

Increasing preparedness in communities



Selwyn Brooks

The emergency management environment is more complex now than before, and one of the most active district emergency organisations is planning a full stretch of programmes this year aimed at increasing the preparedness of the communities.

Chairman of the St. James Central DEO, Selwyn Brooks, told members at the annual general meeting last evening that today's volunteers had to "negotiate a maze of relationships, reputations, lack of resources and accommodation, few training opportunities, lack of recognition and appreciation for work successfully implemented".

"To lead a DEO today therefore demands a change in our thinking on how

we operated in the past. We now need decisive leadership, innovation, creativity, flexible negotiation, improvisation, strategic vision and planning.

"The emergency environment has become increasingly more

complex, and DEO chairpersons and members will have to work among a diverse and ever expanding range of organisations and events, managing ever increasing community expectations and scrutiny and some associated political implications," he said.

Brooks said over the past year the DEO had done mass casualty and first aid training, shelter management training, damage assessment, training in the safe use of a donated chainsaw, amended the by laws, added to the cadre of members trained in radio operations and added 20 new members.

One of the prides, he noted, was the fact that they had done a number of projects mapping the risk assessment

and disaster resilience of two neighbourhoods, Redman's Village and Hometown Sunset Crest, with plans for an even bigger study this year.

Additionally, the chairman said they were launching a HELP sign project by the end of next month to assist residents with information on how to access emergency personnel when needed and they were making preparations to host three training sessions for the business sector, the first of which will focus on the new Safety and Health at Work Act.

Community emergency response and first aid training courses were also on the cards, along with a school quiz among the three primary schools in the catchment area.

The biggest project though will be a resilience study of the Batts Rock to Paynes Bay area to identify and plot challenges and strengths in these community in the event of an emergency. (LB)



Dr. David Estwick and chairman of the Barbados Sugar Industry Limited Dr. Atlee Brathwaite at today's meeting.

\$460m for cane industry

AGRICULTURE MINISTER OUTLINES PLANS TO TURN INDUSTRY INTO A PROFITABLE SECTOR

Barbados is to have a \$460 million multi-purpose sugar cane processing facility by 2016.

This was revealed this morning by Project Manager of the Barbados Cane Industry Corporation, Carl Simpson, during the opening of a meeting which the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. David Estwick held with a Japanese delegation for funding of the facility.

Estwick said the discussions, which also involved top representatives of Bosch Projects — an international agency with technical expertise in cane sugar — and the St. Lucia-based Inter-Sugar Partnership, was aimed at examining all the variables in moving towards the establishment of the venture.

He said this was a fulfillment of a recent Cabinet mandate that established a set of provisions that included raising the necessary financing for the project.

"That would be the two phases of the project. One being the field side of the project and the second being the factory side of the project, along with a co-generation facility being established," the agriculture minister added.

"The objective would be to move the sugar industry to a high-end value-added product industry, where we look to produce alcohol, we look to produce "A" strike and "B" strike molasses, we look to produce electricity from that co-generation facility, we look to produce specialty sugars,

largely for export."

He reiterated an earlier position to ban future bulk sugar exports to the European Union, since, he said, it made no sense selling sugar at a "massive" loss to the EU.

"I will replace that with the bulk sugar production only for domestic purposes, packaging domestically and taking advantage of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy rules of origin with respect to importation of sugar within CARICOM," reasoned Estwick.

The minister argued that once these elements were put in place, they would turn around an "ailing" sugar industry into a vibrant and profitable sector.

Estwick also acknowledged the "suffering" of the independent sugar cane growers, whom he suggested had been getting a lot of promises for a long time. He noted the lack of profitability in the industry ever since the removal of the preferential price for sugar and quota to Europe, which was replaced by a reciprocal system.

"That price has been reduced almost every two years or there about, to the point where it is essentially not profitable to engage in that type of activity any longer.

"It meant that the lack of profitability created a situation where the Government was put in a position where it could not pay the independent sugar farmers the type of cane support funding that was necessary, via, not only the cane planting scheme, but also the price paid for them for a ton of sugar cane taken to the sugar factories."

Recognising that many plantations would have therefore lost substantial sums of money and carried forward debts over the years, Estwick pleaded with them to "stay with us through this difficult period".

He said he was optimistic that the Government would receive the required funding for the processing facility. (EJ)

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Announcement

Appointment of New Vice President of Human Resources



Glenda Gilkes, EMBA
Vice President of Human Resources

Insurance Corporation of Barbados Limited (ICBL) is pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Glenda Gilkes as our new Vice President of Human Resources effective January 15, 2013.

Glenda has more than 25 years of experience in human resources leadership roles across the financial, insurance, telecommunications, tourism and manufacturing sectors. During her career, she led several executive teams both regionally and internationally, which allowed her to be exposed to different cultures and work practices.

In addition, Glenda has extensive experience in change management, strategic planning, human resources planning and labour relations and is a skilled negotiator. She is a strategic thinker and resourceful problem-solver who is pro-active and results oriented. Glenda also possesses excellent interpersonal, analytical and organizational skills necessary to recruit, train and influence the motivation of staff to reach their full potential.

She has served on the Board of Directors of two statutory Corporations as Chairman of the Human Resource Committees and she is a member of the Human Resource Management Association of Barbados (HRMAB).

Glenda holds an Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) majoring in Human Resources Management and a Post Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management from the University of the West Indies.

Glenda will be responsible for all aspects of human resources including talent development, employee engagement, labour relations, compensation and benefits. She will also be in charge of ensuring that our programs fully support the new strategic direction of ICBL to include maintaining the highest standards for attracting, retaining and developing talented professionals across our operations and the transformation of ICBL staff into a high performance team.

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