

BARBADOS BETTER THAN EVER

THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY 2007 REPORT
ON PROMISES AND PERFORMANCE





*A Happy, Peaceful
and Prosperous New Year
From the Government that has made it
Better Than Ever For All Barbadians*



*Our New Year's Resolution:
To continue to serve you by working even harder
at making Every Bajan A Winner*

BLP

THE ECONOMY A PHENOMENAL RECORD

Job Number 1 has been Jobs

This Barbados Labour Party took office with unemployment just under 25 per cent, with a workforce that had been demoralized by two disastrous terms of Democratic Labour Party rule. More than 32,000 of the 132,000 workforce could not find jobs, including a whopping 17,000 of the 64,200 women in the labour force.

The BLP has changed the state of the game with innovative thinking and hard work that spurred investor confidence, leading to the creation of more than 30,500 jobs — as promised. Today, more than 133,000 Barbadians are employed and unemployment stands at 7.1% per cent, with a mere 6,000 females listed among the unemployed.

This phenomenal job-creation rate was led by a revitalized private sector, that, spurred by confidence generated by the BLP Administration's policies, invested billions and created 24,400 jobs.

In 1994 more than 32,000 of the 132,000 work force could not find jobs. This included 17,000 of the 64,200 females in the labour force

Foreign Reserves are at \$2.2 billion. Enough to cover imports for 35 weeks. And our dollar is secure

Protecting the Barbadian dollar

Barbadians elected this party to office in 1994 despite attempts by the Dems to scare voters into believing that the BLP Government would devalue the dollar.

Our mission was clear: we had to place priority on protecting the Barbados dollar after it had been buffeted for nine years by unsound economic policies.

The dollar's state was at its most precarious at the end of 1993 when under the Dems foreign reserves stood at just \$47 million — enough to cover the country's import bill for less than two weeks.

This mismanagement by the Dems drove the country into the waiting arms of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and forced it to borrow 30 million pounds sterling at the crippling interest rate of 13.5%, which the country is still paying back today.



The BLP has created 30,500 jobs. More than 133,000 Barbadians are now employed

BLP's policies have led to sustained growth in the tourism and services sectors, which in turn generated significant foreign exchange

At mid-2007, under the skilled leadership of Owen Arthur, reserves are at an imposing \$2.2 billion — enough to cover imports for 35 weeks, and our dollar is safe.

We have been able to achieve this level of financial security without recourse to massive foreign borrowing. This is largely because the BLP's policies have led to sustained growth in the tourism and services sectors, which in turn generated significant foreign exchange.

Strong, sustained, unprecedented growth and development

In the early 1990s, the Barbados economy was in absolute shambles, declining in 1990 by 3.3 per cent, in 1991 by 3.9 per cent, in 1992 by a staggering 5.7 per cent and again in 1993. Investors had no confidence in DLP leadership or policies and the economy was shrinking. In fact, when that party left office in 1993 real Gross Domestic Product stood at \$790 million, just \$3 million more than the \$787 million of 1985; the country had stagnated under the Dems.

By contrast, between 1994 and 2007, under the Owen Arthur Government, Barbados recorded only one year of negative growth and that was in 2001 when the world suffered the 9/11 shock of the terrorist attack on the US.

The contrasts between the first four years of the 1990s and the past four years are even more striking. Real GDP growth under the BLP exceeded four per cent every year except in 2003 when the growth recorded was two per cent. In other words, the economy's poorest performance in the past four years was better than the best under the last DLP administration.



**In 1993 overall
Barbados was
\$419.8 million**

The creation of a climate of confidence in the economy has been in large measure attributed to the post-1994 reversal, and few things speak to state of health of an economy like investor confidence. That's why we invite Barbadians to study the numbers. In 1993, the year before the Dems left office total overall investment in the entire country was \$419.8 million. Under the BLP the Four Seasons Resort at Paradise Beach in Black Rock alone is \$400 million.



**In 2007 the new
Four Seasons
Resort at
Paradise Beach
will alone be
a \$400 million
investment**

Immediately upon taking office in 1994, this BLP Government set about to restore confidence among local and foreign investors by creating an environment conducive to healthy returns.

Again, the results have been astounding. In 2006 alone, more than \$1.7 billion was pumped into the economy as new investment, contributing to the transformation of the landscape that has been occurring over the past decade and providing thousands of new jobs and opportunities for Barbadians at all levels. Investment in the hospitality sector has transformed our hotel plant and moved Barbados to a premiere destination for discriminating travellers.

Through enlightened social policies the Barbados Labour Party has been able to translate this strong, sustained and unprecedented growth into benefits for every Barbadian, giving life to its 2003 election slogan, **Every Bajan A Winner.**

The World Bank has designated Barbados as the third wealthiest country in the hemisphere...

... It said investment in "intangible assets" such as education, health, human capital, commitment to the rule of law and social stability placed Barbados behind only the United States and Canada in the Western Hemisphere

Personal tax free allowances for persons over 60 increased from \$30,000 in 2006 to \$40,000 in 2007

That's why in 2007, the United Nations has identified Barbados as the Number 1 Developing Country in the world — our social programmes in areas such as education, health, access to clean drinking water, electricity services and modern telecommunications continue to be facilitated and enhanced by robust economic performance.

That's also why in spite of our limited natural resources, the World Bank has designated Barbados as the third wealthiest country in the hemisphere and one of the wealthiest in the world. The bank said investment in "intangible assets" such as education, health, human capital, commitment to the rule of law and social stability placed Barbados behind only the United States and Canada in the Western Hemisphere.

Since 2003, 26,000 persons longer p Income Tax

Unprecedented, unparalleled Tax Relief

The BLP is determined that its policies should lead to an improved standard of living for all Barbadians. To this end, we have placed special focus on the welfare of our most vulnerable citizens. One of our strategies has been to ensure that an increasing amount of the money for which they work remains in their hands through enlightened tax policies.

LAND TAX

Over the past five years, an average of 19,000 landowners have been relieved from paying land tax, the result of a policy decision by the BLP to exempt owner-occupied properties valued at less than \$125,000; while the majority of those who remained on the residential tax roll have benefited from reduced rates.

INCOME TAX

One of the most sweeping social strategies of the BLP resulted from the decision to lift the income tax threshold from \$15,000 to \$25,000, resulting in 26,000 income earners escaping the income tax net since 2003. Again those who remain on the roll benefit from rate reductions.

The personal allowance for persons aged 60 and over and in receipt of a pension was increased from \$30,000 in 2006 to \$40,000 in 2007.

The home allowance was increased from \$6,000 to \$10,000 from income year 2004 with a further increase of \$5,000 granted in 2007 for expenditure on environmentally preferred products.

To encourage taxpayers to save more, an annual \$10,000 savings allowance was introduced in 2007 for investments made by a taxpayer in either one of the following, or a combination of all:

- Savings with a cooperative society
- Investment in new shares
- Investment in mutual funds.

A further incentive was granted to tax payers who were desirous of saving for their retirement. The deduction allowed for contributions to registered retirement savings plans was increased from \$4,000 to \$10,000 per annum.

Determined to ensure that working class Barbadians have a higher level of disposable income, the BLP Government in 1998 went further, providing a reverse tax credit to thousands who had already been dropped from the tax roll. This benefit was increased from \$500 to \$800 from the 2007 income year. In 2008 it will rise to \$1,110, with a further increase to \$1,300 in 2009.

The maximum income threshold, at which persons qualify for the credit, was increased from \$13,000 to \$15,000 in 2007, to \$16,500 in 2008 and to \$18,000 in 2009. More than 27,000 Barbadians will benefit from this measure.

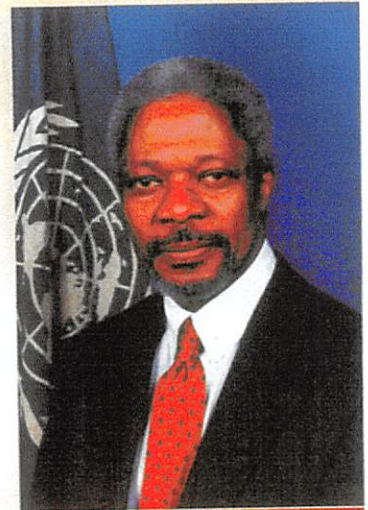
CORPORATE TAX

The BLP's reduction of the corporate tax rate from the 40 per cent of the early 1990s to the current 25 per cent, has enabled businesses to retain a larger portion of their profits for reinvestment. This reinvestment has led to new and expanded businesses and a significant number of the 30,000-plus jobs created since first term of the Arthur Administration.

In similar vein, the corporate tax for approved small businesses, businesses in special development areas, those engaged in manufacturing and in the construction of houses for sale at less than \$150 000, has been reduced from 25 to 15 per cent, generating even more jobs for Barbadians.

New Opportunities for Small Enterprise

The impressive performance of the Barbados economy has brought enormous benefits to all Barbadians. However, this BLP Government ensured that there were many avenues for ordinary people to fulfil their dreams. This administration was faced with the problems of the Barbados Development Bank, which was virtually bankrupt and its fate had to be addressed as a matter of great urgency.



Former UN Secretary General Dr. Kofi Annan described Barbados as a nation punching above its weight.

In 2007, the United Nations declared Barbados the number one developing country in eradicating poverty

The Enterprise Growth Fund Limited was formed in 1998 as part of the Government's initiative to expand capital market activity. It sought to develop dynamic small to medium-sized businesses through the provision of both traditional and non-traditional financing instruments. In addition to providing venture capital to businesses, EGFL also provided management services to a number of funds set up by Government, including the Agricultural Development Fund and the Industrial Development and Employment Fund. By September 2007, approvals of \$205 million were made and \$153 million in grants, loans and equity actually disbursed, serving 148 clients.

It is further estimated that more than 2,500 persons were employed using resources from the EGFL. Many meaningful enterprises owe their birth and existence to this company.

Fund Access was set up to provide loan financing to mainly small businesses that were unable to access financing from commercial banks. To date, 709 clients have received loans totalling more than \$18.5 million. Of these, 330 were for loans to set up new business and 379 were advanced for the expansion of existing businesses. An estimated 849 jobs were created as a direct result of this activity by Fund Access.

The Urban Enterprise Loan Scheme, set up in 1997 under the Urban Development Commission, has disbursed 759 loans worth \$7.2 million. This lending has created employment for 977 persons. Its counterpart, the Rural Enterprise Fund, made loans totalling \$3.9 million for small business development in rural Barbados.

The Rural Development Commission conducted training courses for 4,158 persons in a variety of activities, while many rural enterprise showcases were held to acquaint Barbadians with goods and services, produced in the rural areas, that are now available to citizens.

**Small
business
tax rate
reduced
from 25%
to 15%**



This BLP Government, while initiating programmes to develop small businesses, also put in place a new tax and incentives regime to govern their development, including a low rate of tax for registered and approved businesses. Government sought to assist the Small Business Association in setting up its offices, enabling that agency to offer an improved range of services to its members.



Barbados Investment and Development Corporation

Barbados' manufacturing sector, challenged by the increased competition of a liberalized trading environment, has performed creditably since 2003. Domestic exports from this sector, which was employing 9,805 people at the end of 2006, jumped 49.2 per cent; from \$329.4 million in 2003 to \$491.6 in 2006.

Through its Export Development Programme, the BIDC facilitated local producers in getting their speciality and gourmet foods into the stores such as Tesco, Walmart, Waitrose and Sobeys'. Related to this, the Special Technical Assistance Programme (STAP), was set up to improve the global competitiveness of manufacturing and service companies, and more than \$17.6 million has been disbursed since 2001.

Between 2003 and 2006 the BIDC assisted more than 100 small business start-ups, creating almost 200 jobs and generating \$3 million in investment.

Overall, the corporation provided assistance to more than 2,000 companies between 2003 and 2006.

Domestic exports from the manufacturing sector jumped 49.2 %: from \$329.4 million in 2003 to \$491.6 in 2006

**In 1993, total
deposits \$1.9
billion**

**In 2003 total
deposits \$ 7.3
billion**

Domestic Savings

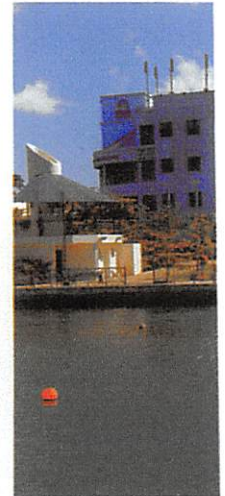
Since 1994, strong sustained growth has given rise to an unprecedented rise in savings, which has doubled since 2001. During the Dems' last year in office, 1993, total deposits in the banking system amounted to \$1.9 billion. By comparison, at the end of 2006 total deposits stood at \$7.3 billion.

This kind of activity demonstrated investor confidence in the country and led to projects that facilitated the creation of 30,000-plus new jobs, leading to larger volumes of disposable income among households. Additionally, progressive tax policies, including lower income and land taxes, left more disposable income in the hands of Barbadians, creating the atmosphere for increased savings.

This disposition to savings has been buttressed by the deliberate decision of Government not to increase rents for the National Housing Corporation apartments, bus fares and the whole regime of user fees for various government services and to allow only a marginal rise in water rate.

The Barbados National Bank success story

In 2001, the Government made available to the public \$96 million worth of shares in the Barbados National Bank Inc., which was then trading at a price of \$1.80 per share. In 2003, the Government sold its 57 per cent holding in the bank for \$3.45 per share, grossing over \$188 million. Today its remaining 20 per cent holding has a stock market value of about \$63 million. The share price meanwhile increased to \$6.63 per share, bringing a good bonanza to those who ignored advice from the DLP to sell their shares. This transaction provided much needed funds for infrastructural development at the airport and the Hilton.



**Local investors,
brimming
with renewed
confidence in
the economy,
injected millions
in housing
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the upgrade of
physical plant in
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and retail sectors**

Unprecedented Investment

Barbados' robust economic growth and phenomenal infrastructural advancement have been encouraged and facilitated by a clearly thought out and efficiently executed public investment programme. The expansion of the ABC Highway and reconstruction or repaving of hundreds of kilometres of major and minor roads, the upgrading of the national water network, the revitalization of Bridgetown, Speightstown and the South Coast with a series of projects and the construction of a number of new Government buildings, among others, have facilitated and encouraged private sector investment. A

significant portion of this has been in tourism and in international financial services.

Local investors, brimming with renewed confidence in the economy, injected millions in housing development; the upgrade of physical plant in the distributive and retail sectors.

A nation that is building

Barbados has enjoyed a sustained explosion in construction activity since the BLP took over the affairs of this country in 1994. At that time real activity in the construction sector stood at \$42.3 million, a significant decline from its 1986 value of \$53.5 million. The 2006 estimate showed, however, that construction had more than doubled and now stands at \$105.6 million. In 1993, 7,100 persons were employed in construction and quarrying, the 2006 figure was more than twice that — 14,500.

This pattern was reflected in the mortgage-lending sector. Total long-term residential mortgages had moved from \$292.8 million to only \$590.2 million under eight years of Dems rule. Under the BLP, long term residential mortgages mushroomed to almost \$1.6 billion by the end of 2006. The value of new mortgages had moved from \$75.9 million in 1996 to \$212 million in 2006.

In 1993 a mere 7,100 persons were employed in construction and quarrying while the 2006 figure was more than twice that — 14,500



The CSME region has provided vitally needed labour for our own growing economy.

Furthermore many of our professionals – doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants – have now established offices in CARICOM countries and are bringing valuable foreign exchange to Barbados.

The BLP has facilitated this process by meaningfully supporting the Barbados Coalition of Service Industries

In road construction, the BLP Government has ensured that every settled community in Barbados is serviced by at least one paved road. The Urban Development Commission and the Rural Development Commission have been building both asphalt and concrete roads at a rapid rate and have been quietly transforming both urban and rural areas. The ABC highway is being widened and so far has taken road construction and design to new heights.

The protection of the environment was not neglected during the building boom. The sewerage system for the South Coast was put in place and planning for the West Coast commenced. The Botanical Garden to be situated at Waterford has begun to take shape with most of the planning work already completed.

Managing prices

The BLP has maintained an excellent record keeping prices down. Between 1994 and 2004, consumer inflation surpassed 2.6 per cent only in 1997 when the Value Added Tax was introduced and placed on all food items. However, this inflation situation remained a far cry from what the country experienced under the Dems in the early 1990s.

Since 2005, in the face of unprecedented increases in the price of crude oil, along with agricultural commodities such as wheat and corn, inflation has stood at between six per cent and seven per cent. The BLP responded by cushioning Barbadians from the full increase in crude oil prices and also by removing duties on a select basket of vital commodities, especially food and basic necessities, while encouraging wholesalers and retailers to remove mark-ups.

Since 1994, the BLP Government has maintained strict controls on items within its scope. For example, all fees, rates and user charges have remained constant over the period. Water rates were marginally increased in a manner that affected those consuming small volumes the least. Government has also ensured that inputs used in the production of electricity were free of tax.

The BLP has ensured that workers received reasonable pay increases every year, in most cases above the rate of inflation. This enabled the workers to cope with increased prices, especially in situations where the inflation was outside local control.

Building the regional economy

When the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas was signed in 1989, the Barbados Government was assigned lead responsibility for the transition to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). In 1994, Prime Minister Arthur had full responsibility for this historic regional initiative.

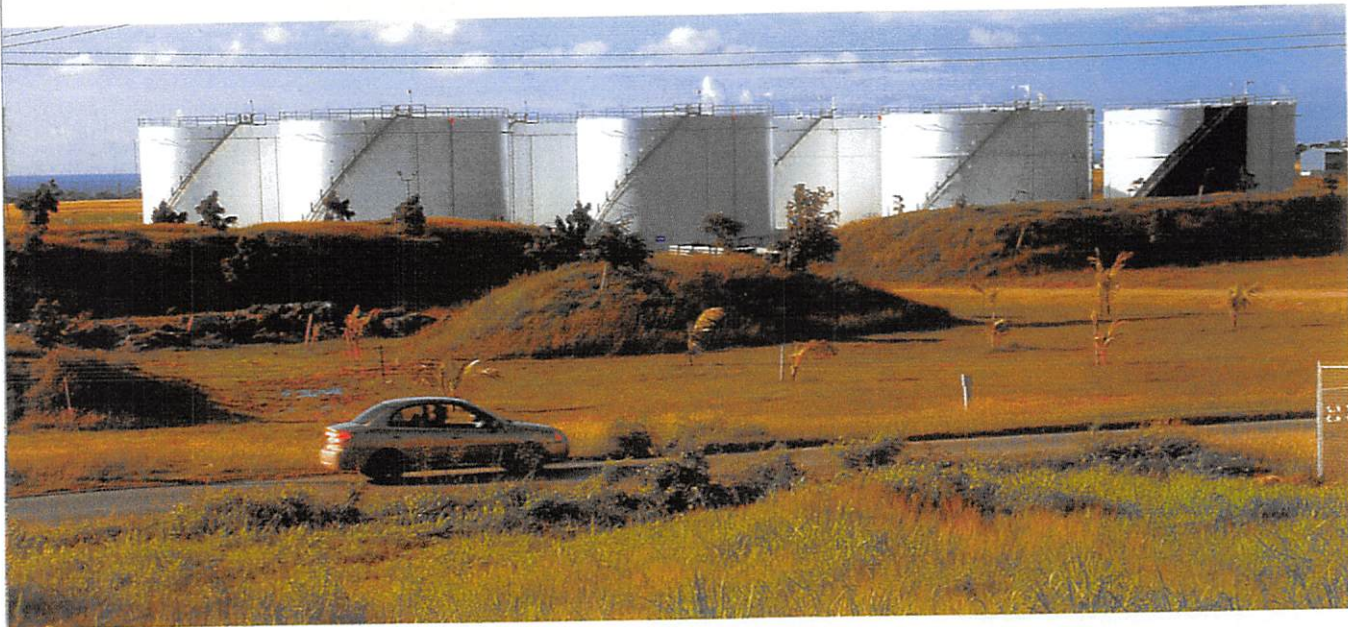
The CARICOM region is vital for the development of Barbados. In fact the region was responsible for 35 per cent of our total exports in 2006, representing \$304 million in sales, surpassing the United States, which took \$171 million of our exports. CARICOM is also our second largest market for imports, not far behind the United States.

The CSME region has also provided vitally needed labour for our own growing economy. Furthermore many of our professionals – doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants – have now established offices in CARICOM countries and are bringing valuable foreign exchange to this Barbados. The BLP has facilitated this process by meaningfully supporting the Barbados Coalition of Service Industries.

Managing energy prices

The price of crude oil on the world market has escalated rapidly over the past three years and now stands at US \$90 per barrel. The BLP Government has taken some bold initiatives that have shielded Barbadians from the worst possible effects of spiralling energy costs.

In 1994, the total tax on a litre of gasoline was 89 cents. It is down to 60 cents per litre as a direct result of bold BLP tax initiatives. The same holds for diesel, which is used mainly in the transportation and industrial sectors. The BLP has also removed the excise tax on kerosene and all fuels and natural gas used by the Barbados Light & Power Company in the generation of electricity.



As part of its programme to improve efficiency in the island's energy sector, the BLP Government closed the obsolete Mobil Oil Refinery in 1998, a decision estimated to have saved consumers roughly ten cents on every litre of fuel they use. Consumers are today paying 40 cents per litre, or about \$1.50 per gallon of gasoline as a direct result of these impressive policy initiatives.

Additionally, in a step aimed at improving the country's energy security, a new fuel terminal was constructed at Fairy Valley, Christ Church, providing Barbadians with some independence from the major oil marketing companies.

Saving Social Security

Barbados has undergone demographic change that has resulted in this country now having a great proportion of elderly people. Indeed, improvements in the health care system have caused Barbados to record one of the highest percentage of centenarians in the world. However this has put pressure on the social security scheme since the shrinking working age and it now has to finance this growing number of elderly persons.

After reviewing the results of the actuarial reports, a consultative process on National Insurance Scheme (NIS) pension reform, along with the results of the National Consultation held in 2001, a number of revisions were made to the National Insurance Scheme.

- Increases in the NIS contribution rate by one per cent of insurable earnings each year for four years, shared equally by employee and employer.
- The NIS retirement age for unreduced pension was raised by six months every four years, starting in 2006 until age 67 is reached in the year 2018.
- Flexible NIS retirement ages were introduced so that in due course persons may retire on an NIS pension at any age from 60 to 70 years.
- These changes have resulted in an improved NIS scheme that will ensure that all Barbadians have access to its many benefits when they do retire.



OUR FOCUS: OUR PEOPLE

We in the Barbados Labour Party are very proud of figures that speak of sound economic management. However, we remain ever mindful of the fact that our progress means nothing if we can't take all our people along this growth path to share in the rewards.

We have lived every day by our election slogan of 2003 — Every Bajan A Winner.

Our poverty eradication programme has remained a primary focus of the BLP.

BLP provided 319 persons with \$3 million in loans for projects ranging from retailing and food services to cosmetology and craft under the Urban Enterprise Loan Fund

Urban Development Commission

The Barbados Labour Party has seriously tackled the issue of Urban Renewal in Barbados. We created the legal framework that offered Barbadians in urban tenancies the same kind of benefits that their colleagues in rural Barbados have been taking advantage of since the early 1980s when a previous BLP Administration introduced the revolutionary Tenancies Freehold Purchase Act.

This BLP subsidised the purchase of these house lots where the tenant paid \$2.50 per square foot while the landlord was given free market price. So far over 800 households have benefited from this initiative at a cost of \$8.8 million and it is expected that in total over 5000 households will benefit.

Among other things, we promised to: reduce urban squalor by repairing and replacing the homes of the poorest Barbadians; continue to facilitate the purchase of house lots for those who could not afford the market price; accelerate the programme of converting 2,000 derelict properties into new housing solutions.

The BLP, through the UDC, between April 2003 and October 2007

- Built 183 new homes for the aged and the indigent at a cost of \$8.8 million.
- Repaired 180 houses at a cost of \$8.3 million.
- Eliminated 29 pit toilets at a cost of \$277,004.
- Built 102 septic tanks at a cost of \$582,614.
- Connected 44 households to the South Coast Sewerage System at a cost of \$488,707.

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- Dug 252 wells for \$1.37 million.
- Built 76 roads at a cost of more than \$10 million, bringing to more than 100 the number of asphalt and concrete roads built since 1997 at a cost of \$33.3 million. Work on another 16 has begun.
- Provided 319 persons with \$3 million in loans for projects ranging from retailing and food services to cosmetology and craft under the Urban Enterprise Loan Fund.
- Provided subsidies to 519 clients at a cost of \$6.7 million.

House Repair/Replacement Programme

ACTIVITY	1997/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	TOTAL
New Houses	69	88	41	20	34	44	48	66	16	10	436
House Repairs	68	80	45	109	114	31	49	34	51	30	611
Wells	69	110	52	85	62	63	21	61	37	74	634
Septic Tanks	15	44	20	11	15	26	8	23	21	26	194
Bathrooms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	29	40
Care & Support	-	-	-	-	-	19					19
South Coast Sewage	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	9	6	14	44
Sub Total \$M	7.3	4.9	2.7	4.9	11.06						
TOTAL \$M			30.8				20.8				

Rural Development Commission

The Rural Development Commission provided almost \$4 million in loans and provided training for 4,158 people in areas such as basic accounting, care of the elderly, marketing, managing small businesses, preparing business plans, records management, dress making, handicraft, construction, project management and customer service.

The RDC also provided public relations and marketing services for small farmer and agri-business practitioners, including a number of enterprise showcases around the island at a cost of more than \$700,000.

The RDC also improved the living conditions of the rural poor, between 2003 and 2007 constructing 218 homes and repairing 423, provided 78 bathrooms, digging 492 wells, constructing 273 septic tanks, installing electricity in 273 homes, connecting water to 121 houses, building 10 wheelchair ramps and undertaking minor works at 182 homes.

At the same time the commission constructed 67 new roads at a cost of \$20 million to benefit 802 households, and is now working on another 18 that will benefit 333 households.

In addition, the RDC installed 2,431 street lights in rural Barbados between 2003 and 2007.

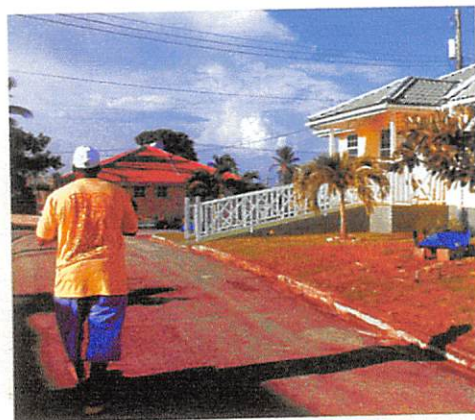
POVERTY ERADICATION *A PROMISE BEING KEPT*

**The BLP
appointed
a Special
Envoy for
persons
with
disabilities**

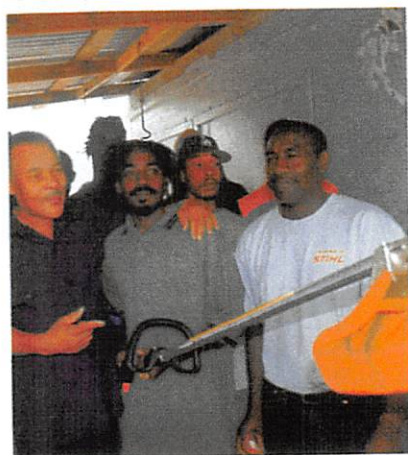
**10,474
persons
benefited
from
programmes
to train
youth in
leadership,
information
technology,
marketing
and
accounting**

The Barbados Labour Party's promise to make **Every Bajan A Winner** propelled the programmes of the Ministry of Social Transformation since the 2003 General Election. Most of the programmes promised have been realized and new initiatives are now being planned or executed.

- The Urban Development Commission has made millions available for enterprise creation.
- Funds are available under the Poverty Eradication Fund for new enterprise initiatives.
- The Poverty Alleviation Bureau has been providing funds to Barbadians for skills enhancement.
- Persons living below the poverty line are being assisted with the payment of rent and utility bills, among other grants from the \$9 million Poverty Fund.
- The Welfare to Work programme was expanded and provided training for more than 1,000 — 60 per cent of whom found jobs and 20 per cent created their own employment as nail technicians, housekeepers and care-givers for the elderly.
- The programmes of the Disability Unit have been expanded.
- The Poverty Alleviation Bureau and the Urban Development Commission together have provided house repairs for thousands of Barbadians.
- Five new Community Resource Centres were built since 2003, bringing to 14 the number of such centres across the island, and 10,474 persons have benefited from programmes to train youth in leadership, information technology, marketing and accounting, among others.
- By the end of the financial year, three new or refurbished centres will open at Rices, St. Philip and Friendship and Parkinson, St. Michael.
- More than 400 young people graduated from the Community Art Career Programme. The eight-month programme provided training in Drawing and Illustrations, Computer Graphics, Air Brushing and Animation.
- As part of its Care For Our Elderly programme, the Vauxhall Senior Citizens Village was completed and opened.
- A increased number of Home Care workers have been placed on a five-day work week to enhance the quality and volume of services offered by the National Assistance Board.
- Extensive renovations have been undertaken at the Clyde Gollop Night Shelter for men; and its rehabilitation programme expanded.
- A Special Envoy for persons with disabilities has been appointed.



ERADICATING POVERTY BLOCK BY BLOCK



The BLP promised in 2003 to intensify and expand the work of the Block Committee under Project Oasis, in order to further develop programmes that would facilitate the reintegration of marginalised young people into the mainstream of society.

In 2003-2004, 222 persons were trained in areas such as Bobcat operations, small business, auto mechanics, computer repairs, digital media, small engine repairs, horticulture and landscaping.

In 2004-2005, the offerings were expanded to include cookery, bartending, leather craft, screen play writing and electrical installation. The number of participants rose to 478.

Between 2005 and 2007, the numbers jumped to 569.

As a result of this training, Project Oasis assisted in the formation of 21 businesses by graduates.

Training was provided at the community level for 2,000 young people per year in a range of sports and cultural disciplines under the Youth Development Programme. The Division catered to 3,718 in 2003-2004 and 3,819 in 2005-2006.

The Division also conducted camps for almost 7,000 children, ran musical training workshops, organised Nail Technology courses and launched the National Youth Awards programme.

No one left out. No one left behind

GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-POVERTY CRUSADE ALSO INCLUDED SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF DIRECT PAYMENTS TO VULNERABLE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS. IN 2006:

- The minimum NIS contributory pension was increased to \$116 per week,
- Non-contributory pension went to \$93 per week;
- Weekly welfare payment for individuals with severe disabilities were increased to \$63;
- The weekly welfare payments to destitute persons was increased to \$63;
- Funeral grants were raised to \$1,485; and
- Maternity grants were raised to \$850.

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HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR BARBADIANS

To date, 635 lots have been identified for sale under the Joint Venture Programme of which 396 have been completed in various parts of the island

The Barbados Labour Party placed this issue at the top of its agenda in 2003. It took a two-pronged approach: Make the homes of tenants of the National Housing Corporation available to them for purchase at concessionary rates and mandate the NHC to step up its partnerships with the private sector to provide affordable housing.

The first major plank of this policy was to put an arrangement in place so that the thousands of households who have paid rent to the NHC for many years to live in terrace units would be able to buy them at tremendously discounted prices.

- In March 2003 the BLP mandated that these tenants would receive: 25 per cent discount on the cost of their units
- 40 per cent concession on all rents
- A rebate of \$5,000 in lieu of minor repairs

In addition, the following measures were introduced in order to facilitate disposal of the units.

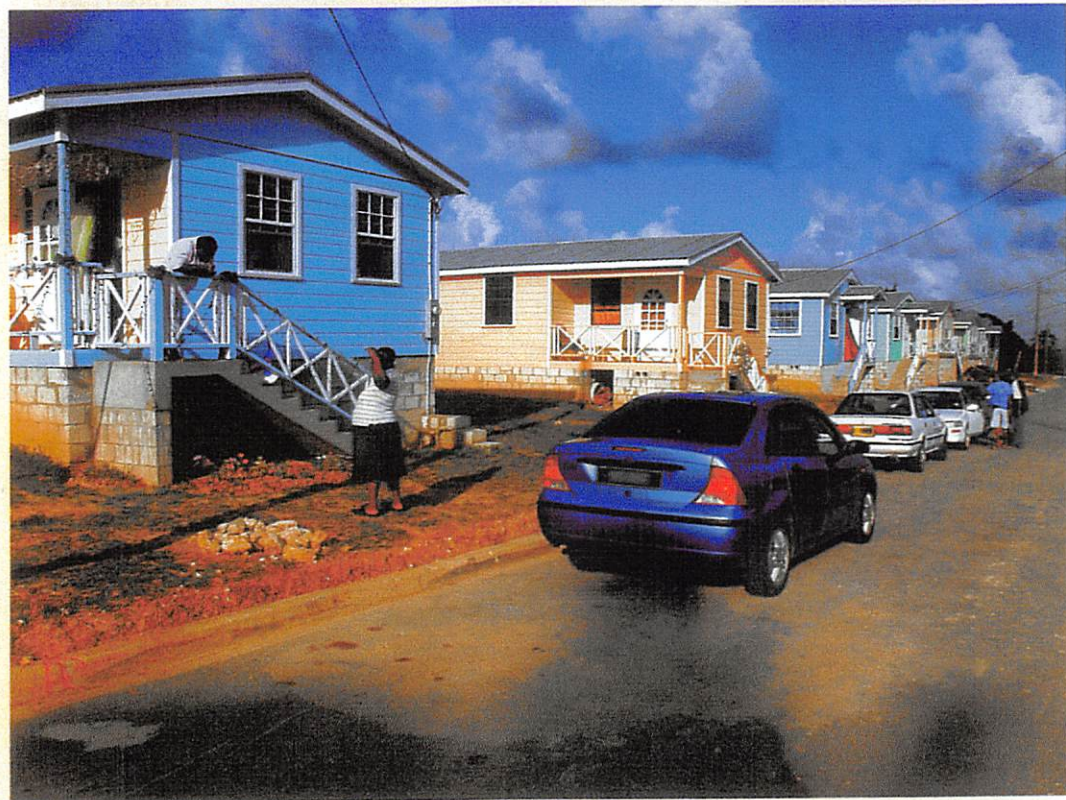
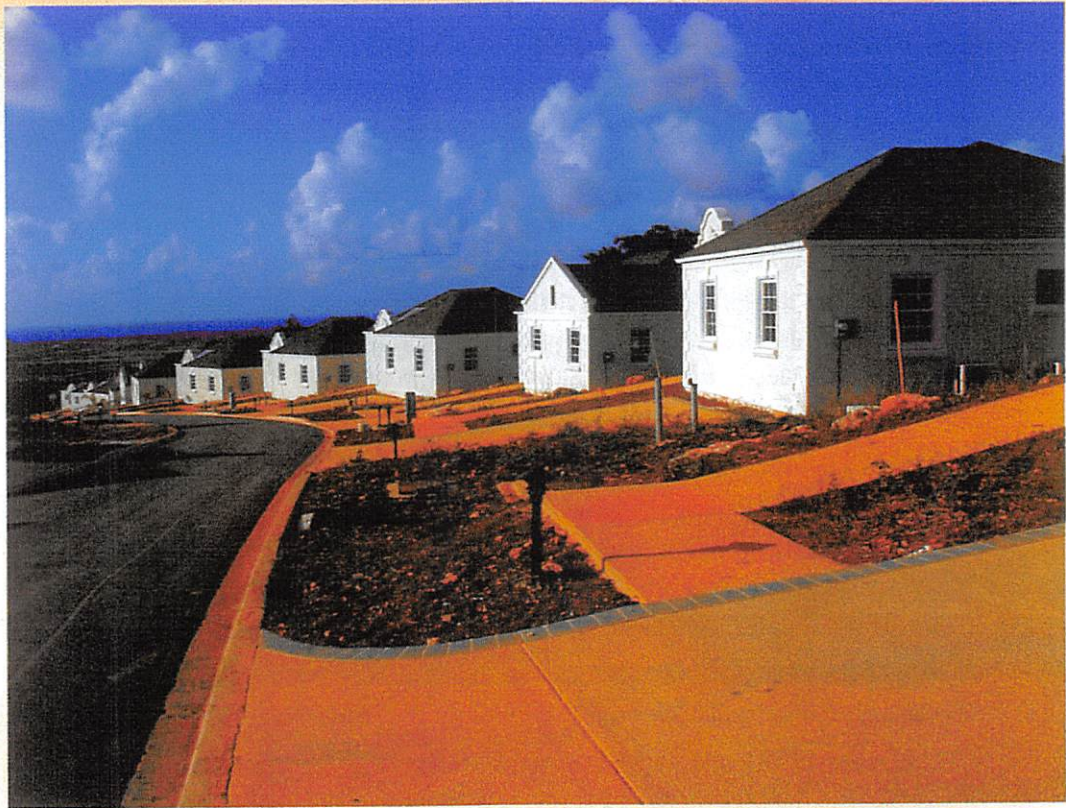
- All asbestos roofs have been removed from units
- Parapet/firewalls have been constructed
- Sewage systems are being upgraded, new wells are being sunk
- Units are being repaired

Under joint venture programmes with the private sector, the NHC set out to provide 1,061 houses for sale.

To date, 635 lots have been identified for sale under the Joint Venture Programme of which 396 have been completed in various parts of the island.

In March 2003 the BLP mandated that tenants would receive: 25% discount on the cost of their units; 40 % concession on all rents; a rebate of \$5,000 in lieu of minor repairs





BLP UPGRADING, EXPANDING THE ROAD NETWORK

The BLP has delivered on its promises in regard to road rebuilding and rehabilitation, and nowhere has this been more evident in recent times than in the transformation of the ABC Highway into a world-class multi-lane highway.

THE RESULTS ARE DRAMATIC:

- The single largest road project in the history of Barbados, the expansion of the ABC Highway from two to four lanes from Warrens, St. Michael to Graeme Hall, Christ Church is almost at the end of Phase 1. Phase 2, and the construction of six flyover bridges, is set to begin.
- 11 roads were rehabilitated under a special Scotland District project, touching St. John, St. Joseph, St. Andrew and St. Thomas.
- The Bridgetown Roads and Safety Improvement Project was completed at a cost of \$64 million and resulted in nine kilometres of reconstructed road from University Drive/Black Rock to the Garrison, and the rebuilding of Westbury Road, Passage Road and Country Road.
- Several kilometres of major highways were rebuilt using the new longer-lasting Foam Bitumen process. When completed it will cover 20 major highways.
- A number of subsidiary and tenantry roads in south-eastern and south-western Barbados were rebuilt. When completed this \$34 million project will cover 150 residential roads.
- Twenty roads were completed in St. George, 16 in St. Philip, 10 in St. James, 45 in St. Michael, 7 in St. Thomas, 30 in Christ Church, 7 in St. Joseph, 5 in St. Lucy, 10 in St. John, 8 in St. Peter and 3 in St. Andrew.
- We carried out extensive drainage works on the Constitution River, built culverts at Gun Hill and Glebe Tenantry, St. George and rebuilt another at Jordan Road, Belleplaine, St. Andrew.
- Major flood mitigation work was undertaken in the north with the expansion of one floodwater retention pond at Mount Brevitor, and the building of another in the same area, while the Minister and the private sector jointly undertook flood alleviation works at Holetown and Speightstown.

The Bridgetown Roads and Safety Improvement Project was completed at a cost of \$64 million and resulted in nine kilometres of reconstructed road from University Drive/Black Rock to the Garrison

We purchased 100 new buses in 2006 & 2007

- Work was completed on bridges at Diamond Corner, St. Peter, Morgan Lewis, St. Andrew and on the Ernie Bourne Highway.

With regard to transportation, the BLP brought significant relief to thousands of commuters by extending a number of short routes. Working class Barbadians in areas such as Forde's Road, Pine, Grazettes, Eden Lodge, Holders Hill, Dash Valley, Edey Village, Jackson and Cave Hill now benefit from regular bus services.

Rural dwellers, who previously had to put up with stressfully long routes that covered as many as three or four destinations now benefit from shorter, dedicated services.

This was partly achieved when we purchased 100 new buses in 2006 and 2007.

THE INTRODUCTION OF FIVE SPECIALLY EQUIPPED BUSES ALSO RESULTED IN NEW AND RELIABLE SERVICES TO DISABLED BARBADIANS, INCLUDING SCHOOL CHILDREN. WE ALSO

- Established the Transport Authority to manage public transport operations in Barbados;
- Piloted through Parliament the first comprehensive remake of the Road Traffic Act in 25 years;
- Implemented a Park and Ride system for major national events in the country as part of its traffic management strategy.

The introduction of five specially equipped buses also resulted in new and reliable services to disabled Barbadians including school children





TOURISM AND INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

Barbados has retained its place as a premier tourism destination in the region and a significant portion of the population continued to benefit from secure employment and a standard of living that is the envy of many across the Caribbean.

The Tourism Development Act has facilitated more than \$2 billion in actual new investment, with a further \$4 billion pledged.

This has brought new jobs since 2003, improved earnings and has benefited ancillary business owned by ordinary Barbadians, as well as other benefits:

- 400 rooms were constructed at Needhams Point in the new Hilton Barbados — now Hilton International's show piece in the Americas.
- Over 1, 500 rooms were upgraded or refurbished across the sector in the past 24 months alone.
- 200 new villas are under construction at the already opened Sugar Hill complex in St. James, along with an 18-hole golf course.
- 200 room hotel and 100 new houses and villas and an 18-hole golf course under construction at Apes Hill, St. James/St. Thomas.

The Tourism Development Act has facilitated more than \$2 billion in actual new investment, with a further \$4 billion pledged.



- 50 new luxury condos completed and available for rent at Schooner Bay in Speightstown, St Peter.
- 400 new rooms built at the Crane, St Philip — a project that will create the single largest hotel project on the island with 900 rooms when completed.
- 200 luxury villas under construction under the Banyan Tree label (Asia's leading luxury hotel brand) along with an 18-hole golf course at Black Bess, St. Peter.
- 115 room hotel along with 20 luxury villas, a spa and meeting and other recreational facilities being built under a \$400 million Four Seasons Resort project at the former Paradise Beach Resort at Black Rock.

New paths to tourism growth

The Barbados Labour Party has facilitated a new thrust in Inland Tourism, a move that is bringing new economic opportunities for Barbadians outside the traditional tourism belt.

In addition to sport and recreation-based inland projects such as those at Apes Hill, Sugar Hill and Black Bess, Government has taken steps to cash in on the growing sub-sector of retirement tourism.

- **The Lakes at Mount Brevitor in St Peter is the first such project to get started. Seventy seven villas, catering to locals and visitors, are now under construction, but when completed will comprise 450 villas and apartments along with complimentary health and recreational facilities.**





Small hotels integral to strategy

No administration in our history has invested more on the development of our small hotel sector than the Barbados Labour Party. \$30 million has already been invested in small hotels with a further \$20 million approved.

- More than 50 small hotels were upgraded in preparation for Cricket World Cup 2007, including 22 that moved up from one- and two-star ratings to three-star.
- 200 new "bed and breakfast rooms" were created from a \$5 million investment as part of the preparation for CWC 2007, and are now part of the tourism sector's regular room stock.

No administration in our history has invested more on the development of our small hotel sector than the Barbados Labour Party. \$30 million has already been invested in small hotels with a further \$20 million approved

The big picture never out of focus

Brand name hotels, the millions poured into small indigenous properties, the make-over of numerous urban and rural public spaces, new golf courses and polo fields, an airport that is an envy of the Caribbean and a harbour that is world recognized for its efficiency represent facets of the public face of Barbados' tourism.

Behind the scenes, keen tourism development planning, led by the Barbados Tourism Authority and facilitated by generous budget allocations by the BLP Government has brought it all together with phenomenal results of record visitor arrivals and spending.

- Since 2002 tourist arrivals have grown annually — from 469,000 long stay visitors in 2002 to 562,558 in 2006.
- Tourism spending grew from \$1.4 billion in 2002 to \$1.9 billion in 2006.
- The BTA's budget has been increased annually by the BLP reaching \$85 million in 2006.

It all pays off

OVER THE PAST FIVE YEARS THE BLP ADMINISTRATION HAS:

- Introduced flights by US Air from Philadelphia and Charlotte, Delta from Atlanta, Continental from Newark and Air Jamaica from Fort Lauderdale.
- Virgin Atlantic and First Choice started flying from Manchester, while British Airways increased frequency from Gatwick from seven times to 11 times weekly in the winter. Virgin will begin daily flights from Heathrow in London, opening the island to many more European visitors.
- From Canada West, Jet started services between Bridgetown and Calgary.

BUILDING BARBADOS ANEW

The BLP has been literally changing the face of Barbados — and nowhere has this been more evident than in the City of Bridgetown.

The BLP Administration through the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc. (BTII) and other state and private sector entities has invested more than \$150 million on a number of high profile projects that have reinvigorated a number of dormant or dying districts, sparking new business opportunities for ordinary Barbadians.

Bridgetown transformed

THE BLP HAS BEEN TRANSFORMING BRIDGETOWN AND ITS ENVIRONS BY:

- Spending \$100 million-plus with the Barbados Cricket Association on the redevelopment of Kensington Oval as the most up-to-date and architecturally appealing cricket and general purpose stadium in the Caribbean.
- Rebuilding Independence Square as the premiere recreational spot in the City.
- Completing the Lewis-Wickham Boardwalk in the heart of Bridgetown, presenting a place of solace on the waterfront.
- Reconstructing the Chamberlain (formerly Swing) Bridge as a new lift Bridge, once again opening up the Inner Basin of the Careenage for new recreational and commercial development.
- Starting the massive project for the dredging and redevelopment of the Constitution River that when completed will feature a clean, pristine waterway that will create new commercial and recreational opportunities for Barbadians.
- Building a new bus terminal at Cheapside, that provides comfort and modern facilities for thousands from rural Barbados.
- Starting construction of a new multi-storey parking facility also at Cheapside
- Restoring the long abandoned Town Hall building in Cheapside as a modern office complex.
- Recreating the “green” in Jubilee Gardens by creating a modern inner-city park where for years a mere asphalt surface served as a “bus stand” for thousands of hard-working Barbadians.





Grantley Adams International Airport, which serviced 2.36 million passengers in 2006, got a massive \$239 million make-over and expansion

- Completing construction of the West Wing of Parliament Buildings, where now is located a modern museum that pays tribute to the country's parliamentary history and those who contributed to it.
- Restoring the Jewish Synagogue in Bridgetown, the oldest such facility in the Western Hemisphere.
- Remaking the Trevor's Way Waterfront as a park-like pedestrian access for cruise ship passengers leaving and entering the Bridgetown Port; and a place of leisure and relaxation for City residents and workers.
- Facilitating the restoration of George Washington House in Bay Street.
- Restoring the derelict homes of dozens of Barbadian families living along primary access roads to Kensington Oval, while completing a massive clean up and "greening" of access roads into the City from points as far away as Black Rock, Eagle Hall, Government Hill and the Garrison.
- Completing a new "chattel house" type complex at Westbury Road to accommodate fish and food vendors who traditionally operated from Baxters Road.
- Outside of Bridgetown the push to enhance tourist/public facilities has been just as vigorous.

BTII HAS:

- Completed the drainage and redevelopment of the Salt Pond at Speightstown, complemented by a streetscape project in the area.
- Redeveloped the Fish Market and Esplanade at Speightstown along with a board walk along the seaside of the historic northern town.
- Redeveloped Fort Denmark in Speightstown, opening a misused historic site for accommodation and recreation opportunities.



- Constructed a new car park off Church Street and the Speightstown Bypass Road.
- Continued the St Lawrence Gap/ Dover tourism development project, including the construction of 20 vendors' kiosks.
- Completed an ultra-modern, expanded Oistins Bay Garden — a leading spot for entertainment and socialisation between tourists and locals on the south coast.

Big money spent for everyone's benefit

With all the new investment by local and foreign tourism partners, the Barbados Labour Party Government recognized early that major infrastructural improvements would have to be made to key national assets — facilities that improve the island's tourism product, but which also bring tremendous benefits to Barbadians every day.

- Grantley Adams International Airport, which serviced 2.36 million passengers in 2006, got a massive \$239 million make-over and expansion. Millions more are already being sourced for further expansion and modernization.
- Dredging and berthing expansion to accommodate major increases in passenger and cargo capacity was undertaken at the Bridgetown Port at a cost of \$115 million. The Port, which expects to welcome three quarters of a million passengers this year, can now handle the largest passenger cruise liners on the high seas.
- Harrison's Cave, Barbados leading tourist attraction, was refurbished at a cost of \$52 million, which also covered improved infrastructure in the area and new vending facilities for Barbadians.
- **The multi-million dollar Concorde Visitors Centre was opened at the Grantley Adams International Airport as a tourist attraction and a place of education and adventure for Barbados' children.**

The BLP restored the derelict homes of dozens of Barbadian families living along primary access roads to Kensington Oval, while completing a massive clean up and "greening" of access roads into the City





ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The BLP reduced the tax on gasoline from 89 cents in 1994 to 60 cents in December 2007; and on diesel from 74 cents to 32 cents

Energy

COMMITTED TO DIVERSIFYING THE ECONOMY THE BLP HAS:

- Enhanced energy security by constructing the ultra-modern oil terminal in Christ Church.
- Through the Barbados National Oil Company, the BLP developed a strategic partnership to increase yields from existing wells.
- **Developed legislation to support an offshore petroleum industry, and successfully launched an international bidding programme to establish Barbados as an energy producing country.**
- Established a regime to ensure that a portion of established offshore oilfields remain in the hands of Barbadians for the benefit of future generations, while retaining equity in all successful wells awarded to international companies.
- Increased the number of homes and businesses from 10,000 to over 16,500 connected to natural gas lines, allowing them access to a cheaper source of energy.
- Reduced the tax on gasoline from 89 cents in 1994 to 60 cents in December 2007; and on diesel from 74 cents to 32 cents.
- Worked with Barbados Light & Power to establish a 10 megawatt wind-energy farm to be built in St. Lucy.





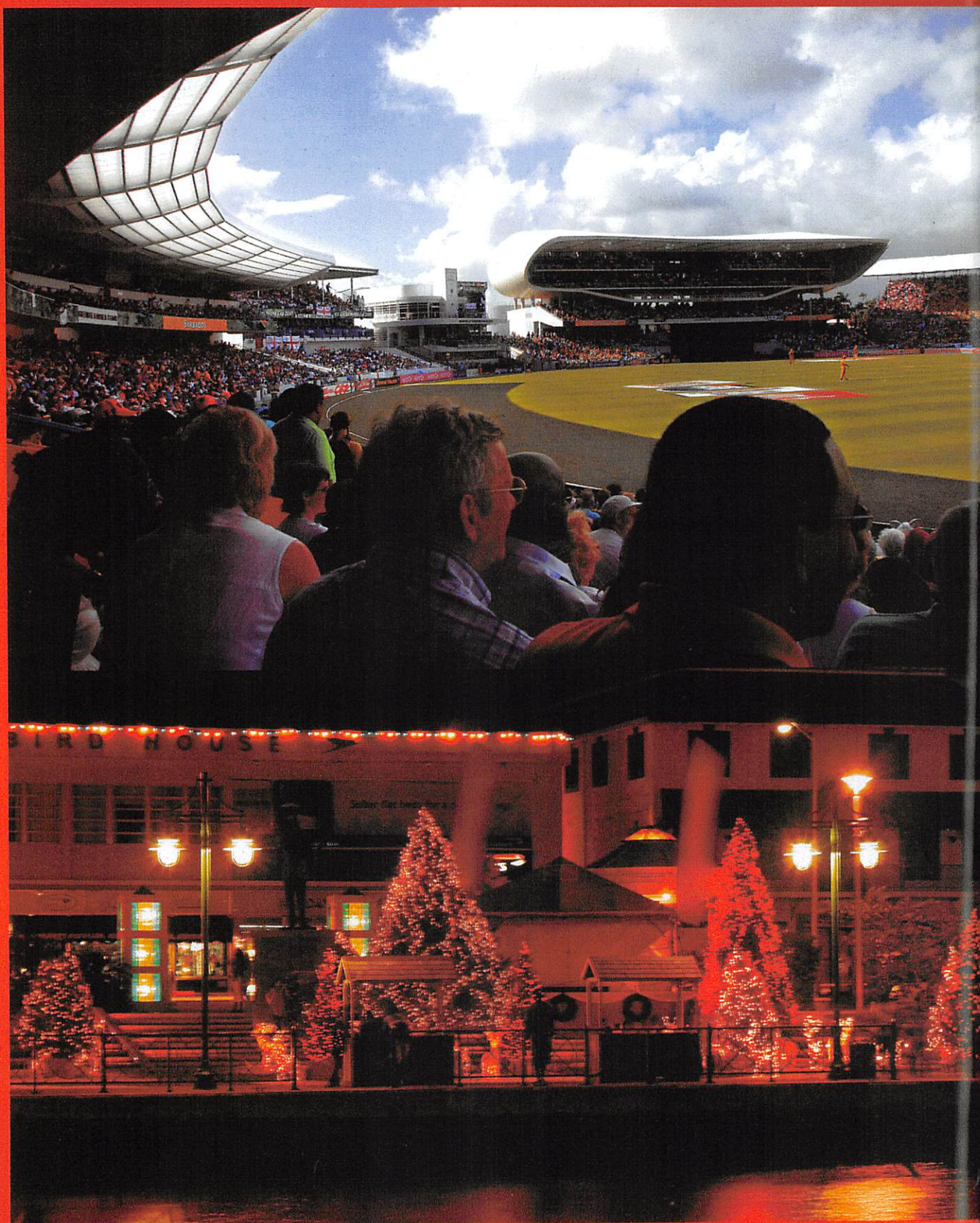
- Established a \$10 million Energy Efficient Audit and Retrofit Fund for the tourism sector.
- Established a Public Sector Energy Conservation Programme covering vehicle purchase and management, audits and retrofits of Government offices, aimed at saving the country \$60 million annually.
- Established the first solar model house, completely fuelled by the sun's energy, as a prototype for alternative energy in future housing construction.

Environment:

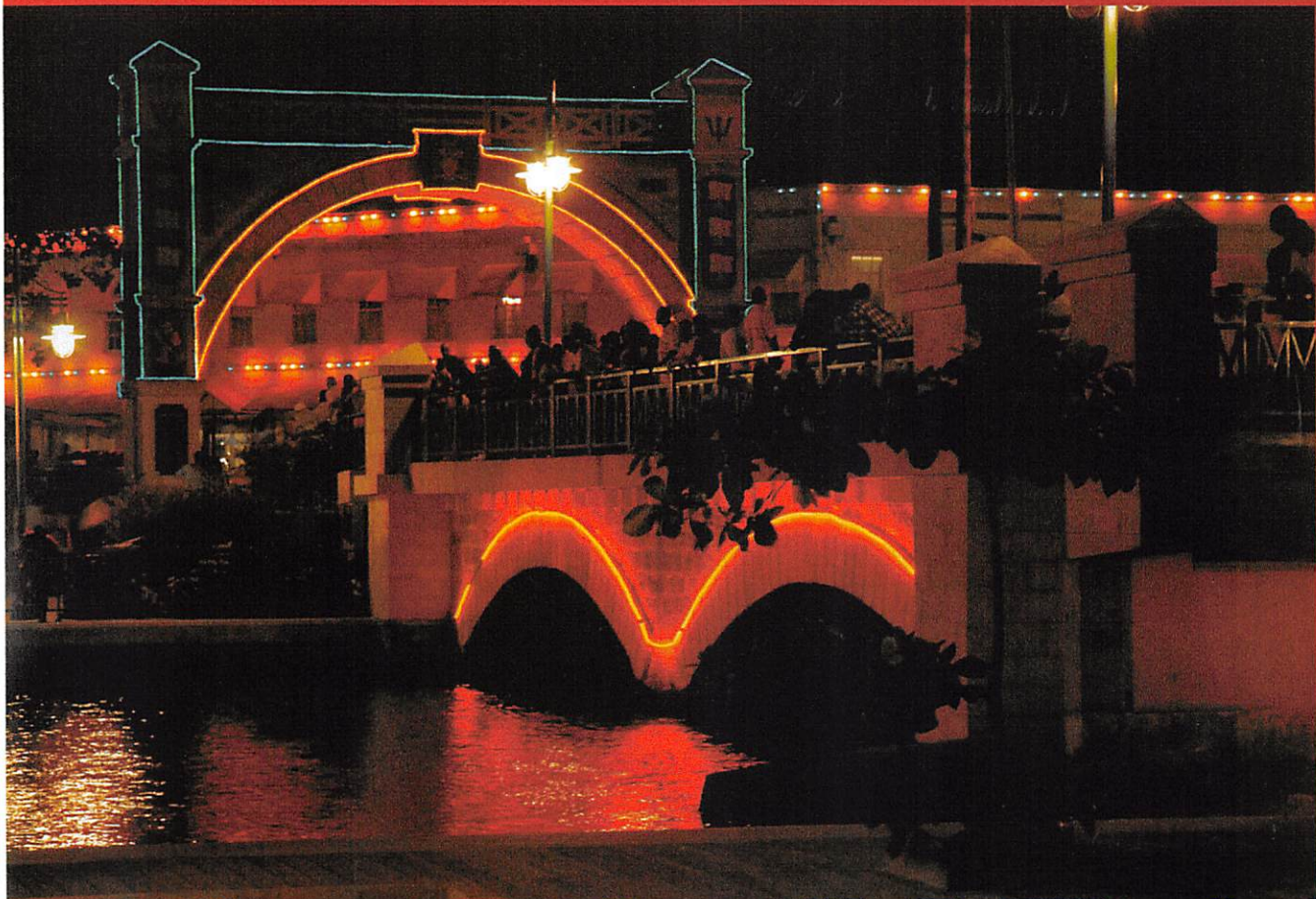
- Carried out a Coastal Infrastructural Programme that includes major works at Holetown, Rockley, Welches and along the East Coast that cover coastline improvement, new beach accesses, footbridges to link inaccessible coastal areas, as well as groyne, breakwater and revetment construction.
- Built new, or renovated and improved, beach facilities at Silver Sands, Browne's Beach, Worthing and Pebbles beaches.
- Improved the waterfront from Drill Hall to Rockley, restored and enhanced Crane Beach and implemented an aeration system for the Holetown Lagoon.
- Provided vending facilities at Rockley, Worthing and Dover.
- Significantly enhanced the appeal of Bridgetown by redeveloping and greening Jubilee Gardens, Independence Square and Trevor's Way.

The BLP established a Public Sector Energy Conservation Programme aimed at saving the country \$60 million annually





Building Anew...Better than ever





Every Bajan a Winner





HEALTH

The BLP went into the 2003 General Election with no doubts about how strongly Barbadians felt about the need for quality health care for all. In fact, we boldly declared: "The BLP sees access to health-care as a fundamental right of every Barbadian and insists that it should be funded principally through public finances, as an investment in our country's social capital."

Almost five years later, the BLP has delivered, but with mature, enlightened strategies that recognize the sensitive nature of health issues. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, still a beacon of quality health care in the region, has been a major focus of this Government.

AT THE QE H THE BARBADOS LABOUR PARTY HAS:

- Spent \$35 million on new equipment, including \$8 million on new x-ray technology.
- Secured \$5 million from the European Development Fund to facilitate upgrading of the information technology capacity of the hospital.
- Opened a new dialysis unit, with an increased capacity from 16 to 24 machines, a minor operations theatre and water treatment plant.

**Government
also spent
\$3 million
on a major
refurbishment
of the
Nightingale
Nursing Home**





- Completed a redevelopment study, the recommendations of which are now engaging the full attention of a Cabinet sub-committee. In the meantime leaking roofs have been fixed, obstetrics and gynaecology theatres refurbished and reactivated.
- Refurbished 11 rooms on the 'A' Ward; started the expansion of the surgical and medical Intensive Care Units; and completed plans for the expansion of SICU by 12 beds.
- Acquired equipment for a modern cardiovascular suite and received the report of a Task Force on the provision of comprehensive cardiovascular services completed. A new angiographic suite has also been established.
- Appointed hundreds of workers who had been acting for many years and hired a Theatre Manager to improve efficiency in the use of these facilities.

Spent \$35 million on new equipment, including \$8 million on new x-ray technology.

Welfare of nurses and the quality care of Barbadian patients

Given the exodus of quality Barbadian nurses to North America and Europe in unprecedented numbers, allied by a global shortage and attractive remuneration packages, the Arthur Administration promised to step up training of new nurses. It facilitated the expansion of classes at the Barbados Community College from 40 soon after re-election to 120 last year.

A number of nurses received specialized training in areas such as neurology, neonatal nursing, medical and surgical ICU nursing as well as nursing education at Bachelor of Science and Master of Science levels.

The BLP deployed 20 more nurses in the polyclinic system and 45 were training in Community Health Nursing.

Government also spent \$3 million on a major refurbishment of the Nightingale Nursing Home.

Mental Health of country not neglected

In 2003, we promised to reform mental health services in Barbados, cognizant of the fact that significant disability and lost of productivity had been associated with mental illness.

The BLP has kept its word:

- All mental health legislation has been reviewed by a national task force and proposed amendments are now with the Chief Parliamentary Counsel.
- A new National Mental Health Policy and National Mental Health Plan have been developed to direct mental health services over the next eight years.
- 60 per cent of a major refurbishment of the Psychiatric Hospital has been completed.
- Given the link between drug abuse and mental health challenges, \$1.2 million has been provided for substance abuse programmes.



Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases a national priority

Given the drain on the country's financial resources as a result of the impact of chronic non-communicable diseases, the BLP promised action. A CNCD Unit was set up, headed by a senior medical officer, and it has started working with the Ministry of Education in 10 primary schools to promote healthy choices and physical activity. A similar programme targeting ten secondary schools has also been started.

The unit is negotiating with fast food suppliers to reduce trans-fat and salt in their products, while a CNCD registry has been launched in conjunction with the Chronic Disease Research Centre to address issues related to heart disease, strokes and cancer. A Diabetes Foundation is also being established.

Operating an efficient Drug Service

This BLP's promise to improve the efficiency of the Barbados Drug Service to better serve the needs of Barbadians is well on the way to being fulfilled. All Government pharmacies have now been fully computerized and the policy paper, with appropriate recommendations to contain costs and re-categorize the drug formulary, has been submitted.

Additionally, 29 private pharmacies are now linked to the BDS electronically, greatly enhancing data transmission and operating efficiency.

Emergency care right in the community

The Maurice Byer Polyclinic in St Peter and the Randal Phillips Polyclinic in Christ Church have been provided with additional staff and now open until 8:30 p.m. to ensure that for numerous health emergencies all patients don't have to travel to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. They can now get quality care in their communities.

The Ministry of Health has also opened men's health clinics at six polyclinics, with the remaining two set to come on line shortly, while the feasibility study for a new polyclinic and Community Services Centre at Gall Hill, St John has been completed and submitted to the Planning and Priorities Committee.

Unmatched ambulance service in the Caribbean

Twenty five fully trained paramedics are now included in the corps of personnel providing vital services for Barbadians through the Emergency Ambulance Service, which has been provided with seven new, fully equipped ambulances.

29 private pharmacies are now linked to the BDS electronically, greatly enhancing data transmission and operating efficiency



Now that the pilot stationing of an ambulance and paramedics at the Arch Hall Fire Station in St Thomas has been fully tested, plans for the full decentralization of the service are progressing.

BLP looks after those who have already done their duty

The refurbishment of the Geriatric Hospital continued during the past four years and shortly construction of a new \$5 million state-of-the-art kitchen and food storage facility will begin, while an upgraded laundry with new boilers and dryers, plus a \$600 000 presser facility have been proposed. The BLP is also pressing ahead with plans for a modern rehabilitation unit.

Meanwhile, the 'A' Ward at the St Philip District Hospital is being rebuilt, along with a fully equipped new laundry; the St Lucy District Hospital has been given a comprehensive make over with new roof and floors and an upgraded electrical supply; while the roof of the Gordon Cummins Hospital in St Thomas has been replaced and a new emergency power generator installed.

Sanitation gets priority treatment

Thirty new trucks have been acquired by the BLP Government and an efficient garbage collection system is in force. The promised new SSA depot at Reed Street in the City is now 90 per cent completed.

25 fully trained paramedics are now included in the corps of personnel providing vital services for Barbadians through the Emergency Ambulance Service, which has been provided with 7 new, fully equipped ambulances



AGRICULTURE

The restructuring of the sugar cane industry is now well under way. Diversification in agriculture is visible across the sector, and traditional flagship areas like pork and chicken production continue to grow. Financial assistance has not been neglected in the move to give agriculture a new lease on life.

- Between 2004 and 2007 the Agricultural Development Fund disbursed \$17.4 million in loans and grants.
- Through the Rural Enterprise Fund, Livestock Development Fund and Fruit Orchard Development Fund, \$900,000 went to 119 livestock loans, \$600,000 to 65 vegetable production loans, \$700,000 to 110 retailing loans, \$500,000 to 31 fishing loans and \$1.2 million to loans in areas such as construction and catering.

Sugar cane

Plans for the creation of a new sugar cane industry are now well advanced and some implementation has begun.

- Plans have been completed for a new Multi-Purpose Facility for the industry to begin operations in 2010, replacing both Portvale and Andrews factories. It will produce 20 000 tonnes of speciality sugar, 23 million litres of ethanol, 36,445 tonnes of high grade molasses and 20 megawatts of electricity from bagasse.
- More than \$5 million secured from the European Union is to be directed toward the restructuring of the Barbados Agricultural Management Company and the reform of Barbados Sugar Industries Limited.
- A new company, Barbados Cane Industry Corporation will take over management of the sugar terminal, sugar cane milling plants and factories. BAMC's focus will be redirected toward agronomic best practices.
- Test fields of fuel cane are now under cultivation.
- Plantation Reserve brand of Barbados sugar has been successfully launched as a major export product of the new sugar cane industry.
- Between 2003 and 2007 more than \$11 million was provided in price support to independent and small sugar farmers and this support will continue.
- Plans for a Living Sugar Museum at Bulkeley, St George to expose Barbadians and tourists to live interpretation of the island sugar industry's history are now being examined by the Ministry of Agriculture.



Between 2004 and 2007 the Agricultural Development Fund disbursed \$17.4 million in loans and grants



Cotton

Plans for an integrated, sustainable local cotton industry producing 100 per cent West Indian Sea Island Cotton based products got into high gear in 2004 with the incorporation of Exclusive Cottons of the Caribbean, which recently launched its own high-quality "tea towel" brand, now available in several local shops.

Pork

The Barbados Labour Party promised in 2003 that by the end of 2008 the island would be producing three million kilograms of pork annually. We are on the way to achieving that target — from 2.3 million kilos in 2005 to 2.6 million kilos in 2007 and a projection of 2.7 million kilos by the end of this year.

This achievement is the result of Government-led and private sector supported marketing initiatives, and Government's \$238 000 support for 60 farmers in a Gilt Improvement Programme.

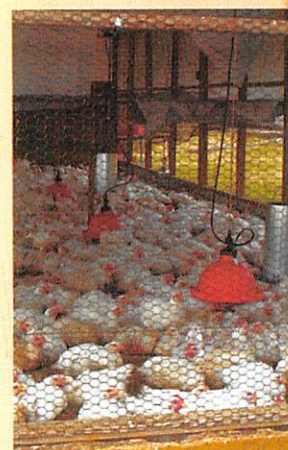
**Government
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Programme**

Poultry

Poultry production continued to be the pride of the local agricultural sector. By the end of 2007, the industry is expected to have produced in excess of nine million birds, compared to 8 million in 2002.

Again this growth was facilitated by strong incentive support from the BLP Administration:

- A 50 per cent rebate on equipment and machinery costing up to \$30 000.
- A grant of up to \$3 000 per farmer for training of producers in good agricultural practices in accordance with HACCP standards.
- A one-time rebate of 50 per cent, up to \$5 000 for farm security systems to combat praedial larceny.





- A 20 per cent rebate, up to \$25 000 per unit for approved Environmental Control Systems for poultry facilities.
- Duty-free access to refrigerated and other specialized vehicles used to transport poultry.

The poultry industry was also assisted by Government policy decision to streamline poultry importation to limit unfair competition.

Dairy

One of the BLP's proposals to grow the local dairy industry was to stimulate the taste for milk among children. The plan involved increasing the provision of fresh milk from 20 primary schools to 31 primary schools. Having achieved this, the plan now is to provide fresh milk to all primary school children.

However, after a slight decline in production in fresh milk in 2006, the Senior Veterinary Officer was sent to Canada and the United Kingdom to facilitate the importing of 50 pregnant heifers. These heifers arrived in March 2007, and together with initiatives by the Pine Hill Dairy and farmers production, which stood at 4.6 million kilos in 2005 and dropped to 4.2 million in 2006, is now projected to reach 5.1 million kilos by the end of 2007.

Scotland District's immense agricultural potential

After spending more than \$8 million annually on land stabilisation and infrastructural upgrade in the Scotland District since 1994, the BLP Administration promised last election to invest more than \$60 million to exploit the potential of this area.

It has been declared a Special Development Area, which qualifies investors for certain incentives, while an Agricultural Development Plan that resulted from an FAO study identified fruit, livestock and crop production as ideal for the area. Between 2003 and 2007 the BLP Administration spent \$49 million on a variety of projects that included reforestation as part of a plan to establish nature trails.

Additionally, to facilitate private sector investment in the Scotland District, we established a ten-year tax holiday for investment in fruit production, processing and marketing; and amended the Orchard Development Subsidy to provide annually \$5 per tree up to 1,000 trees per farmer for approved species of plants.

Land for landless

Under this programme 416.5 acres of arable land was allocated to 208 farmers since 2003, and technical assistance provided to farmers involved in two poultry operations in St Philip; improved drainage for farmers at River, St Philip; extension officers assigned to assist in farm management practices and a joint sheep rearing project established between the BADMC and persons involved in the Youth on the Block Scheme at Rose Hill, St George.

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416.5 acres of arable land was allocated to 208 farmers since 2003

COMMERCE, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

This BLP administration has been engaged primarily in the protection of the welfare of Barbadians through its various agencies:

- The Fair Trading Commission,
- Office of Public Counsel, Consumer Complaints Tribunal,
- Barbados National Standards Institution,
- Office of Bankruptcy and Insolvency and,
- The Office of the Registrar of Cooperatives and Friendly Societies.

The Office of Public Counsel has handled 2,883 complaints between 2003 and October, 2007.

Similarly, the Consumer Claims Tribunal, since its inception in 2002, held 133 sittings, heard 173 cases, which resulted in 112 customers obtaining cash awards totalling \$170,412.

To assist consumers challenged by cost-of-living increases and to help them decide where to shop, the Ministry now routinely publishes food prices at various retail outlets.

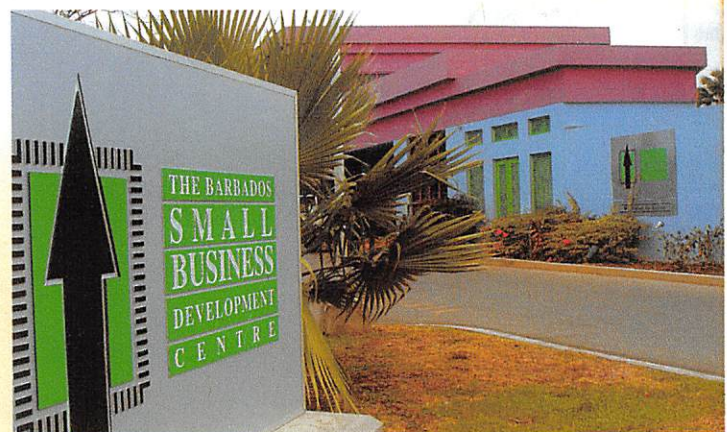
The BLP also introduced price controls on a basket of 30 essential items, including meats, flour, rice, macaroni, vegetables, fruits and toiletries to ease the burden on consumers.

Consumers have also begun to benefit from a regime of subsidies to the Barbados Light and Power Company, designed to cushion the impact of ever increasing energy prices on the pockets of households.

Retailers were directed not to display any “no-refund, no-exchange” signs, particularly to protect consumers who might have purchased substandard or defective products.

A mechanism was put in place to monitor the efficiency and accuracy of gas station pumps so consumers would not be cheated, either deliberately or by neglect.

To facilitate and encourage Small Business Development, the BLP has reduced the small business tax rate from 25 per cent to 15 per cent, amended the Small Business Development Act, provided \$1.3 million to the Small Business Association for special projects and decentralization, lent 665 clients \$16.7 million through Fund access (creating about 800 new jobs), and lent more than \$175 million through the Enterprise Growth Fund.



The BLP has reduced the small business tax rate from 25% to 15%



INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

During the period 2003 to present, the BLP continued the transition of Barbados from a jurisdiction informally defined as an offshore sector, to an international business and financial services centre encompassing an export driven economy.

This has resulted in a significant growth in the number of international business entities licensed to operate in Barbados as can be seen from the following.

- The number of International Business Companies licenced at the end of 2006 was 2,714 which was almost an increase of 1,000 that were licenced at the end of 2003.
- The number of International Societies with Restricted Liability grew at a phenomenal rate during the period with 391 being licenced at the end of 2006 compared to the 104 that were licenced at the end of 2003.
- 202 Exempt Insurance Companies were licenced at the end of 2006 compared to 184 at the end of 2003. The exempt insurance management companies increased from 27 in 2003 to 31 in 2006.
- The number of International Banks licenced under the International Financial Services Act increased from 53 in 2003 to 59 in 2007.
- Expansion of the Special Technical Assistance Programme ("STAP") to include services with special emphasis on the non-traditional services sector.
- The introduction of the Dividend Tax Credit scheme whereby international business entities may claim a credit for withholding taxes suffered in countries which do not have a tax treaty with Barbados.
- The charging or pledging of shares in an International Business Company or quotas held in an International Society with Restricted Liability was exempted from stamp duty.
- International business companies were exempted from the payment of Bonded Warehouse fees.
- An International Business Customer Charter was launched in November, 2007.
- A letter of intent was signed with the London Court of International Arbitration ("LCIA") for the establishment of a Barbados based centre of the LCIA. The international commercial arbitration act based on the United Nations commission on International Trade Law ("UNCITRAL") Model Law on International Commercial arbitration was passed in Parliament in 2007.
- Created Invest Barbados as a dedicated agency for the marketing and promotion of international business.

- Agreed to the establishment of a Financial Services Authority and a Barbados Qualified Investor Fund Regime.
- Between 2003 and 2007, Double Taxation Agreements were signed with Mauritius, Botswana, Austria and the Seychelles. A second Protocol to the Barbados/US DTA was signed in 2004.
- We signed a Bilateral Investment Treaty with Mauritius in 2004.
- The Companies Act was amended to enable auditors to provide audit services to companies through the vehicle of a limited liability company.
- Negotiated Barbados' position on services with respect to its obligations under the European Union/ African Caribbean Pacific Economic partnership agreement and the CARICOM/ Dominican Republic Free Trade agreement.





TELECOMMUNICATIONS LIBERALISATION

Barbadians made maximum use of the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector. This has seen Barbados moving to the No 3 position in internet penetration in the hemisphere, after Bermuda and Canada as shown in a study done by the World Bank and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). This is the result of competition within the telecom sector.

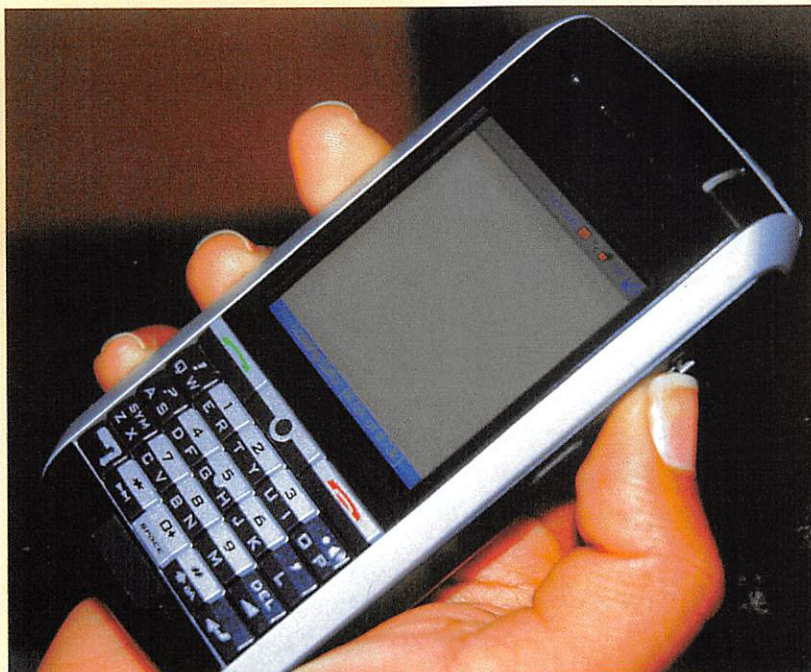
International Direct dialled call rates have fallen sharply since 2004 when the per minute cost was \$2.70 to the USA for businesses and residential customers, compared to the current 1.30 (daytime rates) for residential customers and 50 cents per minute for business customers. This is a 55% reduction for residential customers and an 81% reduction for business customers.

For mobile, rate reductions were between 25% and 40% during the 2003 to 2007 period.

The number of mobile subscribers reached 240,000 in 2007 more than ten times the number in 2000. Over that same period the number of internet users jumped from 12,000 to 43,500 in April 2007.

Barbados is moving to the #3 position in internet penetration in the hemisphere, after Bermuda and Canada

International Direct dialled call rates have fallen sharply since 2004 with a 55% reduction for residential customers and an 81% reduction for business customers



Spending \$100 million-plus with the Barbados Cricket Association on the redevelopment of Kensington Oval as the most up-to-date and architecturally appealing cricket and general purpose stadium in the Caribbean

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS INCLUDE:

- Major funding for elite and emerging athletes.
- An increase in the number of children in the National Sports Council's Summer Camp from 600 to over 1600.
- The provision of significant funding to national associations to assist them in hosting and attending competitions.
- The purchase of significant pieces of equipment to better maintain the over 100 playing fields under the control of the National Sports Council and some of the school grounds.
- All Public Primary Schools were given cricket, football and netball equipment to facilitate their sports programmes.

SPORTS

Since promising to provide playing facilities in every major community in Barbados, the Owen Arthur Government has been engaged in a rigorous programme of new construction, expansion and renovation.

Nine new pavilions have been built in St. Philip, St. Michael, Christ Church, St. Joseph and St. James, with four more under construction in Christ Church, St. Thomas, St. George and St. Philip.

At the same time, ten new multi-purpose hard courts have been built from St. Peter to St. Philip, with a further ten resurfaced. Barbadian young people are also playing sports on six new playing fields.

The quality of life and the variety of activities in an additional twelve communities have been expanded significantly with the provision of high quality lighting at sports facilities in eight parishes.

Nowhere has the Government's commitment to sports been more visible, however, than in the more than \$100 million remake of the historic Kensington Oval into an award-winning, multi-purpose sports and entertainment complex that was showcased to the world during the Cricket World Cup final in 2007.

Since then preliminary planning for the reconstruction of the National Stadium and Netball Stadium have been completed and approval granted by the Town Planning Department.





CULTURE *AN ECONOMIC ASSET*

Recognizing the significant economic potential that can accrue to a country that fully develops and exploits its cultural industries, the BLP Administration has sought to ensure that all structures are put in place to allow the cultural landscape to bloom.

IN THE AREA OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, WE HAVE:

- Worked with the Barbados Community College to offer a two-year associate degree in Fine Art that includes Two- and Three-D imaging, film and video, a three-year Bachelor of Fine Arts degree that specializes in studio or graphic art, and evening classes on a per-term basis in drawing, painting, ceramics and photography among others.
- Facilitated the University of the West Indies in offering a Bachelor of Fine arts degree in film, dance and theatre.
- Through the National Cultural Foundation;
 - assigned tutors to primary schools for a Drama In primary Schools Programme,
 - assumed full responsibility for the Barbados National Youth Orchestra,
 - established the Barbados National Youth Steel Orchestra,
 - instituted a Dance in Schools Programme at both the primary and secondary levels.
- Completed drafting the Cultural Industries Development Bill, which will increase a range of tax incentives to practitioners and investors in cultural industries;

Through the National Cultural Foundation:- assigned tutors to primary schools for a Drama In primary Schools Programme; established the Barbados National Youth Steel Orchestra; instituted a Dance in Schools Programme at both the primary and secondary levels



HIV/AIDS

Of particular success has been the programme to prevent mother-to-child HIV/AIDS transmission, with infected births dropping from 4.3% in 2002 to 2.6 % in 2006

95% of HIV-positive pregnant women now receive anti-retroviral treatment, compared to 76% in 2002.

The BLP, through the office of the Prime Minister and National HIV/AIDS Commission, has worked with a number of ministries and other state and private sector agencies to coordinate a national response to the epidemic.

Through the expansion of the Voluntary Counselling and Testing Programme, since 2004 there has been a 16 per cent increase in the number of persons pre-tested and counselled, a 17 per cent increase in persons receiving post-test counselling, and ten new Voluntary Counselling and Testing sites were established since 2003.

Of particular success has been the programme to prevent mother-to-child HIV/AIDS transmission, with infected births dropping from 4.3 per cent in 2002 to 2.6 per cent in 2006. Additionally, 95 per cent of HIV-positive pregnant women now receive anti-retroviral treatment, compared to 76 per cent in 2002.

By March 2008, the AIDS food bank, on which construction started in 2006, should be completed.

To help in its HIV/AIDS programme Government secured \$6.5 million from the World Bank and matched the amount from its own funds. The result has been a significant improvement in the quality of life of persons living with HIV/AIDS by the provision of a regime of anti-retroviral drugs.

- Since 2003 HIV/AIDS Sensitisation Workshops have been conducted for teachers at all primary and secondary schools.
- 80 primary school teachers and 24 guidance counsellors were trained in HIV/AIDS prevention and management strategies.
- 7,500 resource texts and workbooks were distributed to nursery, primary and secondary schools.





EDUCATION

In 2003 the Barbados Labour Party made this declaration as a matter of policy: "We have set for ourselves the objective of transforming our nation into a fully developed society in the shortest possible time. Central to the achievement of this will be the transformation which we will undertake to develop every capacity in our education system." The process began with the multifaceted programme known as Edutech.

Its broad purpose was to expand the tools and modernize the methods by which our children are taught. The results have been exceptional: the number of students leaving school with certification has jumped from 40 per cent in 1994 to 66 per cent in 2007. One in every three teachers now uses modern technology to teach.

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THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAS ACHIEVED THE FOLLOWING:

New secondary and primary schools curriculum:

- New curriculum implemented at all public primary and secondary schools.
- Scientific monitoring and evaluation of progress continues.
- Draft syllabi being modified through feedback from teachers.

New National Secondary School Certificate:

- Nine secondary schools enrolled in a continuous assessment pilot project as part of preparation for the Barbados Certificate of Secondary Education.
- 640 teachers have been trained to facilitate full implementation.
- Ministry of Education and CXC are collaborating on the development of a database to facilitate the process.

School Plant Refurbishment

- Major works completed at 22 primary, 10 secondary and four private schools up to September 2007.
- Major works in progress at two primary and two secondary schools.
- Major upgrade undertaken at Grantley Adams Secondary to facilitate introduction of Information Technology programmes.





- New George Lamming Primary School to replace Erdiston Primary and Carrington Primary schools to be completed and opened by April 2008.
- \$4.25 million spent on 57 primary schools as part of the Domestic Summer Programme since 2003.

Expanded training for teachers and administrators

- 120 teachers training in partnership with Mount St. Vincent University in Canada and Erdiston College.
- 60 teachers trained in Mathematics, Science and Integration of Technology in conjunction with Cambridge College.
- 60 principals trained in Instructional Leadership in conjunction with Cambridge College.
- More than 700 teachers trained in various programmes at Erdiston College.

By September 2007, 5,560 three- and four-year-olds were enrolled in formal pre-primary education. This represents an increase of 91.5%

Information and Communications Technology:

- The Ministry has rolled out complete ICT programmes at 24 primary and 13 secondary schools and partial ICT outfitting of 59 primary and 18 secondary schools.
- High-speed Internet services have been installed in 67 primary and 22 secondary schools.
- To date 2,655 persons have been trained in Technology Mastery and Integration, Teaching Methodologies, Educational Leadership, Indigenous Software Development, Financial Management, Administrative Procedures and Management of Media Resources.

Between 1994 and 2007 we have more than doubled the number of places at BCC, SJPP and the Cave Hill Campus UWI

Early Childhood Education

- In this term we committed to the provision of free pre-primary education for all Barbadian children. By September 2007, 5,560 three- and four-year-olds were enrolled in formal pre-primary education. This represents 91.5 per cent.



- Three new nursery schools were opened at All Saints, St. Boniface and St. Giles. Work has started on a fourth at Six Roads and will begin shortly on a fifth at Sharon, St. Thomas.

Parent/School partnerships

- Parent Volunteer Support Programme in Early Childhood Education now covers all primary schools in the island, compared to 55 in 2003.

Tertiary Education

The growth in the number of persons achieving secondary certification has led to a tremendous demand for tertiary education places.

- Barbados Community College roll increased from 3,679 in 2003 to 4,288 in 2007; Polytechnic from 2,972 in 2003 to 3,148 in 2007; and the Cave Hill Campus of UWI from 3,492 in 2003 to 7,064 in 2007.
- Spent \$116 million on the university education of Barbadians in 2006-2007, up from \$74 million in 2002/2003.
- \$9.1 million allocated to the Cave Hill Campus of the UWI for its Expansion Project.
- Guaranteed loans of \$28.5 million to upgrade School of Clinical Medicine and Research, and expand the Cave Hill School of Business
- 33 acres of land vested in the UWI for the expansion of the Cave Hill Campus.
- All plans for the University College of Barbados now fully established and first student intake scheduled for August 2008.
- To better facilitate tertiary education the limit of loans from the Student Revolving Loan Scheme was raised from \$35,000 to \$50,000.





- More than 30 courses are now being offered at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic through its Online Open and Flexible Learning Centre, and to date 175 students have successfully completed courses.

Special Education

- The Ministry of Education offers an Individual Education Programme for all students enrolled in a special education programme, and since the last election, 350 students have benefited annually.
- 106 teachers have been trained up to the level of Masters in Education Special Needs. 14 to the level of Bachelor of Education –Special Education; four to manage children with Autism or Autistic tendencies; 39 from primary schools to address speech and language difficulties; and nine primary schools have been assigned teachers specially to coordinate special needs programmes.
- Three additional special needs units have been set up at Hilda Skeene, St. Matthew's and St. Stephen's primary schools.
- A programme of mainstreaming special needs students was initiated at St. Paul's Primary.
- Full access bathrooms have been provided at 25 primary and 13 secondary schools.
- Braille note-takers, Braille keyboards, touch screen monitors, voice synthesizers and electronic whiteboards have been provided at the Irving Wilson School as part of a comprehensive ICT package.
- 2,630 five- and six-year-old and 2,987 seven- and eight-year-olds were screened for speech and language difficulties in 2005-2006, while 2,614 five-year-olds were screened for hearing difficulties. 76 received speech therapy.
- Subventions to the Challenor School and Learning Centre were increased from \$775,000 to \$1 million, while the Challenor School received an additional \$500,000 for debt service.

Continuing education

- Seven secondary schools are now offer continuing education classes, Queen's College and Lester Vaughn being the most recent additions.

Division of Youth Affairs

In addition to the many projects associated with its Youth on the Block programme, the Division expanded the residential phase of the Barbados Youth Service to four months, introduced new programmes and enrolled almost 400 students between 2003 and 2007.

Under the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme, the Division offered business counselling services, entrepreneurial training, accounting services, marketing services among others for almost 2,000 clients.

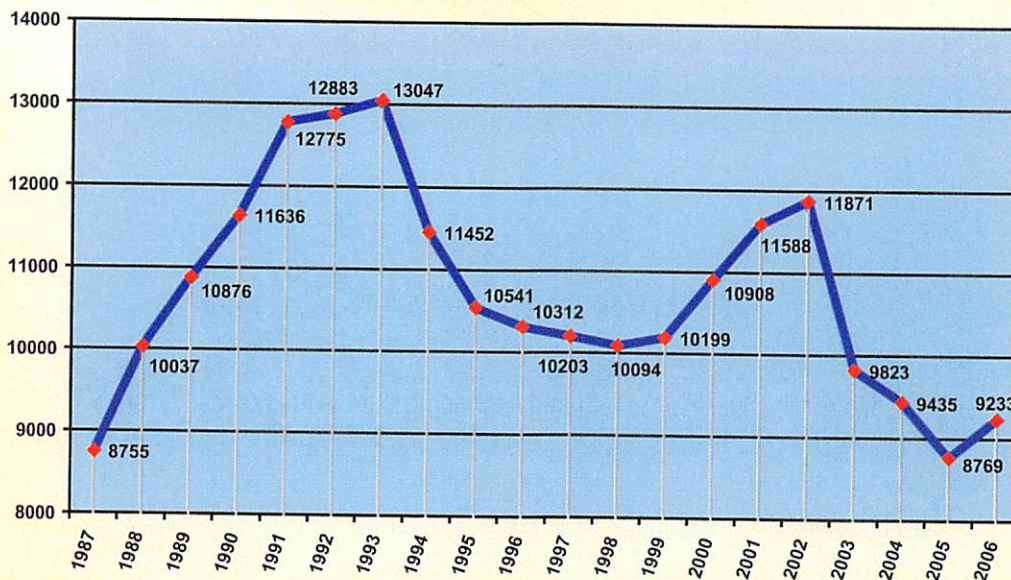


JUSTICE, PEACE AND SECURITY

The Office of the Attorney General has led the BLP Government quest to create an equitable, just, peaceful and safe society with a series of initiatives centred on police, judicial and penal systems reforms.

Significant emphasis has been placed on upgrading the conditions under which police officers work and reducing crime.

TOTAL REPORTED CASES OF CRIME IN BARBADOS: 1987-2006



This phenomenal reduction in crime has been achieved at a time almost all other countries in the region and across the developing world have been facing unusual increases in the incidence of crime.

Crime in Barbados in 2008 is at the same level as 1987. In fact, between 2003 and November 2007, the number of reported crimes has fallen each year, except in 2006 when there was a five per cent increase.

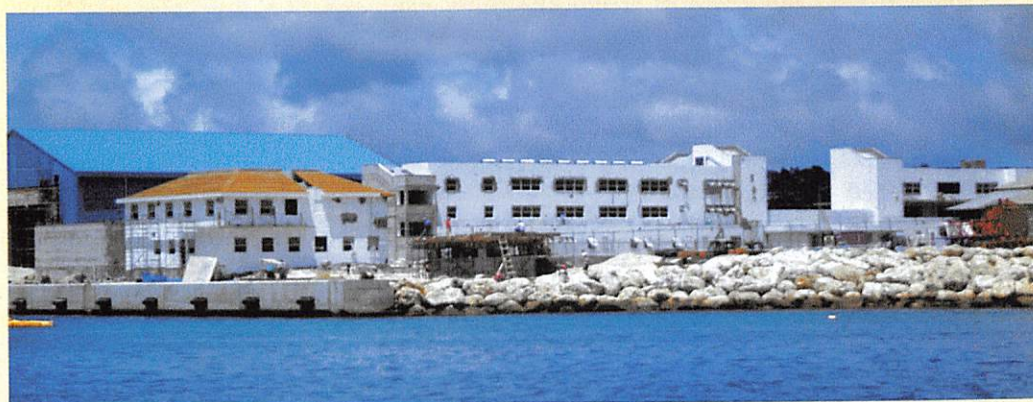
- Residential burglaries - down 14.3 per cent
- Commercial burglaries - down 12.4 per cent
- Crime against visitors - down 42 per cent
- The murder rate, nine per 100,000 people, is one of the lowest in the region.



THE BLP HAS, SINCE THE LAST ELECTION

Completely revamped the Force's communications capacity through the purchase and installation of an integrated wireless telecommunications network that also covers other emergency response agencies at a cost of more than \$26 million.

- Increased the number of constables and special constables involved in the maintenance of law and order in Barbados and integrated a number of special constables into the Force.
- Undertaken major computerization of police operations with the acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment and the activation of Local and Wide Area Networks.
- Drastically improved the conditions under which members of the public and force work through its physical development programme. District "A" Police Station has been refurbished, namely the Female Barracks, main station building and the building housing the Criminal Investigations Department, Special Services Unit and the Police Band Headquarters.
- Started construction of a new police station at Crab Hill, St. Lucy and opened the new police complex at Speightstown.
- Started construction of a new station as part of a municipal complex has begun at Tamarind Hall, St Joseph and commenced refurbishment of the Oistins Police Complex.





In keeping with its promise to the men and women of the Barbados Defence Force, a pension scheme for soldiers and former soldiers was established this year through an act of Parliament.

- Undertaken a comprehensive review of the current and future accommodation needs of the Force, and as a result has decided that news stations will be built at Wildey, St. Michael and Cane Garden, St. Thomas in partnership with the Barbados National Bank; along with new facilities at Belleplaine, St. Andrew, Six Roads, St. Philip and Worthing, Christ Church.
- Introduced Closed Circuit Television in St. Lawrence Gap as part of a programme of modernization of policing methods.
- Introduced a modern fleet replacement and management programme that has resulted in policemen having access to a larger number of up-to-date vehicles for the execution of their duties than at any time in the past.
- Increased support for the Health and Wellness Programme of the force, recognizing that easy access to health checks, especially for chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension, is an important part of safeguarding the health and welfare of police officers.
- Completed the construction, equipping and staffing of an ultra-modern Forensic Sciences Centre, and enacted the Forensic Procedures and DNA Identification Act to support its operation.
- As a legacy benefit of hosting Cricket World Cup 2007, continued the operation of the Barbados-based Joint Regional Communications Centre, providing efficient screening of persons travelling within the region and instant connection with INTERPOL.

Defence and Security

The Barbados Coast Guard took possession of a new, state-of-the-art, significantly expanded headquarters facility, HMBS Pelican, at a cost of \$59 million.

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It also received the first in a new fleet of modern patrol vessels of varying size, with the full procurement scheduled to be completed in three years.

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Police/public relations

The Police Complaints Authority was fully activated by the Barbados Labour Party Government since the last general election with the coming into force of the Police Complaints Authority Act in May 2004, the opening of the Authority's office in September 2004, the establishment of complaints office within the Force, and the approval of the rules of procedure for the lodging, investigation and disposal of complaints.



Justice system modernization

Access to justice by all Barbadians is fundamental to the creation of a truly just society, and the BLP Administration recognizes that to achieve this the court system must work efficiently in an environment that is conducive to the delivery of justice.

After forty years of promises by successive governments, the BLP ultimately started the construction of new state-of-the-art Judicial Centre that will house the Supreme and High Courts and provide for sittings of the Caribbean Court of Justice. It will be completed in the first half of 2008.

Additionally, by upgrading computers and software in the Computer Aided Transcription Unit and increasing staff from 10 to 14, the BLP Government has sped up the delivery of trial transcripts to judges, thus reducing the backlog of cases.

Efficiency has also been improved by training members of the Judiciary, the Bar and Court staff to use the new Court Management Information System, as well as the new rules of Civil Procedure.

A new Justice Information System, designed to link Police, the Prison Service, Courts, Immigration, Customs and Probation departments, has already been designed, and the Office of the Attorney General and its departments, including the Solicitor General's Chambers and the office of the Chief Parliamentary Counsel, have been fully computerized.

The BLP administration has broken its ties with the Privy Council in London and recognised the Caribbean Court of Justice as the final court.





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The BLP has constructed within two years and within budget, a new state of the art prison facility at Dodds, St. Philip to accommodate up to 1,250 inmates.

In the area of Penal Reform

THE BLP HAS:

- **Constructed within two years and within budget**, a new state of the art prison facility at Dodds, St. Philip to accommodate up to 1,250 inmates.
- Increased the complement of Prison Officers by 44 new posts and an additional 121 new posts have been approved over the next two years.
- Provided viable alternatives to custodial sentences, resulting in 342 community services orders being issued by the Court system over the last five years.
- Launched a Parole system.

TO ENHANCE THE OPERATION OF THE BARBADOS FIRE SERVICE IN ITS SERVICE TO BARBADIANS, THE BLP HAS:

- Approved plans for the construction of a new Fire Station at Six Cross Roads, St. Philip.
- Increased the number of Fire Officers by 20 and established an Auxiliary Fire Officers Unit with an initial complement of 7 officers.
- Procured new equipment for the Fire Service, including the new ultra modern rescue tender.
- Developed a new secure telecommunications system for the Fire Service, which now sees it sharing a common platform with all other emergency services.

IN THE AREA OF EMERGENCY RELIEF, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE, THE BLP HAS:

- Enacted for the first time an Emergency Management Act, which became effective on April 1, 2007.
- Created a new Department of Emergency Management with an expanded mandate to replace CERO and recruited additional staff.
- Relocated the Department of Emergency Management to Warrens Industrial Park, St. Michael.





NEW STANDARDS IN ACCOUNTABILITY AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Barbados Labour Party has set new standards in transparency, accountability and fiscal responsibility.

The landmark 2003 Public Accounts Committee Act ceded unprecedented oversight and investigative authority to the Opposition and to Independent Senators.

Indeed, the Act confers on Opposition and Independent Senators the competence to form quorums without government's participation.

The Leader of the Opposition, as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, has distinguished his tenure by the impressive feat of not carrying out a single investigation; albeit he has been strident in unfounded allegations and calls for commissions of inquiry.

In stark contrast, the Minister of Finance initiated thirteen special audits of such entities as the Barbados Tourism Authority; the Rural Development Commission, the Government Printery and the Schools Meals Department; and has laid the related reports in Parliament for full public disclosure.

This level of transparency and accountability is unparalleled.

Moreover, Barbados, under the BLP, is now a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. We had the distinction of leading our sister CARICOM countries in the negotiations for participation in the Convention.





THE CIVIL SERVICE

The BLP has continued its programme of instituting changes

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Since 2003, the cumulative wage and salary increases of public servants have amounted to 18 per cent — two per cent in 2003, three per cent in 2004, three per cent in 2005, 7.5 per cent in 2006 and 2.5 per cent in 2007. Public officers also received a further 2 per cent Cost of Living Allowance.

Other financial benefits have included:

- An increase in travelling allowance for public officers who use cars from \$1.67 per kilometre to \$1.98 per km.
- The motor cycle upkeep allowance of postmen and women was increased from \$138 per month to \$332 per month.
- An on-call/inconvenience allowance was given to doctors.
- The ceiling on interest-free vehicle loans was raised from \$35,000 to \$50,000.
- Telephone allowance was increased from \$31 to \$125 per month to cover both landlines and cellular phones and the number of eligible persons increased by including persons in the S5 and S6 salary grades.
- Plain clothes allowance for court marshals and clerks, as well as customs and immigration officers was raised to \$1,140 per month in 2007.

Improved job security

In an effort to improve the security of tenure of more public officers, 1,177 were appointed in 2003, 671 in 2004, 764 in 2005, 672 in 2006 and 3,000 in 2007.



Overtime pay promise kept

The BLP kept its promise to police, prison, fire, nursing and air traffic control officers to compensate them for their many hours of overtime work each month by implementing the Flexible Responsibility Allowances. The extent of the improvement in pay is illustrated by the fact that between September 2005 and December 2006 Flexible Responsibility Allowance paid to members of the Police Force alone amounted to \$2 million.

Maternity benefits:

Effective April 2007, female public officers ceased to suffer loss of income while on maternity leave since the National Insurance Department must now pay any difference that exists between their maternity benefits entitlement and their substantive salary.

Job evaluation:

Government promised public servants a comprehensive job evaluation exercise, and delivered in 2005 when 3,000 posts were upgraded. Police officers, nurses, fire fighters, prison officers, artisans and section leaders in the Ministry of Public Works and car park attendants were among the main beneficiaries.

Public Sector Reform:

Since 2003 the Office of Public Sector Reform has been involved in strategic planning with Government departments and agencies, conducting organizational reviews, drafting and implementing Customer Charters and Operational Manuals.

Additionally, the office's Employee Assistance Programme and Service Assessment and Improvement Programme touched more than 5,000 public servants.

Personnel Administration:

Since 2003, the BLP Government has been providing increased personnel and equipment to the Personnel Administration Division (PAD) for the development and implementation of projects to enhance the functioning of the public service.

Effective April 2007, female public officers ceased to suffer loss of income while on maternity leave since the National Insurance Department must now pay any difference that exists between their maternity benefits entitlement and their substantive salary.

The BLP kept its promise to police, prison, fire, nursing and air traffic control officers to compensate them for their many hours of overtime work each month by implementing the Flexible Responsibility Allowances



In 2007 the BLP passed a new Public Services Act... almost 3,000 persons in acting or temporary positions for 3 years or more will now be appointed

- This department, in conjunction with the Ministry of the Civil Service and the Accountant General's Office, has been leading the implementation of Smart Stream, a project to completely computerize the human resource management information system of Government.
- PAD also introduced a Performance Review Development System for the Public Service on a pilot basis.
- The department has also taken steps to streamline and modernize the process of promotions and appointments across the service. Steps are being implemented to make the system more transparent, to better alert officers to the creation of vacancies, to fill vacancies faster with the best persons, and to de-emphasise seniority only as the basis for promotion.





BRINGING LABOUR MANAGEMENT INTO THE 21st CENTURY

The Ministry of Labour has:

- Updated its Barbados Labour Market Information System website, giving the world instant access on job vacancies posted at the National Employment Bureau, labour statistics, health and safety at the workplace information, the Social Partnership's Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS, among other things.
- Completed a policy paper on the management of migrant labour in Barbados.
- Published dozens of documents to provide information to job seekers, students, researchers, employers and public servants on a variety of labour issues.
- Undertaken research and compiled a policy paper on the introduction of Minimum Wage legislation.

Over the last
five years
graduated
4,251 full-
time students
through the
Skills Training
Programme



Under the auspices of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council, provided \$9.7 million in grants to train 19,691 persons

- Completed an Interim Report on the introduction of a 24-hour workday.
- In support of the National Initiative on Service Excellence (NISE), launched GIVE — Great Attitudes, Initiative, Values and Excellence — to reward workers in the public and private sector for providing excellent service.
- Collaborated with the National Employment Bureau, drafted a proposal to use funds from the NIS to retrain displaced workers to re-enter the labour market.
- Expanded opportunities for Barbadian workers to find employment in North American hotels, up to 176 in the United States and 93 in Canada in 2007.
- Under the auspices of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Council, provided \$9.7 million in grants to train 19,691 persons.
- Developed occupational standards for the Tourism and Hospitality, Customer Service, Information Technology and Horticulture sectors.
- Subsidized the training of 436 persons in areas such as automotive engineering, carpentry, joinery, masonry, plumbing, electrical installation, welding and metal fabrication and mechanical engineering under the Vocational Training Board's Apprenticeship Programme.
- Opened a new skills training centre at Six Roads and expanded those at Sayes Court and St. Patrick's.
- Over the last five years graduated 4,251 full-time students through the Skills Training Programme.
- Since 2003 trained 3,030 employed persons through the Skills Training Programme's Evening Classes project.

Through its Training Administration Division, the Ministry of Labour sought to empower members of the Public Service by facilitating training.

- 470 persons received loans from the Training Loan Fund to the tune of \$1.3 million between 2003 and 2007.
- 1,561 public officers were granted training awards at a cost of \$10.6 million.
- Additionally, 440 persons were granted study leave at their own request.
- Between 2003 and 2007 almost 14, 000 public servants received in-service training organized by the Training Administration Division.
- The TAD also facilitated overseas training through scholarships granted by foreign donor agencies or governments for 71 Barbadians.





FOREIGN AFFAIRS

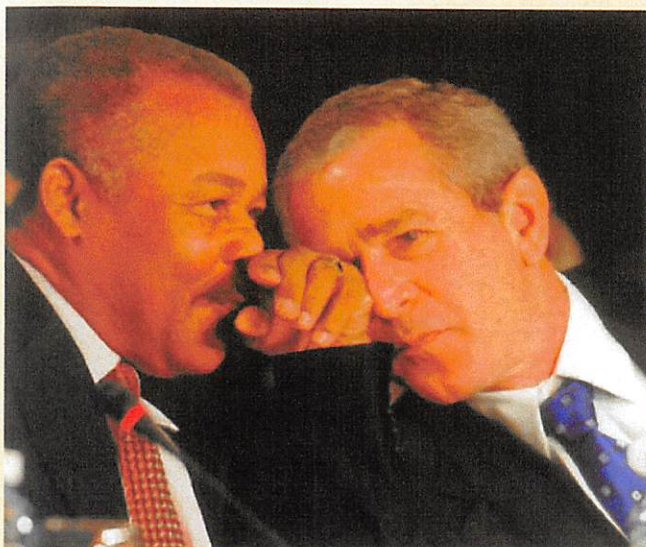
For the BLP Administration the period since the last General Election has been “immensely challenging and active”.

All this occurred in an international environment of heightened political and economic volatility, largely defined by the invasion of Iraq in 2003; the extraordinary preoccupation with the fight against terrorism, to the detriment of the global development agenda; the rise in oil prices to unprecedented levels; and the highly complicated negotiations for consolidation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

Our efforts, even in the face of these challenges, were hugely successful — exemplified in the ruling of the Ad Hoc Tribunal that settled Barbados maritime boundary dispute with Trinidad and Tobago under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. This ruling gave Barbados an extended Exclusive Economic Zone of tens of thousands of square nautical miles — and the right to exploit its rich resources.

- We also:
- Negotiated a bilateral Exclusive Economic Zone Treaty with Guyana, which came into force in April 2004.
- Held three rounds of talks with France to delimit Barbados’ northern boundary with Martinique and Guadeloupe.
- Started talks with St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada on the issue of delimiting Barbados’ western maritime boundaries.
- Engaged in an initiative to make permanent the CARICOM Single Space and Common Visa Regime that had been instituted for Cricket World Cup 2007.
- Led the passage of legislation to give effect to the bilateral trade agreements between CARICOM and Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela.
- Hosted the second CARICOM-Cuba Summit to facilitate discussion among heads on ways to strengthen relations between the Community and Cuba.
- Successfully lobbied for the creation of a Caribbean Sea Commission within the Association of Caribbean States.
- Hosted and chaired the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance in September 2005.

In this term the BLP protected Barbados’ maritime space by winning its claim against Trinidad and Tobago and securing 99% of what Trinidad claimed in Barbados’ Exclusive Economic Zone





- Hosted the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in November 2006.
- Assumed the chairmanship of critical committees at the WTO to promote and defend the interests of small vulnerable economies.
- Successfully led an initiative to create a permanent body within the United Nations to advise member states on matters of international tax cooperation, with a Barbadian expert as one of its members.
- Successfully piloted and secured the unanimous adoption of the UN General Assembly of a new resolution to have the Caribbean Sea recognized as a special area in the context of sustainable development.
- Stepped up discussions with Trinidad and Tobago on a fisheries agreement in accordance with the ruling of the Arbitral Tribunal.
- Launched the Barbados/Guyana Joint Economic, Technical and Cultural Commission in 2007 to explore areas of cooperation in trade and investment, agriculture and fisheries, tourism, immigration and youth affairs and sports.
- Successfully lobbied Washington to avert the override of the Barbados-United States Agreement on the Avoidance of Double Taxation by an act of the United States Congress.
- Vigorously defended Barbados' financial services sector at special hearing on the operations of tax havens held in Ottawa in May, 2007 by the House of Commons Finance Committee.
- Concluded agreement with Brazil on technical, educational and cultural cooperation, and considerably advanced work on an Air Services and a Prisoner Transfer agreements.
- Concluded a Basic Agreement on Friendship and Cooperation and a Bilateral Tourism Cooperation Agreement with Venezuela.
- In conjunction with the Commission for Pan-African Affairs, worked to strengthen cultural and economic ties with Ghana, leading to a framework Agreement and Bilateral Investment Treaty and Double Taxation Agreement.
- Signed Bilateral Prisoner Transfer Agreements with Canada in 2003 and Switzerland in 2004.
- Facilitated links between American and Canadian education institutions and Barbados Community College and University of the West Indies to create new opportunities for Barbadian students.
- Partnered with the Ministry responsible for International Business in a diplomatic offensive to promote the OECD's confirmation of Barbados as a transparent, well-regulated financial services centre, culminating in new Double Taxation Agreements with Mauritius, Botswana, Austria, the Netherlands and the Seychelles. Negotiations are on going with Mexico and Ghana.

This ruling gave Barbados an extended Exclusive Economic Zone of tens of thousands of square nautical miles — and the right to exploit its rich resources.



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