and undertook the construction of many road drains and side cleaning.

Other major projects under this assistance included, the rehabilitation works on the Desruisseaux Multi- Purpose Centre and Court. This project incorporated many elements to make the centre functional again. The

# Saint Lucia Joins Talks On Climate Change

Saint Lucia's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for CARICOM and OECS Dr June Soomer joins delegates from 192 countries as they descend on Copenhagen for two weeks of talks aimed at paving the way for a new global treaty on climate change.

The country representatives will discuss emissions cuts and financial measures to combat climate change to effect the appeal of the Danish Prime Minister who is urging delegates to deliver "hope for the future".

## Why are the Copenhagen talks happening?

The majority of the world's governments believe that climate change poses a threat to human society and to the natural world. Successive scientific reports, notably those from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), have come to ever firmer conclusions about humankind's influence on the modern-day climate, and about the impacts of rising temperatures. Two years ago, at the UN climate talks held in Bali, governments agreed to start work on a new global agreement. The Copenhagen talks mark the end of that two-year period. Governments hope to leave the Danish capital with a political agreement on the outlines of a new deal. The talks are technically known as the 15th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - often abbreviated to COP15.

## What are the prospects for a deal?

Four broad outcomes are possible from the Copenhagen summit: (1) a comprehensive deal with all loose ends tied up, (2) a deal agreeing the "big picture", but with lots of details remaining to be thrashed out over the coming months or years, (3) adjournment of the COP, probably until midway through 2010 and (4) breakdown.

Almost every government attending the talks says it wants a deal; and many contend it is necessary to have the essential ingredients in place by the time the Kyoto Protocol's current targets expire in 2012. But in the weeks leading up to Copenhagen, it has become clear that a full, legally-binding treaty is not possible. A political agreement appears

more likely, with attempts to secure a legally-binding treaty deferred until some point in 2010.

## Why is climate change happening - and is it the same as global warming?

The Earth's climate has always changed naturally over time. For example, variability in our planet's orbit alters its distance from the Sun, which has given rise to major Ice Ages and intervening warmer periods. According to the last IPCC report, it is more than 90% probable that humankind is largely responsible for modern-day climate change.

man-made) climate change".

Why is a new treaty needed?

The Copenhagen talks sit within the framework of the UNFCCC, established at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992. In 1997, the UNFCCC spawned the Kyoto Protocol. But neither of these agreements can curb the growth in greenhouse gas emissions sufficiently to avoid the climate impacts projected by the IPCC. In particular, the Kyoto Protocol's targets for reducing emissions apply only to a small set of countries and expire in 2012. Governments want a new treaty that is bigger, bolder, wider-

2020. Richer developing countries are also likely to be asked to constrain their emissions. If they do make any pledges, they are likely to restrain the growth of emissions rather than making actual cuts. Their commitments are likely to be expressed in terms of a reduction in emissions growth of a certain percentage compared with business as usual, or a reduction in the carbon intensity of their economy.

In order to help developing countries constrain their greenhouse gas emissions, industrialised nations have agreed in prin-

energy. The main route to reducing greenhouse gas emissions is to avoid burning fossil fuels; so a successful treaty would almost certainly make energy more expensive. There are different analyses of how much it would cost to make this transition quickly enough to avert "dangerous" climate change. Developing countries are looking for money in the order of hundreds of billions of dollars each year for mitigation - the ballpark figure that the International Energy Agency calculates is necessary to fund a large-scale switch to low-carbon energy. A number of studies, including one by the World Bank, also suggest that a further \$100bn per year or thereabouts will be needed to help poorer countries adapt. By comparison, the amount of overseas aid currently given each year by rich countries is in the region of \$100bn.

## Would a Copenhagen deal solve climate change?

The global average temperature has already risen by about 0.7C since pre-industrial times. In some parts of the world this is already having impacts - and a Copenhagen deal could not stop those impacts, although it could provide funding to help deal with some of the consequences. Greenhouse gases such as CO<sub>2</sub> stay in the atmosphere for decades; and concentrations are already high enough that further warming is almost inevitable. Many analyses suggest an average rise of 1.5C since pre-industrial times is guaranteed. A strong Copenhagen deal might keep the temperature rise under 2C; but given uncertainties in how the atmosphere and oceans respond to rising concentrations of greenhouse gases, it might not. This is why developing countries put such an emphasis on adaptation, which they argue is necessary already.

IPCC figures suggest that to have a reasonable chance of avoiding 2C, global emissions would need to peak and start to decline within about 15-20 years. Currently, the cuts pledged by industrialised nations are not enough to halt the overall global rise in emissions. Whatever happens in Copenhagen, further meetings will almost certainly be necessary to finalise the "rules" of any new treaty.

Further ahead, at some point governments will almost certainly begin the process of securing the deal after Copenhagen.



The principal cause is burning fossil fuels - coal, oil and gas. This produces carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), which - added to the CO<sub>2</sub> present naturally in the Earth's atmosphere - acts as a kind of blanket, trapping more of the Sun's energy and warming the Earth's surface.

Deforestation and processes that release other greenhouse gases such as methane also contribute. Although the initial impact is a rise in average temperatures around the world - "global warming" - this also produces changes in rainfall patterns, rising sea levels, changes to the difference in temperatures between night and day, and so on. This more complex set of disturbances has acquired the label "climate change" - sometimes more accurately called "anthropogenic (hu-

ranging and more sophisticated than the Kyoto agreement. In June, the G8 and a number of large developing countries agreed that the average temperature rise since pre-industrial times should be limited to 2C (3.6F). In principle, they are looking to the Copenhagen treaty to curb the growth in greenhouse gas emissions enough to keep the world within that limit.

## Who is looking for what in the new treaty?

A lot of issues are involved. Industrialised nations will set targets for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions in order to mitigate climate change. The key date for these commitments is 2020, although some countries are looking beyond that, to 2050.

Australia, the EU, Japan and New Zealand have already said what they are prepared to do by

principle to help them in areas such as renewable energy. Developing countries are looking for mechanisms that can speed up this technology transfer.

Many countries are thinking about how to prepare for the impacts of climate change - what sorts of adaptation will be necessary. These include measures such as building sea defenses, securing fresh water supplies and developing new crop varieties. Developing countries are looking for substantial and reliable finance to help them adapt. Their argument is that as the industrialised world has caused the problem, it must pay to sort it out. Measures to protect forests will be a component of the deal.

## How much will it cost?

In general, fossil fuels provide us with our cheapest sources of

## HOME COMING 2010 "TOUT SENT LISYEN SÉ YONN"

In April 2008 the Government of Saint Lucia decided that special attention had to be given to the concerns of St Lucians resident in other countries. In June 2008, at a meeting held with the Saint Lucians living in New York, the Prime Minister committed himself to facilitating the reintegration of Saint Lucians living overseas into Saint Lucia. This commitment was reinforced with the appointment of Dr June Soomer, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for CARICOM and OECS, as the person who would be responsible for Diaspora issues. In this regard, a Regional Integration and Diaspora Unit, headed by Ambassador Dr June Soomer was established within the Office of the Prime Minister. One of the missions of this Unit is to facilitate the deepening and strengthening of connections between our nationals overseas and their homeland.

At the 13th Biennial Convention of The Union of St Lucian Overseas Associations held in Barbados from 28 July to 03 August 2008, the Prime Minister further committed himself to ensuring that in the next few months systems would be put in place to ensure that there will be a one stop location that would be able to assist overseas nationals with a wide range of issues.

The 14th Biennial Convention of the Union of Saint Lucian Overseas Associations will be held in Saint Lucia in July 2010 and provides an opportunity for fulfilling some of these promises. To this end, Saint Lucian Homecoming 2010 is envisioned as a celebration of the contributions of Saint Lucians living overseas to their homeland and to their adopted countries. It is anticipated that this gathering will reunite old friends and families who have not seen each other since they said goodbye years ago.

Saint Lucian Homecoming 2010 is also about what it means to be a Saint Lucian. It is about the revitalising of our communities and the invigorating of all our people to come together for the development of our country. For this reason the theme for the Homecoming is "Tout Sentlisyen Se' Yonn," developed by the Union of Saint Lucian Overseas Associations, speaks to the need for that coming together and taking responsibility for our development.

Following on the second part of the theme of the 30th anniversary theme "... a future to look forward to" we must continue to reinforce the foundation for that journey on a positive step, by including all Saint Lucians in our development.

The activities planned must ensure that Saint Lucians living overseas are encouraged to invest their

resources, skills, money and time in strengthening our society. The emphasis will be on the building of partnerships with various sectors. In our country we have many groups and individuals, throughout all our communities, who work very hard for the good of the country. Sometimes, their need for resources to make their work more effective is not always forthcoming.

One of the objectives of Homecoming is to partner these groups, whether they are small businesses, service organisations, sporting clubs, development foundations, and other NGO's with Saint Lucian living overseas, with whom they can build such partnerships that will make their work more effective. The role of the youth in our development will also be at the centre of these activities. This will make our continued journey more sustainable and secure for all our people.

Moreover, Homecoming will be an opportunity to say thanks to our people, wherever they live overseas or at home, for the tenacity with which they have held on to the culture of their native land. They have enabled us to put our country on the map with their contributions in all areas. They have enabled us to sustain our economies especially during difficult times such as hurricanes and have also made a significant contribution to the economy of this country through remittances of foreign exchange, regular travels back home and investments in various sectors.

This first Homecoming must signal to all that our nationals can continue to make their contributions to their country wherever they live.

Members of Home Coming Committee established by the Prime Minister held their inaugural meeting on 08 April 2009 to discuss plans for the July 2010 Home Coming of Saint Lucians living overseas.

The Committee is chaired by Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for CARICOM, OECS and Diaspora Affairs, with membership of representatives from the Tourist Board, the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, the Saint Lucia International Association, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Internal Security, the Media, the St Lucia Development Bank and the Office of the Prime Minister. Other members of the public will be invited to assist the Committee in achieving its objectives.

A Secretariat has been established to ensure that there is efficiency in dealing with matters concerning Homecoming. The Secretariat is headed by Ms Paula James and can be contacted at 468-2111.



## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2009

Honourable Richard Frederick

Minister for Physical Development, the Environment, Housing, Urban Renewal and Local Government and Parliamentary Representative for Castries Central



Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, supporters of the United Workers Party, supporters of the St. Lucia Labour Party, fellow St. Lucians, Season's Greetings!

This is a time of the year when we all indulge in setting aside our differences and permitting an aura of goodwill to prevail. It is my fervent desire, that notwithstanding our differences, religious, political or otherwise, that an atmosphere of goodwill remains a permanent feature of our surroundings.

This will invariably translate to all of us respecting each other, recognizing differences but understanding that one has a right to an opinion, and of course healing the deep wounds which result from divisiveness.

Folks, Saint Lucia is our country. No one person or contingent of persons can lay more claims to her than others. She belongs to us all. She smiles when she sees a semblance of peace and tranquility parade her shores, but likewise is disgruntled when we, in furtherance of our own selfish interests, damage her reputation on the regional and international scene. Let us stop doing such an injustice to our sweet Saint Lucia

This past year was, to say the least, was challenging. But as the old saying goes, the Almighty never gives one a burden to

carry without giving him or her strength to carry that burden. And so, he equipped sweet Saint Lucia with the strength, the resilience, the fortitude, to navigate those stormy waters and put her on a developmental path that is now the envy of many.

This year saw the incomparable delivery of many projects by my Ministry of Physical Development. These include: retrofitting of a facility to house the Castries Fire Station, completion of a human resource and development centre at Tete Chemin, refurbishing of old remand prison to serve as a holding facility for Central Police Station and others in the immediate environs, Completion of the Inscription site for the Pitons Management Area; and Completion of the NEMO Emergency Operation Centre.

Projects at implementation stages (ongoing projects) are as follows: Grande Riviere H.R.D.C, Belle Vue H. R. D.C, Monchy H.R.C.D to name a few.

We also saw the delivery of some housing units in the areas for which they were earmarked. These included Cresslands Soufriere and Monchy. The latter is awaiting provision of water connection before handing over. IN the case of Marigot, this project has been promised by the contractor by the end of next month. We have also seen the commencement of work on the the St. Jude's Garden's Housing project in Vieux Fort. Arrangements are currently being finalized on agreements for a housing project in Anse-La-Raye.

In Castries, the changes are so evident that even the blind can see. The opportunity presented would not be sufficient to enumerate the multitude of small projects which have been implemented. And for the season, a number of persons were awarded small contracts to ensure that they too, partake in the festive season.

I want to, on behalf of the people of Castries Central shower praises on the Tawainese Ambassador, Mr. Tom Chou, his staff, government and people. To them I say:

*Although your assistance is the subject of envy, this help In St. Lucia books, must go down in history;*

*The changes you're made in our people's lives;  
Warrant individual testimonials be kept in the archives;  
You have extended a hand to every representative;  
Some reject it, saying it's not in sync with their policies;  
They thrive on their people remaining in misery;  
Believing it would lend to their political longevity.*

Ambassador Chou, government and people of Taiwan, thank you very, very much. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, hoping you reap more in your international trade, so that your assistance to St. Lucia can not only continue but increase.

To my people of Castries Central, every time I see those visible changes that I have commissioned in Castries Central, I remember you. I must never forget that you gave me an opportunity to serve you and this I am doing with utmost vigor. I know some of you may have had your doubts about me. But as the old saying goes, "time is a healer of all sorrows". I have carried the responsibility of district representative against the odds. My critics have not shirked in their quest to assassinate my character. But there is no doubt that God has given me the strength, not only to withstand, but to refute and redirect, where necessary.

I reiterate a commitment which I made to you last year as your District Rep and that is to deport myself and to conduct the affairs of government in such a manner that I do not bring shame to your eyes. I owe you this, and I undertake to discharge this responsibility.

I want to wish all my constituents, boys, girls, ladies, gentlemen and supporters of both political parties a very merry Christmas and a bright and prosperous 2010. Live by the principle of being a "go-getter" and when decisions are tough to make, let God guide you in the right direction.

To each and every St. Lucian, let me wish you a Merry Christmas and a new year in which we respect each other, recognize differences, but do not let those differences be the basis of animosity. Let us try desperately to live peaceful and loving lives. Merry christmas everybody.

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – 2009

Hon. Ezechieel Joseph

Minister of Agriculture lands Fisheries and Forestry  
and Parliamentary Representative Babonneau



form at an acceptable level in 2009. Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture will adopt an even more active role to ensure that the necessary infrastructure, institutions and policy framework are in place to meet the requirements of the: International, Domestic, Regional and Cruise ship market.

This past year, was marked by both challenges and accomplishments.

During 2009 my Ministry was successful in overcoming many of the challenges faced, thanks in part to the support received from many friendly governments and organizations that assisted with the implementation of our programs.

I wish to place on record my Ministry's appreciation and gratitude to the Governments and people of Taiwan, Mexico, Japan and the European Union. I would also like to say a special thank you to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), CARICOM, the many farmers' organizations and all the stakeholders in the agricultural sector.

2010 promises to be an even more challenging year. But with challenges come opportunities. Let us together continue to build on the momentum and the gains made in 2009. As a nation let us work together to ensure our country returns to the track of agriculture prosperity.

To my constituents of Babonneau, I believe that together we have accomplished most of our programs. However in the coming year we need to continue to focus not only on the economic, but more importantly emphasize the social aspects of our people's lives.

As we strive to create better communities, the active participation of

everyone in the many development programs undertaken is vital.

Let your voice be heard in matters regarding the development of our youth. How do we engage them to become active participants in our community efforts and assume leadership roles?

Let your voice be heard on ways to develop cohesive and sustained family structures that strengthen our communities and nation.

This is an area of concern to me. That is why in 2009 we started a number of programs geared towards the development of our youth. In the coming year we will continue to build on these programs. I trust that I can rely on your support to make them happen.

As we celebrate this joyous season, please spare a thought for those who may not be as fortunate as you. Let us all use this Season to reflect on the profound theme of love. And may it inspire us to be guardians of the peace and unity here in Saint Lucia.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation and thanks to the staff of my Ministry for their commitment and for seeing our programs through to completion.

Special thanks go out to all the people in my constituency for their support and I look forward in the coming year for your continued cooperation to build on the gains made in 2009.

May the festive season be one of joy and fulfillment for you.

May God bless and guide us all as we celebrate the birth of His son-Jesus Christ. Remember always to put "Jesus in your Christmas."

On behalf of my family, the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry which I have the honor to lead, I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2010. I thank you.

Over the past few years, we in Saint Lucia have seen an increase in violent crimes and continual domestic violence and violence against women and children. Again, like last year, I urge all St. Lucians to enjoy the time spent with family and friends, putting aside old grudges. For, for us to grow as a nation we have to come together as a people.

During the festive season, peer pressure on our country's youth will be even greater, with the push to consume alcohol, illegal drugs and partake in illicit sexual activities. I urge our youthful population to carefully consider their decisions as this will greatly impact

their lives.

I further ask all parents, guardians and responsible citizens of this nation to help safeguard our children against such practices. I also urge all St. Lucians to be careful on the highways and byways during this season of celebration.

In closing, I wish members of the diplomatic Corps and persons from other nations residing in Saint Lucia, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year; Feliz Navidad y prospero ano nuevo, Joyeux Noël et Bonne L'année, Feliz Natal e um ano novo feliz, shin yen kwai le and to all St. Lucians, Mèsi, tout Sent Lisyen, pou sipòté mwen, èk mwen ka swété tout moun an Bon Nwèl èk an Bon Lanné.

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – 2009

Honourable Guy Eardley Joseph

Minister for Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities and Parliamentary Representative for Castries South East



As your Member of Parliament, we will continue with our focused agenda of transforming the constituency into a beacon of joy and love. This will be done in a guided manner to ensure that every part of the constituency and every aspect of your lives are addressed in one way or the other, in order to transform our social conditions.

In celebrating the joyous season of good cheer and thanksgiving, let us remember to express kindness and love towards our neighbours and others. For it is through our support and respect for each other that we will sow the important seeds of unity, appreciation, friendship and love. These are fundamental to building a strong and beautiful Saint Lucia not just for us but for future generations.

Let this unfolding New Year 2010 be one of renewal and passionate commitment to the good of our nation and our families. Let the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ be a celebration of betterment, of forgiveness, of spreading and sharing good cheer toward each other.

I do trust that we will continue to work together in the New Year with renewed vigour and enthusiasm as we forge ahead with our developmental agenda.

I wish all Saint Lucians at home and abroad a wonderful and joyous Christmas and a New Year filled with a sense of focus, dedication and peace.

May the good Lord continue to bless you, your family and our country abundantly

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – 2009

Honourable Jeanine Compton

Parliamentary Representative for Micoud North



It seems like only yesterday, that I wished you, my fellow St. Lucians a Merry Christmas and a happy 2009, but a whole year has passed and we move rapidly towards 2010.

Throughout this year I have been deeply moved and am greatly appreciative of the unwavering support afforded me by all St. Lucians, in particularly the people of Micoud North.

Over the past year, we, St. Lucians have had to grapple with the effects of the global recession on our small developing nation, with the effects being felt greatly in the

rural communities of Saint Lucia, where, resources and employment are limited. You, the people, must be commended for continuing to work steadfastly for your families and for striving for the progress of our beloved Saint Lucia even in these times of hardship.

I assure you, that I will continue to work to the best of my abilities for the benefit of our Nation Saint Lucia, however I must stress that the world is still struggling out of this turmoil and we must continue to be prudent in our spending during the festive season and the coming year.

It is with much joy and appreciation that I register my heartfelt gratitude to all Saint Lucians and in particular the constituents of Castries South East, for the cooperation and support you have given to me.

Through your committed guidance and assistance, we have been able to undertake numerous programmes, projects and activities, for the further advancement and development of the residents of Castries South East.

I will continue to honour my pledge in making a significant difference in the quality of life of my constituents and that of all Saint Lucians. You have given me the opportunity to serve you and that is a commitment that I hold sacred and honour deeply.

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – 2009

### Honourable Arsene Vigil James

Minister for Education and Culture and  
Parliamentary Representative for Micoud South



to all St. Lucians at home and abroad. Similar greetings go out to all the other persons who form part of the society of our beautiful Saint Lucia.

On a more direct and specific note I wish to say 'Merry Christmas' and a God Blessed New Year to each and every one of you. It is a season of joyous feelings, happiness and comradeship. It is a time for sharing and even to be overly generous though it may be in a small way. It is a time to rekindle acquaintances and friendships. It is a time for family reunions, a time to show concern for those who are deprived and are less fortunate. It is also a time to remember our loved ones, more so as we reflect on the events of the year that have gone past us.

The coolness of the air, the bright lights and decorations, the sound of favourite carols, the several activities and the hustle and the bustle remind us that the festive season

is here again. That strong feeling of joy is aroused as we celebrate together in a true spirit of unity. It is a season to express our love and to show kindness towards our fellow men.

Peace and tranquility must be the hallmark of our celebrations. We must all endeavour to make

our own personal pledge and commit ourselves to a festive season that is free of crime, violence and accidents. To achieve this we ought to be law-abiding with a strong resolve to mutually respect each other. We should vow never to trample on the rights of each other, no matter the situation or our station in life.

Let me thank you my people of Micoud South for your continued support throughout the past year and for the opportunity to share in some of the several events that took place during that time.

Thanks also to the various stake holders and key players within the Education Sector. To all those that I work with directly and to everyone else I thank you for your cooperation and services rendered.

To the Honourable Prime Minister, Cabinet colleagues, Parliamentarians and their families I say 'Have a joyous festive season and thanks for your support and cooperation. Special greetings go to the children and youth of my Constituency and St. Lucia on a whole. Moin Ka Swatay Tout Pep St. Licie Jolly Noel, Bon Fete Et tout Sakibon pou ardan Lannay 2010.

Looking back at 2009, I must say that it was a very eventful

year. Some of the events bring back good and wonderful memories, others not so good and some downright bitter ones. Thank God we were able to survive them all and were able to rise above the occasions. There are indeed lessons to be learnt, so as to strive for a better and brighter future. The economic and financial situation facing our country made it much more difficult for all of us. Money has been hard to come by, not only for us but for countries the world over.

Some of us had to tighten our belts, make cuts and forego many amenities so as to make ends meet. Many of you understood what had to be done and were willing to adjust and make the necessary sacrifices to ensure survival. That is indeed commendable but not everyone was prepared to make adjustments and adapt to the extenuating circumstances. For some persons only self and ambitions mattered.

I am happy and grateful to the majority of my people of Micoud South for their patience, tolerance, understanding and fortitude. You have shown restraint and have been resilient even under difficult circumstances. Finance has been our sore point but I promise to deliver and that I will definitely do during my tenure.

The going has been slow because financing has been tough. The demands on Government have been overwhelming, with increases upon increases at every turn and at varying circumstances. A few individuals are trying

desperately to sow the seeds of discord among you. Those persons selfishly believe that you can fill a bucket with water from a drizzle of rain. Maybe a few have been able to do so, but most of us are realistic enough to know and understand that it is impossible to accomplish such a feat.

Let us not allow such persons to dampen our spirit or influence us to lose our faith and give up hope. We will continue to persevere, persist and endure to the end. We shall seek to achieve our goals and at the end prevail together. Let us continue to join forces for the betterment of our Constituency and our island home.

Let us celebrate this Christmas and the New Year in harmony, peace and love for each other. May the good Lord bestow upon us all glad tidings and good cheer as we celebrate with each other. May He give us good health, strength, appeasement from afflictions and tribulations, and freedom from all forms of atrocities as we joyfully celebrate this Christmas and usher in a bright and a prosperous 2010.

May God bless you all and give you His mercies. Let your lives continue to glow brighter so that your circumstances in life can be better in the New Year and other years to come. Let us all strive for rays of sunshine in our lives.

In conclusion let me say that although 'A stitch in time saves nine' 'Do not hang your hat where you cannot reach it. MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

## CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – 2009

### Honourable Lenard Montoute

Minister for Social Transformation, Public Service, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports and Parliamentary Representative for Gros Islet



Ladies and Gentlemen, residents of the Gros-Islet Constituency, fellow Saint Lucians. It is this time of year again when we celebrate the yuletide season.

This year as we review, reminisce and reflect on our challenges and achievements of the past year, Let us all who have been blessed, spare a hand and a place in our hearts for the less fortunate among us. We can all be exemplars of the true spirit and traditions of Christmas, by upholding the virtues of caring and sharing, nurturing an upliftment of our humanity and a deeper bond of unity in our communities.

This is normally a juncture where we resolve to make amends for our failings and im-

provements on our successes. I wish to make a special plea to our youth, to be more mindful of the value and sanctity of life. Embrace more peaceful and amicable means of resolving conflicts. Engage in safer, healthier lifestyles and more socially acceptable behaviours.

As we look to the future, the prospects are all yours to pursue and conquer. Let the New Year signal a brighter new day and punctuate this new chapter with more positives and higher ideals.

To all residents of Gros-Islet, this coming year we will observe a significant milestone in the history of our constituency. We will observe and celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Gros-Islet's elevation to township. I call on

all Gros-Isletians to unite and participate in the many activities planned, which will culminate with some major events including a homecoming of Gros-Isletians living overseas.

We must each play a role in the continued development of our community as we strive to improve our quality of life in Gros-Islet.

I wish to take this opportunity to wish all fellow Members of Parliament including members of the Opposition, God's guidance, health and happiness now and in the New Year.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all who have worked with me in this past year and look forward to continued good working relations. I must make special mention of my Staff of Ministry

of Social Transformation, Public Service, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports, as well as staff and Board Members of the Statutory Bodies under my portfolio, namely, Saint Lucia Social Development Fund, National Conservation Authority, Belfund, National Lotteries Authority, Sports Saint Lucia Incorporated, the Staff and wards of Boys Training Centre and the Staff of my Constituency Office.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to extend best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to all Saint Lucian citizens, residents and visitors.

May the good Lord Bless you and may God bless our island Saint Lucia. Thank you

# CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – 2009

## Senator the Honourable Allen M. Chastanet

### Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation



Yes 2009 was truly a year that most would like to forget. Yet in the midst of all of the gloom that we have had to contend with, Saint Lucia has not fared as badly as a number of our sister countries in the Caribbean. In fact, it is fair to say that we done relatively well.

Notwithstanding the challenges we recorded some successes. We saw the introduction of new services into Saint Lucia, the return of carriers that had ceased operations here and an increase in the number of flights from some of our existing carriers. The introduction of the low cost carriers Jet Blue out of New York and West Jet out of Toronto has impacted positively on the cost of airline tickets from these two source markets into Saint Lucia. We now have an additional 37,648 seats from these two low cost carriers into Saint Lucia for 2010. In addition American Airlines has decided to put on four additional flights out of Miami throughout 2010 thereby providing over 31,000 new seats. We have also witnessed the return

of Condor Airlines out of Frankfurt in Germany thus providing a gateway to Europe. Additional direct flights will also be added during the summer by British Airways out of Gatwick.

One of the goals that this Government set itself when it came into office was the establishment of an inclusive body to help define the policies that would guide the growth of the tourism industry. While it has taken some time, the Tourism Industry Advisory Committee held its inaugural meeting on December 04-05, 2009. This meeting brought together a wide cross-section of the community to reflect and provide advice on certain critical policy matters. Some elements of a model for the future growth and development of the industry were presented and discussed while the true economic contribution of tourism to the economy was highlighted in a presentation which outlined the main features of the Tourism Satellite Accounting System.

We have been able to pursue the concept of village tourism that was first presented in the

Prime Minister's Budget Address earlier this year. Through the use of resources from the European Union under SFA 2007, we have a technical team assisting the Ministry with implementation of this new initiative. We have determined that the communities of the Mabouya Valley and Dennery village will be the focus of this programme. Over the next two years therefore we will be engaged with the people of these communities in developing and implementing initiatives that will deepen the linkages between tourism and agriculture thereby building on the tourism potential of the area. Approximately 3.4 million Euros will be spent under this project.

Fellow Saint Lucians, what I have attempted to explain so far throughout my tenure as Minister of tourism is that the tourism industry is not an end in itself but a means of providing opportunity for the development of our people and country. Like the banana industry before it, tourism is today the industry that all the leading development institutions

such as the World Bank and our very own Caribbean Development Bank have identified as the vehicle most likely to continue the transformation of our economy. We have put significant resources into the industry and must therefore safeguard the investments we've made so far and the opportunities that will increasingly become available.

In conclusion therefore, let me wish you all a joyous Christmas and prosperity and peace in 2010. From all indications the New Year will not be an easy one but one which holds out hope for improvement over 2009. Let's save our energy for the major battles beyond our shores that we must fight to safeguard our interest at home and not waste it fighting amongst ourselves. My staff and I will do all we can in the coming year to influence the direction of the growth of the tourism industry in a manner which benefits most of us. With your help I am sure we will be successful. Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all. I thank you.

## 2010 A YEAR OF REBIRTH FOR ST JUDE "RISING FROM THE ASHES A PHOENIX WILL EMERGE"



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