

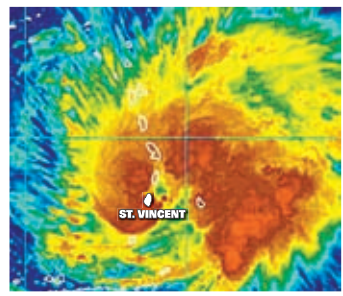
**Briefing**

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# Construction begins today to replace homes

# OPERATION

# REBUILD



BEGINNING THIS MORNING, Tuesday, November 2, construction work will begin to replace the dozens of houses which were destroyed during the passage of the category 1 Hurricane Tomas on Saturday, October 30.

This disclosure was made yesterday, Monday, November 1, by Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves at a press conference held at Cabinet Room. "At 6:00 a.m. tomorrow, we intend in every single community, in every single village, to begin the construction of at least one house," he said.

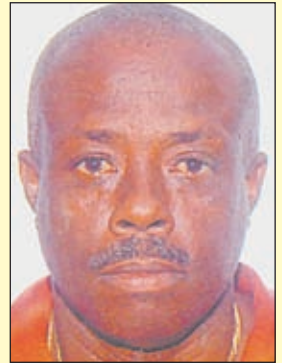
Gonsalves also said that the distribution of construction material will also begin, so that persons whose houses were damaged, could begin to help themselves.

"Then we will seek to distribute to deserving persons, materials, for work to be done and we will assist as far as possible with getting some of the work done, but we have to proceed with great rapidity, so that many persons have to get on with helping themselves too; because we have to get

● Continued on Page 2



**SUSAN ISAACS** of Sharpes Village, Chateaubelair, showing the massive boulder that crashed into her home leaving a gaping hole. (See full story on Page 9)



**CAPTAIN GUY OLLIVIERRE**



**VANDYKE DICKSON**

## Missing fishermen found in Balliceaux

THE TWO FISHERMEN who were reported missing at sea since Friday, October 29, were found safe and sound on Balliceaux early Monday morning.

Guy Ollivierre, 55, of Victoria Village and Vandyke "Jeff" Dickson, 41, of Stubbs left Stubbs Bay last Friday morning to fish on the North Windward coast, but they never completed the journey, after their boat capsized while on the way.

When contacted yesterday, the Coastguard officials told SEARCHLIGHT that they had received information that the men swam to the deserted isle of

● Continued on Pages 12 & 13

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## PM: Reconstruction to begin today!

● Continued from Page 1

the persons who are in the schools out of the schools," the Prime Minister said.

He said the number of damaged homes had risen to over 1,200. There are at present 1,194 persons in shelters around the country.

The Prime Minister also disclosed that the Government had placed an immediate EC\$1 million order for lumber, galvanize and other hardware, at local establishments.

He however warned against getting into struggles about who received help before whom.

"Let's not quarrel about that.... Let us go forward in unity," he said.

The Prime Minister said the Physical Infrastructure Committee, which will oversee the rebuilding work, will be headed by the Director General of Finance and Planning and will include the Minister of Housing and Lands and the Minister of Transport and Works, as well as several technical persons.

He said, during a nationwide address on Sunday evening, the committee will send out teams to get the names of "every single individual who has had his or her house damaged or destroyed."

Once the names have been collected, the extent of the damage to each person's

house has to be ascertained so that the resources can be mobilized and the plans put in place to assist these persons, the Prime Minister said.

He however made it clear that he was speaking of structural damage to homes.

"I am not talking now about consequential loss, which they would have suffered to their furniture, to their refrigerator, to their appliances of one kind or another, to their clothing, to

their beds; because a lot of that has taken place. I am only addressing, for the moment ..., the issue of getting a roof over people's heads," Gonsalves said.

"This is going to take a phenomenal amount of mone. We don't know until we get the actual details of each individual's damage what the total cost of that will be, but it obviously is going to be substantial," the Prime Minister said.

## CWSA teams respond to crisis

● Continued from Back Page

was still continuing on the North Windward system which supplies the Sandy Bay and Owia areas.

The Dalloway system, which supplies much of South Leeward, areas of Kingstown, Arnos Vale, Cane Garden and Villa, and which was affected by muddy water during the passage of the storm, has been fully restored, while the Layou water supply system, was the only system which was not affected by the passage of the hurricane.

Saunders appealed to the public to understand that the CWSA workers, in restoring these systems, have to work in difficult terrain, often involving the cutting

and clearing of large fallen trees. He also said that heavy pipes have to be transported up the mountainside in areas where there are no roads.

"We are trying our best to have the affected systems restored as quickly as possible," he said, and thanked the public for their patience and appreciation that the CWSA was able to restore many of the downed systems in less than 24 hours after the hurricane.

While the water systems are down, the CWSA's water tender will go into the North Windward area to supply the emergency centres and any public facilities, such as hospitals and clinics in those areas, so that residents of the shelters will not be put out by a lack of water.

### Big change starts with small change.



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## Preliminary Assessment of Damage as at Sunday, October 31 following the passage of Hurricane Tomas

NO ONE HAS BEEN reported dead as a consequence of the hurricane. However, two persons were seriously injured and two fishermen who went to sea on Friday, are missing.

- 1,200 houses sustained damage ranging from slight damage to destruction
- Seven government buildings damaged
- Widespread devastation of the agricultural sector, especially bananas and plantains
- 1,194 persons are in shelters
- The National Operations Committee is in full operation and relief supplies to persons in shelters began on Sunday morning.
- All schools closed for this week.
- Hospitals and health facilities were not impacted adversely
- Security situation normal and well in hand
- Water and electricity systems severely affected
- Communication systems were not adversely affected, except north of the Dry River where LIME experienced some problems.
- All main roads are now passable, but there is a great amount of clean up to be done.

## NEMO, BRAGSA officials had hands full



Senior government officials and volunteers outside the office of the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) on Sunday morning, just before several teams left to make assessments of damage in different areas of the country.

THE HEADQUARTERS of the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) was a hive of activity over the past four days.

Key officials of various government and Non-Government Organizations gathered at the organization's Old Montrose office, before disseminating information and teams to the areas where they were needed.

The office was also visited by persons and groups offering to assist those in need.

On Sunday, members from the Ministry of Transport and Works, along with NEMO and BRAGSA officials, went out in teams around the country, assessing the level of damage.

Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves and NEMO's Acting Director Michelle Forbes met with other emergency and security officials at the headquarters during and after the passage of the category one hurricane.

## SVG to receive US\$1.1 m. from CCRIF

# PAYOUT

ST. VINCENT and the Grenadines will receive a payout of US\$1.1 million from the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) as a result of damage sustained during the passage of Hurricane Tomas.

According to a release from the CCRIF, the CCRIF model generated substantial government losses in Barbados, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Barbados endured the biggest actual loss (as it is a significantly bigger economy than the other two) as well as the biggest

loss relative to GDP (just over 1.5%), also due to a high coastal exposure. Both Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines endured modelled losses of around half of one per cent of GDP.

Preliminary reports from all three islands suggest that the impacts are commensurate with these levels of losses. All areas of Barbados have been significantly impacted, whereas severe impacts have been limited to the southern parts of Saint Lucia and the northern parts of St. Vincent.

CCRIF coverage triggered in

all three islands in which losses were recorded in the CCRIF model. Preliminary calculations show payouts of US\$8.5 million for Barbados, US\$3.2 million for Saint Lucia and US\$1.1 million for St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These payouts reflect the application of policy conditions to the modelled government loss.

Each member of CCRIF selects their own policy attachment point (equivalent to a deductible), exhaustion point (equivalent to the full policy value) and the level of premium they wish to pay. These three

conditions then dictate what the payout will be relative to the loss.

Under the terms of CCRIF policies, a final loss and payout calculation will be undertaken on 13 November, with the National Hurricane Centre data available at that time used as input to the loss model. Payout will be made as soon thereafter as possible.

Hurricane Tomas remains an active storm and could impact further CCRIF - covered countries.

Should that occur, a second event report will be issued.

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**DJ Nicholas**



## Bookstore



# Fishing boat smashed to pieces behind 'Complex'

FISHERMAN Calvin Lampkin is now weighing the options open to him, after his fishing boat was destroyed during the passage of Hurricane Tomas.

Lampkin's Japanese long-liner, which he has owned since 1992, was smashed to bits on the rocks just outside the Administrative Building in Kingstown Harbour.

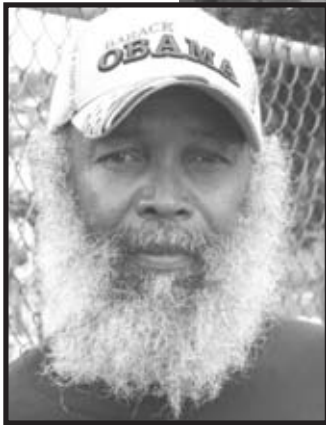
On Sunday morning, he told SEARCHLIGHT that the boat had been tied up at the Fish Market jetty, but the bow line burst.

"I lent my regular bow line to someone, who didn't return it. He took it to Bequia and didn't bring it

back as promised. I was forced to use a thinner line to tie up my boat," he said.

Lampkin, who is originally from Rose Hall, said that he has to accept what happened and will begin the recovery process from the bottom.

He is however happy about at least one thing, "Fortunately, I have no debts," he stated.



**CALVIN LAMPKIN**



**IN PHOTO: (Shown by arrow), are the remains of Calvin Lampkin's boat.**



**FISHING BOATS** which were re-located to Rose Place from Hurricane Tomas.



**THE CHATEAUBELAIR WHARF** taking a sound pounding Saturday morning. It suffered a large crack during the storm.



**CHATEAUBELAIR** fishermen relaunching their boats after Tomas.



**TONS OF DEBRIS** were dumped on the Chateaubelair water-front.



# Wind runs ship aground

THE SIX SEAMEN onboard the MV Stingray got the ride of their life of Saturday night, during the passage of Hurricane Tomas.

At about 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, the vessel, which had been anchored in Kingstown Harbour, was propelled through the surging seas, all along the southern coastline of mainland St. Vincent, by Tomas's winds, until it came to rest on the reef, off the Brighton coast.

Lieutenant Deon Henry of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Coast Guard told Searchlight that the boat had lost both its anchors and its engine had failed. Henry and other officers of the Coast Guard were on hand at the Brighton Salt Pond beach on Sunday, to lend assistance to the vessel and crew.

Henry told SEARCHLIGHT that the Coast Guard was on standby to deliver a salvage pump and rope to try to float the boat when the seas calmed down.

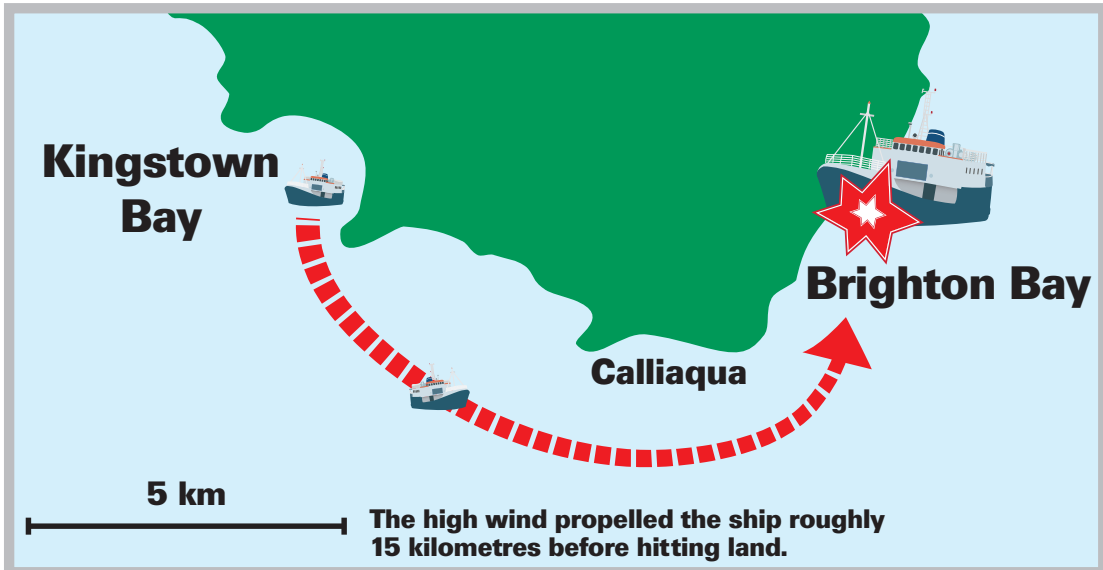
Up to midday on Sunday, October 31, when Searchlight left the scene, the six crew members were still on board the vessel. Three men in a small speed boat were seen trying to row towards the Stingray to lend assistance to the crew. The three eventually made it alongside the vessel, after being repeatedly pushed back to shore by the large waves and the tide.



THE SHIP marooned on the rocks as a small boat fights the waves.



A CLOSE UP of the small rescue team



## Chamber pledges support to help businesses rebuild

THE CHAMBER of Industry and Commerce has extended its full support to the rebuilding of our nation subsequent to the passage of Hurricane Tomas.

A release from the Chamber on Monday, November 1 said, "...We cannot dictate that businesses close their doors since everybody's circumstances would be different. However, businesses are asked to be understanding to the plight of their employees by providing reasonable times and assistance to their employees who would have suffered as a result of the disaster. At the same time, we urge all to remain mind-

ful that the country's rebuilding depends on heavily on our productivity and as such businesses must continue to operate."

"We urge all businesses to ensure that proper damage assessments are conducted at their premises. This includes taking photos where necessary for Insurance purposes."

The Chamber also asked all citizens to be very careful and cautious as the nation continues the clean-up.

They advised businesses to provide assistance to state agencies wherever possible, especially where specialized and heavy-duty equipment is needed.

## Yacht found on beach

VISITORS to the Wallilabou Beach met this yacht on its side on the sand when they visited the beach on Sunday morning following Hurricane Tomas.

The owner of the boat was unknown up to press time.





# Opinion

SEARCHLIGHT



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Words of  
 Wisdom

In adversity those talents are called forth which are concealed by prosperity. -  
 Horace

## Every hand needed for rebuilding

### EDITORIAL

HURRICANE TOMAS REALLY delivered a severe beating to our country over the weekend. We had been bemoaning the state of the economy. Now, in retrospect, when we look at the devastation all around us, things were relatively good.

Our agricultural industry has suffered a severe hit, and the months ahead look dismal in terms of our ability to earn income from our agricultural exports, and being able to supply ourselves with food, especially fruit and vegetables. Estimates put losses in the agricultural sector at over \$67 million.

In this issue, we feature two banana farmers whose entire crops were wiped out. They have both been in the banana industry for many years and have said this is the worst experience they have ever had. Despite the misfortunes of the banana industry over the years, it is still a major income earner, and brought in over \$22 million last year.

By the last estimate, over 1,200 homes were either damaged or destroyed during the hurricane, and over 1,000 persons were in emergency shelters on Sunday. Many of these persons were traumatized by having to run for their lives and are now wondering how they will pick up the pieces.

Despite the devastation all around us, especially to our agricultural industry and to the many families whose homes were dam-

aged, we still have to thank God that no lives were lost and we did not suffer more damage.

Tomas was a category one hurricane, and he grew stronger after he left us. As we go to press, we are receiving reports of fatalities and widespread damage in St. Lucia. Just thinking of what might have happened, were Tomas a stronger hurricane, is too horrible to bear.

However, the situation is what it is, and processing of rebuilding has begun. The relevance and appropriateness of the theme of our 31st anniversary of independence, "With every hand we build our land", is now beginning to dawn on us.

Now more than ever, we need to put aside petty differences and get on with the task of building and rebuilding. It is to our credit that over the last few days, the national good has been at the forefront, and very little of the divisive partisan political discourse, which has characterised our conversation over the past few years, has been heard.

May this new attitude continue as we hopefully have learned over the past few days that the things we have in common are much greater than the things which divide us, and we really need each other and to work together, if we are to progress as a people.

## PM calls for public to be understanding in recovery

PRIME MINISTER Dr. Ralph Gonsalves has asked the nation not to expect perfection in the next weeks, as they seek to rebuild the houses, structures and agriculture damaged by the passing of Hurricane Tomas.

Speaking at a press conference on Monday November 1, 2010 at Cabinet Room, Gonsalves stated that the nation must approach the rehabilitation process with as much urgency as possible. "We are not going to have in this week or in the following weeks, perfection," he stated.

According to Gonsalves, two committees have been set up to deal with the damage to houses and agriculture. The physical infrastructure committee is headed by the Director General of Finance and Planning and the committee responsible for the rehabilitation of the agriculture will be headed by Minister of Agriculture Montgomery Daniel.

Gonsalves stated that as of yesterday, 1,200 homes were reported damaged and dozens destroyed, mostly in the north west region of the country. He added that an order totaling EC \$1 million worth of galvanize, ply board



PM RALPH GONSALVES

and other building supplies was made to begin the rebuilding process. He stated that the process will start today, as early as six am around the country, and officials will begin distributing materials and helping

persons wherever they can.

Estimating the destruction of agricultural crops to be \$67 million, Gonsalves said that mostly all banana crops have been destroyed and persons have reported the destruction of pigeon pea

plants, green houses, as well as animals among other things.

He added that he has requested the financial help of several institutions. According to Gonsalves, USAID has given emergency aid in the sum of US\$50,000. He added that an application for an emergency loan from the World Bank is currently being prepared, as well an application for money remaining from a rural transformation grant totaling \$7.7 million Euros from the European Union. He further stated that he has contacted Taiwan in relation to offering assistance beyond the US\$200,000 which they have made immediately available.

Gonsalves also stated that EC\$1.1 million from the Catastrophic Risk Insurance will be obtained as well as US\$250,000 from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) will be sent through CDEMA to NEMO. He added that a request was sent to the CDB for the remainder of the money from the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF), a total of EC\$5.5 million.



## Letters

## Mr. Alexander, uplift the youths of SVG

**EDITOR:** Being a long time reader of the SEARCHLIGHT newspaper online, for the first time ever, I feel compelled to write a letter to the editor.

Over the years I've always enjoyed Mr. Alexander's columns, but his offering for the week ending October 29, 2010, was mostly off base with regard to the youth of the nation.

While I understand Mr. Alexander's perspective, I find it totally amusing.

Mr. Alexander often speaks of the passing of pioneers who assisted with the development of SVG. I believe that Mr. Alexander feels that this is and was the best that this nation has to offer. It is with that mindset I take offence. There is absolutely nothing wrong with young people being given an opportunity to help in framing the future of our country. Young people are asked to go university and pursue higher education and in turn return home to help further the development of our country. While I am sure Mr. Alexander shares that sentiment, I think he should rethink his position on the bashing of young upstarts, whether in political or government institutions.

Often time, there are complaints that the young people of the country not doing enough to ensure the future growth of our country, but if we are to listen to Mr. Alexander, it will be okay just to sit back and wait until you are about 30 - 35 when you are more seasoned. This notion is totally ridiculous. I have two cousins, both doctors, who graduated from St. George's University. Both returned home to work to help further the country's medical services. But after a while, one got tired of the 'sit and wait your turn' culture, and left the country for the US. Mr. Alexander, I beg you to put aside your political biases when it comes to the upliftment of the youths of SVG.

Leslie Lawrence jr.



Handling fallen wires is dangerous - always assume they are live!

## We have no choice but to pick up the pieces

## Eye of the Needle

**MY HEART goes out to all those who have suffered as a result of our latest natural disaster, our long-suffering**



RENWICK ROSE

farmers, those in banana in particular.

Just when we were all but sure that we had escaped another hurricane season unscathed, Hurricane Tomas gave us a rude awakening. No, we are not out of the hurricane belt or so "blessed", as we are wont to deceive ourselves, that we cannot be hit by a hurricane. My own guess is that we were perhaps even less prepared last Friday for a storm, than we were at the beginning of the annual "season of dread", in June. With each passing month our complacency increased, fuelled by such

backward thoughts as the idea that Haiti's continued susceptibility to natural disasters has something to do with its alleged "sins", voodoo included. "Not "blessed" SVG, we tried to convince ourselves. "Welcome to the Club, SVG".

However there is an old saying that "it is an ill wind which blows nobody good". Out of our hurricane-inflicted suffering, we are bound to develop a much deeper appreciation of our own vulnerability. We are sure to pay more heed to warnings and the need for preparation. The reality is that we live in the

hurricane belt and each year must prepare for the worst. By now that should be routine, but for one reason or another we seem to like to live on the edge, and complain afterwards.

As we say our thanks to the Most High for our survival, we can only but reflect that in spite of the serious damage, things could have been much worse. What if Tomas had been a Category 4 or 5 hurricane? We will also have some satisfaction in that the Vincentian tendency towards constant improvement of our housing stock makes us better able to withstand ravages such as those wrought by Tomas. At the same time, we must consider the losses and destruction, not on an individual level, but as losses accruing to the nation as a whole with a collective responsibility to repair the damage.

Now we are left to assess the full extent of the destruction and to pick up the pieces. Those whose homes have been rendered unfit for habitation

must be re-housed and assisted to put their lives back together again. Physical infrastructure must be repaired and public utilities restored to their functioning levels. In all of this, however, we must spare a special thought for the state of our local food sector. As I write, a comprehensive assessment of the damage to the agricultural and fishing sectors could not yet have been made, though from all reports it is reasonable to believe that it is substantial. That goes for our sister islands of St. Lucia and Barbados as well.

We have recently observed World Food Day with statistics demonstrating our rapidly growing dependence on extra-regional sources for food. The ravages of Tomas will only exacerbate this situation. We are right on the door-step of Christmas, traditionally a time of increased demand, how can we manage? That situation calls for urgent action. Depending on the scale of the destruction,

there may be appeals for food aid, but this is but a temporary and emergency solution. The more sensible response is to use the opportunity to put our entire agriculture and fishing industries on a more secure and sustainable footing.

It must be borne in mind that in the case of farming and fishing families and communities, it is a case of LIVELIHOODS. When a farm has been ravaged or a fishing boat lost, the ability of that farming and fishing family to take care of its own needs is severely restricted, if not wiped out entirely. If you take our battered banana industry for instance, it means that those who have had total or very substantial losses, end up like workers who have lost their jobs. There is no income forthcoming, but bills are still there to be paid and mouths to be fed. These must be borne in mind in any rehabilitation or reconstruction programme.

One must also be gender-sensitive in our

approach to these matters. Our reality is that single-parent households mostly headed by women are prominent in the rural communities. That reality must underpin our approaches to deal with the situation, a weakness that we have displayed time and again. It means that in both the relief and reconstruction efforts, it is of paramount importance that the active participation of those affected, and their organizations must become central to the effort. Whether it is community organizations, or organizations of fisherfolk and farmers, charting a way forward is impossible without their input and participation, from conception to implementation. We must learn our lessons from the past and seek not only to avoid them but to improve significantly in the manner in which we tackle such crises.

● Renwick Rose is a community activist and social commentator.



# Opinion

SEARCHLIGHT

## Letters

### NSPD member speaks out

**EDITOR:** I read intently, the article which was written by a concerned member of NSPD dated Friday, October 16, 2010. It captured in detail almost all the events that had transpired during the meeting.

Please afford me a space in your newspaper to comment on an issue of concern to me and one that I think would stimulate lots of interest among the members of the National Society of Persons with Disability (NSPD).

This issue has to do with accountability. It involves information that was reported at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) by the treasurer of the NSPD. Here are the facts.

The treasurer announced at the Biennial Annual General Meeting about two (2) years ago that some monies were missing from the organization's headquarters.

We as concerned members of the organization would want to find out if there are any efforts being made to retrieve those missing monies. We don't know how much, if it were a large amount. We would want to find out if the organization has a bank account. If so, why a large amount of money has to be kept at the office? According to the organization's constitution, only a small amount or petty cash should be kept at the office.

We the members of the organization would like to see proper financial statements for the past two years. In the future, all reports of the organization must be typed and be distributed among its members in advance. The organization is forging ahead quite smoothly. Other organizations want to adopt our organization as a good role model. If our acts and operations are not in order; if we do not project ourselves to the public in a transparent manner, we will not get new members and our organization will be dormant.

The inclusion of students with disabilities in the school system is critical to ensuring the integration of disabled persons into the mainstream of society. With the influx of disabled students gaining entrance into mainstream schools, we as educators and members of the NSPD must cater for their educational needs and welfare.

I can remember quite vividly that when I was attending the Teachers' College, I was denied the rights of extra time to write my final examinations. I wrote to the relevant authorities but no one seems to know who the correct authorities really are.

Our disabled students are faced with several difficulties and the caregivers don't know who to approach.

I have requested that an education committee in the NSPD discuss the concerns of these our students, but my request went unheard.

We have to wake up those who are sound asleep. We need to realize that there are intelligent persons in our organization. We must aim at passing the boundaries of the office and launch out into the deep of our nation to capture those 5000 disabled persons in our island.

We have to do something good for the betterment of ourselves and our blessed state, St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Those who can see would have to use their eyes for those who can't.

Those who are intelligent would have to use their intelligence for those who are less fortunate.

Let's join hearts and hands and work together for the betterment of our organization.

**NOW IS THE TIME FOR US, THE MEMBERS TO SPEAK OUT!**

A Concerned Member

### Act now before it's too late

**EDITOR:** On August 28 2010, our brother was brutally stabbed to death. One of the persons who was charged was released back into the community.

Since our brother's death, our family has been continuously threatened. There have been two fires in the past two months in which one of my cousin's homes was burnt down and the shack that my brother left, which housed his only son, was burnt to the ground right in front of the Lauders

Primary School.

We are curious to know what is going on and why nothing has been done even though these incidents were reported to the police. Are they waiting to act until another family member has been killed?

We, the family here in the United States, are concerned and would like to get some answers.

Relatives in the United States

### Let good policy be your guide

**EDITOR:** St. Vincent and the Grenadines has been engaged in the silly political season for at least the past 15 years, as a proliferation of talk shows has permeated the airwaves. Political diatribe has become the order of the day and our political leaders have to suffer through the daily indignity of having outright lies and innuendoes about their character become fact. Both political leaders have been demonized by persons residing on the opposite side of the political divide.

I have known and been friends with Ralph Gonsalves for almost thirty years and I have never seen in him the caricature that his opponents would like to portray. He is not an evil person who hates people and wants to destroy the economy

of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In fact, quite the contrary, he has prepared himself both academically and by being an avid reader to make a contribution to the development of his country. He has studied many political systems and economic experiments and has used best-practices and learnt from other leaders' mistakes in an attempt to advance the development of St. Vincent and the Grenadines over the long term.

Having said that, I recognise that like all of us, he suffers from the imperfections of men and often appears dismissive and impatient. He is accused, even by his friends, of not listening to advice.

● Continued on Page 9

## One Region

### Decriminalising marijuana – taking the high ground



SIR RONALD SANDERS

FROM THE OUTSET of this commentary, let me state categorically that I have never smoked marijuana, and I do not drink alcohol except for the occasional glass of wine at a celebration. I was a heavy cigarette smoker until 1980 when, with great difficulty, I went from over 20 cigarettes a day to none at all overnight.

I am relating all this because, not for the first time, I am arguing that the Caribbean should legalise the growing of marijuana for medicinal purposes and should end laws that criminalise the use of small quantities for recreational and religious purposes.

Every serious and independent scientific study that has examined the matter of decriminalising marijuana has recommended that it should be decriminalised, and now the US billionaire financier and philanthropist George Soros has donated \$1 million to a proposal in the election campaign in the state of California in the United States to try to legalise marijuana.

In the Caribbean, there are thousands of people who are criminals because they are, in one way or another, involved in illegally growing, picking, packing and distributing marijuana.

Many of these are farmers or people who worked on farms and who have lost markets for their products such as bananas and citrus because Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) countries were deprived of preferential access to the European Union market because of challenges by Latin American countries and the United States encouraged by large US-owned corporations that dominated the banana market. They have turned to working the marijuana business because without it, they will not survive. So, they are criminals.

If these countries were growing and exporting marijuana legally, the current financial crisis that many of them face from the loss of markets for agricultural exports would be swiftly corrected.

Marijuana is already California's biggest cash crop, worth an estimated \$14 billion annually - more than the state earns from grapes harvested for its wines. For a time, there were more than 800 dispensaries in Los Angeles - which is more marijuana outlets than coffee shops.

If it is legalised in California, the state's coffers will swell.

Of course, the attitude to criminalising marijuana is driven by lobbies in the United States - the same country that had prohibited the use of alcohol. Few countries are willing to stand-up and say: "We will examine all aspects of decriminalising marijuana and we will take a decision based on our own national and regional circumstances". In fact, the converse is true. Every year countries live in fear of the annual report by the United States that points an accusing finger at countries where marijuana is grown or is transited to the US market.

But this is what George Soros say about the issue: "The criminalisation of marijuana did not prevent marijuana from becoming the most widely used substance in the United States and many other countries. But it did result in extensive costs and negative consequences".

Soros goes on to observe: "Regulating and taxing marijuana would simultaneously save taxpayers billions of dollars in enforcement

and incarceration costs while providing many billions of dollars in revenue annually".

He also makes a point that is substantiated by expert studies that "it would also reduce the crime and violence associated with drug markets and the violations of civil liberties and human rights that occur when large numbers of law abiding citizens are subject to arrest".

In 2002, a study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in Britain indicated that relaxation of the cannabis laws could save police \$60 million a year and vastly improve police and community relations, and in a previous commentary on this issue I pointed out that University of the West Indies Professor Alston Chevannes, who chaired a Task Force on Drugs in Jamaica some years ago, noted: "Jamaica would like to decriminalise personal use of cannabis but is afraid of US decertification. Other CARICOM countries would probably like to but can't for the same reason. An international movement that includes big players like Mexico and Brazil would prevent our small countries from being exposed. If the US can be won, then I reckon the UN would have to come to its senses and reconsider the Conventions".

This matter of decriminalisation would have to be handled responsibly. The entire process from production to distribution would have to be highly regulated and taxed heavily just as cigarettes and alcohol are heavily taxed. Advertising for its use would have to be severely restricted as happens now with cigarettes and cigars, and education programmes explaining its addiction and discouraging its use should be mounted in a sustainable fashion. And, just as it would be illegal to drink alcohol and drive so it should be to use marijuana and drive. Excessive use of cannabis should also be discouraged in the same way as the excessive consumption of alcohol.

People are not allowed to go to work drunk on alcohol or to be drunk on the job; similar restrictions should apply to marijuana use.

But, at the bottom line, marijuana should be brought into the legal system of regulation and control and education and taxation. If it were to happen, the gang warfare, the spread of illegal weapons, the number of young people in jails - all would be reduced in Caribbean countries.

As Professor Chevannes suggested, no one Caribbean country could contemplate such action on its own, but all of them should - at the very least - mount a study on the matter which should include the likely scenario for Caribbean countries in the future if marijuana continues to be a lucrative, illegal trade that lures our unemployed (many of them young people) into its web.

Incidentally, apart from the vote in California, two other states - Arizona and South Dakota have medical marijuana initiatives on their ballot. A third state, Oregon, will consider expanding its existing medical marijuana law by authorizing state-licensed dispensaries.

Surely if the American states are considering it, so should the Caribbean.

(The writer is a Consultant and former Caribbean diplomat)

● Responses and previous commentaries at: [www.sirronald-sanders.com](http://www.sirronald-sanders.com)



# PM Gonsalves defends NEMO

PRIME MINISTER Ralph Gonsalves has defended the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) against claims that they did not give the public enough time to prepare for the arrival of Hurricane Tomas.

Answering a question from a media representative during a press conference on Monday, November 1, 2010, Gonsalves stated that he was out of the country on Friday, but returned late Friday night and headed to the headquarters of NEMO.

Gonsalves, who added that he knew "bulletins have been going out", stated that maybe the information was not taken in by the public.

He added that there are certain procedures to be taken during the countdown to a storm's approach to a country. He added that information should be sent out at 72 hours, 48 hours, 24 hours and 12 hours before the storm's arrival.

Gonsalves stated that at within the 12 hour point, on Saturday morning at around 6:45, he made a national broadcast, which was repeated at intervals during the day.

He added that although the broadcast was made, several persons said that he was making more of the situation than it actually was. He stated that persons may have felt that way, because signs of the strong hurricane winds and rains were not visible as yet. He further related that persons adhered to the warnings and went to community shelters only when the hurricane struck the island.



Vehicles lined up at the Banfield Gas Station early Saturday morning waiting to be filled up.

# Tomas delivers sound pounding to North Leeward

North Leeward took a solid pounding from Hurricane Tomas, with Sharpes Village in Chateaubelair taking the brunt of it.

Many houses in that community lost part of, or the entire roof. Many families are in shelters and entire crops were destroyed.

Sharpes Village resident Susan Isaacs said that she was in her living room on Saturday at around 2:30 pm when she heard a loud

rumbling. Following the noise, her whole house shook. Upon investigation, Isaacs said that a very large boulder had slammed into the back of her house, into her daughter's bedroom.

The family is now staying with relatives. Ironically Isaacs's mother's partially new home, also in the Sharpes area, lost its roof.

The Chateaubelair wharf sustained some damage in the form of a

large crack on the side of the platform facing the shore, and tons of debris were dumped on the shoreline. The cleanup effort has started, but it will be a monumental task in days to come. Many roads are still blocked from beyond Fitzhughes to Petit Wallilabou, by landslides and trees.

Rose Hall, the highest elevated settlement in the country, suffered its usual toll. However, the other communities suffered

moderate damage to property. Two sailing yachts ran ashore at Cumberland. One is completely destroyed, while the other is just resting on the beach unscathed.

One area resident told SEARCHLIGHT that that Tomas is the worst storm to hit the area since Janet

in the late fifties. Area representative Jerrol Thompson toured the area on Sunday. Also touring the area was New Democratic Party caretaker Roland 'Patel' Matthews. Matthews told SEARCHLIGHT that he is overwhelmed by the damage, especially to the agri-

cultural sector.

"It would take real united human effort to bring this place back," he said.

In 1889, the town of Chateaubelair suffered from the effects of a severe hurricane that left only two buildings standing. (TY)

## Examine closely what is being proposed before marking your X

● Continued from Page 8

However, I have found that he does not advise himself on issues related to the long term development of this country. He listens to advice and uses the knowledge that he has gained through his readings and life experiences to filter and make decisions. I however believe that the perception that the Prime Minister doesn't listen to advice is entirely of his own making. He is often slow to share the credit for accomplishments with others, including the other members of Cabinet, who have worked better than the public perceives, as a team, over the past 10 years.

I have known of Arnhim Eustace even longer than I have known Ralph Gonsalves. The mother of his wife Jennifer, was a close friend of my mother. In 1981, I stayed overnight at his home in Barbados. Mr. Eustace is no fool. He has enjoyed academic achievements and political successes. In his youth, when the struggle for black rights was prominent in the United States and on university campuses, he was a part of that movement and many of his current strong supporters remember him from those times.

I think that the impression that is portrayed of him that he is unprepared and uninformed is false and is really a result of the political spin market that we are mired in. It is my opinion that Mr. Eustace is a reluctant politician, who in an attempt to show his mettle as a political leader, goes overboard when critiquing the policies of

the ULP government and sometimes misstates the facts. One can argue that is the role of the opposition, but in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, there is a lack of serious political discourse on the issues of relevance to the development of our country.

As we celebrate the independence of our nation and approach another manifestation of our democracy, elections, please for the sake of our country stop demonizing our leaders for political expedience and do a sober reflection on the policies that are being implemented for the development of our country.

As we prepare for elections, be guided by the policies as submitted by the political parties and don't allow yourself to be caught up in an emotional rollercoaster about our leaders that is the result of the active imagination of the spin doctors on both sides of the political divide.

For love of country, let the policies, programmes and proposed policies be your guide when deciding how to vote this election. There is a real difference in the policies and philosophies of the two main political parties. Personalities come and go and as important as it is for us to love our leaders, ultimately, it is their policies that affect us as a people in a real and personal way. Please for the sake of our beloved country; examine closely what is being proposed before making up your mind on how you vote.

John Edwards



ONE OF THE many houses left roofless in Chateaubelair after the passing of Hurricane Tomas





**NANETTE CUFFY SAID** that she is trying to cope in the aftermath of her loss.



**THE REMAINS OF** Nanette Cuffy's house that was destroyed during the recent passage of Hurricane Tomas.

# Cuffy grateful to be alive

NANETTE CUFFY IS thanking God that although she was left homeless in the aftermath of Hurricane Tomas, she still has life.

Cuffy, like many other residents in Chester Cottage, a village in the north east of St. Vincent, lost the roof of her house. "I was lying down and

then I felt rain. When I looked up I saw the roof blowing off," Cuffy recalled.

"We didn't get to do anything, we only pull some clothes," the woman explained.

"It (the wind) came so fast we had to run."

Cuffy, her two sons and her 80-year-old mother

lived in the small abode.

Her mother and elder son have since relocated to Barrouallie, but Cuffy and the second of her two sons have joined the forty or so others at the overcrowded Chester Cottage Community Learning Centre, the designated emergency shelter for that community.

"We are all trying to cope," she told **SEARCHLIGHT**.

Likewise, the roof of the home of Linkilus Washington-Jones was completely torn off.

Jones told **SEARCHLIGHT** that he and four other individuals were in the house cooking sometime around 8 pm on

Saturday.

"Den de whole roof just walk way," Jones said.

He was one of the more fortunate ones to be offered temporary accommodations with a relative.

Other residents of Chester Cottage told **SEARCHLIGHT** that the area was seriously affected by the heavy winds.

Rochelle Caine, mother of four, was also coping with the inconvenience of having to relocate into the one habitable room of her house, after a section of the roof of her house blew off.

"I lost a lot of things including all my documents," Caine said. (DD)

## Burgess moving on after Tomas

FITZROY BURGESS IS just one of the hundreds of Vincentians whose houses were damaged during the passage of Hurricane Tomas last weekend.

When **SEARCHLIGHT** caught up with the Ottley Hall resident on Sunday morning, he was supervising workmen who were trying to effect repairs to his roof.

Burgess said that the damage to his house, which includes a broken widow pane, occurred at about 8 p.m. on Saturday.

Burgess also lives close to where a St. Vincent Electricity Services Ltd. (VINLEC) pole, carrying high tension wires and a transformer fell.

General Manager of VINLEC Thornley Myers was in the area on Sunday morning assessing the damage to the electricity distribution system.



**FITZROY BURGESS HOUSE** with broken window and roof partially off.



**LEFT-RIGHT:** Fitzroy Burgess and Thornley Myers.



**DOWNED ST. VINCENT** Electricity Services Ltd. (VINLEC) pole, carrying high tension wires and a transformer, close to where Burgess lives.





**MARGARET EDWARDS TALKS with SEARCHLIGHT reporter, Junior Jarvis, about the damage done to her home.**

**THE REMNANTS of Margaret Edwards' house at Ottley Hall.**

## Edwards' home totally destroyed

MARGARET EDWARDS WAS in her house braving Hurricane Tomas when her house started collapsing around her.

"The first thing off was the door," she informed SEARCHLIGHT. Then everything start to

go.

"I lose everything.... My TV, fridge, stove, clothes... everything."

Edwards is now staying with a neighbour in the area until help comes.

## Schools to remain closed for the week

ALL PRIMARY AND secondary schools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are expected to remain closed for the remainder of the week.

A release from the Ministry of Education said the closure of the schools was due to the passage of Hurricane Tomas on Saturday, October 30, 2010, the resulting damage to homes, and the fact that a number of schools are currently being used as emergency shelters for affected families.

"As a result of the foregoing, the Ministry of Education wishes to advise parents and guardians that schools will remain closed for the week of Monday, November 1 to Friday, November 5, 2010," the release, issued Sunday, October 31 said.

The Ministry also requested that heads of educational institutions and their staff be on hand to report on the state of readiness of their institutions for classes.

Shelter managers were asked to report to their designated shelters in order to perform the duties which are assigned to their posts "for the effective management of the post hurricane issues," the release said.

Students of the four divisions of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Community College, were expected to have been advised last evening whether the College will reopen today.

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**DANGEROUS:** Sheets of galvanise were seen wrapped around utility wires.



**THE OLD MEAT MARKET** at Bay Street, Kingstown, lost a section of its roof.



**YOUNG MEN** take a bath in the trench at Peter's Hope.



**BISHOP JOHNNY JONES' The Mount Carmel Spiritual Baptist Church** at Chester Cottage was totally destroyed.



**A COCONUT TREE CRASHES** into the roof of this house on the windward side of the island.



**THIS TREE** at Murray's Village collapsed under Tomas's winds and found a resting place on utility lines.

## Missing fishermen found on Balliceaux

● Continued from Page 1

Balliceaux, from where they were transported to Bequia on Monday.

Nodica Ollivierre, Guy's wife of 19 years, told SEARCHLIGHT that her husband had left home on Friday, long before she was awake.

The mother of three, said: "I never like the sea or any of its activities. I'm not for it and he knows that, so he tells me nothing."

She said even though her husband is a former Sea Captain, she always had an uneasy feeling about the boat that he bought two years ago. Guy is originally from Paget Farm, Bequia.

Recalling the events of the past weekend, Nodica said: "It was a sad feeling not seeing him coming home."

By midday yesterday, she was overjoyed when she learnt that her husband was safe in Bequia.

"I spoke to him and he is ok," said the elated wife.

Joel Dickson, Vandyke's younger brother, was trying to remain strong when SEARCHLIGHT visited him on Monday morning. He said he last saw his brother on Thursday night. Joel said his brother had a fractured toe and he had promised to assist him in attending to it on Friday, but by the time he got up that morning, Vandyke was long gone.

On Friday afternoon, relatives had tried to contact the men to alert them of the impending hurricane that was heading to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, but they only received a voice message. (HN)



**LANDSLIDE** and fallen trees blocked the main road at Biabou near to the Anglican Church.

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# Jessop counts her blessings after Tomas

AS VINCENTIANS continue to count their blessings and assess the damage done following the passage of Hurricane Tomas, a mother of two is more than grateful that she and her children are still alive.

21-year-old Racquel Jessop, an employee of the Allan Smith Family Bakery, was feared dead by many persons who saw the damage done to her Ottley Hall home.

But luckily, Jessop, her six-year-old son Lester and four-year-old daughter Shanielle were not at home when tragedy struck on October 30.

"I had done leave earlier in the after noon, and was staying by my boyfriend father on the other side," Jessop said.

The young woman told SEARCHLIGHT, that after being sent home from work because of the hurricane warning, she wisely decided to leave the rented abode, which is situated under a bank at the edge of the main Ottley Hall road.

"After they said there was a hurricane watch and there was no work, I came home and decided to move, because I didn't feel safe there; a tree had fallen on one side of the house, but it didn't do any damage."

"I told my son to just get some clothes, and was back and forth to the house, because I had all my things in there."

Jessop said that around 4 pm, while she was helping to secure the roof at her boyfriend's father's home, she noticed that a part of the hill overlooking her home was missing.

"I look across and could see the main road and say 'Don't tell me that tree drop on my house'."

"I went down the road and when I see what happened, I started to cry. I felt real bad," she said.

Jessop said that she was since able to get a number of items from the two-bedroom house, which is being held up by a lime tree in the yard.

She said that she has been promised assistance from members of the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), who passed through the area on Sunday making their assessments.

"They say they will give us food and do what they can; but I am hoping I can get some help with a house I am planning to build in Ottley Hall," Jessop stated.

Meanwhile, Jessop's next door neighbour Amealia Porter,



**THE HOUSE** once occupied by Racquel Jessop, held up by a lime tree (shown by arrow) was partially covered by branches of a tree which fell on it during Hurricane Tomas. Jessop (inset) left the house a few hours before the tragedy.

is pondering if she should remain in the area.

"I don't feel safe, because that part of the hill over my house is rock, and I don't know if it will come down too," she lamented.

Porter disclosed that the two homes in her yard house eight other relatives, including her mother, siblings and her children.

"I don't know what to do, because I have nowhere else to go."

Porter recounted hearing the devastation that demolished her neighbour's home.

"I heard the trees breaking and then when I hear the loud crash and my house shake, I get frighten for them; but later someone told me they were not at home." (JJ)



**IN PHOTO:** Racquel Jessop with her six year old son Lester.

**PASSERS-BY** stand in the area from which the huge tree fell, landing on Jessop's house.

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# 1,194 housed in emergency shelters

WHILE LIFE may be slowly returning to normal for some, it may be some time yet before the residents on the northern tip of the island may be able to do likewise.

This as Hurricane Tomas wreaked havoc on the northernmost sections of the island, so much so that Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves, in an address to the nation Sunday, October 31, declared the areas extending from Park Hill to Owia on the Windward and Belle Isle to Fitz Hughes on the Leeward side, disaster areas.

Landslides, fallen

trees, utility poles and debris from homes damaged by high winds, blocked or lined the roads along the Windward coast.

According to the Prime Minister, there were 1,194 persons being housed in the various emergency shelters across the country.

Park Hill, South Rivers and Chester Cottage were some of the interior regions that recorded damage.

However communities along the north-eastern coast of the country, including Langley Park, Orange Hill, Overland, Sandy

Bay and Owia, got the full brunt of the system.

The impact of the storm left many seeking shelter.

The Sandy Bay Government School and the Langley Park Government School were the busiest emergency shelters in the nation with 300 and 120 persons respectively.

Emergency shelters in Owia (30), Georgetown (20), Chester Cottage (overcrowded with 40), Park Hill (over 20), Byera (over 40) and Colonarie (40) were also utilized, as persons in the mentioned communities

were forced to leave their homes.

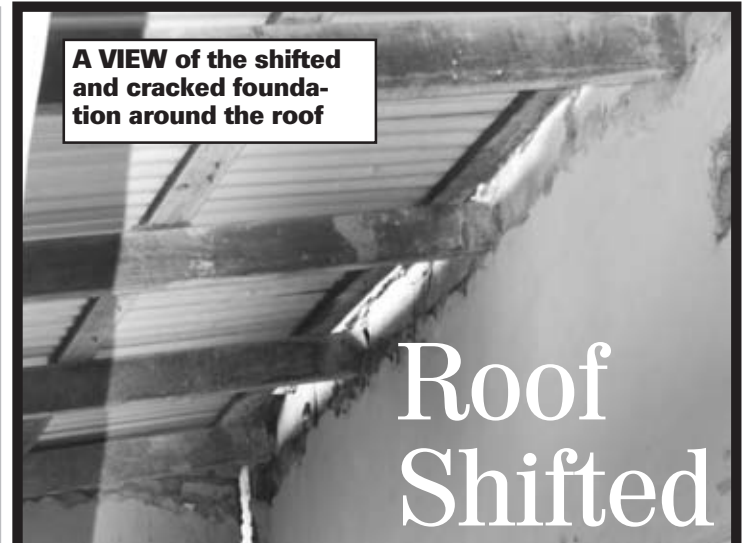
The number of displaced persons on the Leeward side of the island did not reach that of those on the eastern part of the island.

Emergency shelters in Fitz Hughes recorded the majority with some 40 persons, followed by Rose Hall with 35; shelters in Chateaubelair (24), Troumaca (10), Barrouallie (11), Layou (22), Buccament (23), Questelles (23), Penniston (20) were the others to have recorded some significant numbers. (DD)



PM RALPH Gonsalves visiting the Park Hill shelter

A VIEW of the shifted and cracked foundation around the roof



## Roof Shifted



EUSTACE FRANCOIS

ALTHOUGH THEY did not lose the roof of their house, Audrey Miller and Eustace Francois were still moved by the might of Hurricane Tomas.

The category one storm shifted the roof of the couple's home, causing cracks in the structure.

Francois, who makes and sells miniature steel pans for a living, had the roof of his 'pan yard' blown away.

The Ottley Hall couple say that they intend to do what best they can to return to life as usual.



PM RALPH Gonsalves speaks to citizens at the Pamelus Burke School shelter

## Billigy ponders her next move



NINA BILLIGY

BUSINESS OWNER, Nina Billigy is now pondering her next move after the passage of Hurricane Tomas left her business in ruins.

Billigy, who has been operating Mudula's Cafe and Bar for the past three years in Pembroke, just opposite the service station, had the roof of her Bar blown completely off, after strong winds and heavy rainfall in the wee hours of Sunday, October 31, 2010.

Billigy who lives in the downstairs of the bar along with her mother and sisters, stated that she knew something had happened to the bar after the strong winds.

"I was hearing a lot of really strong winds and when I came out, I saw the entire roof of the bar gone," Billigy said.

In the meantime, Billigy said she is waiting and hoping that she would get some assistance soon. "I glad we safe still, but in the meantime, I just going to clean up the mess here," she said.

Hurricane Tomas was downgraded to a tropical storm on Sunday as it moved across the Caribbean Sea, the U.S. National Hurricane Center said.



IN PHOTO: Remains of Mudula's Cafe and Bar at Pembroke.



# Billingsy: I lost everything

THE STINGING EFFECT of Hurricane Tomas is still being felt by many Vincentians across the nation.

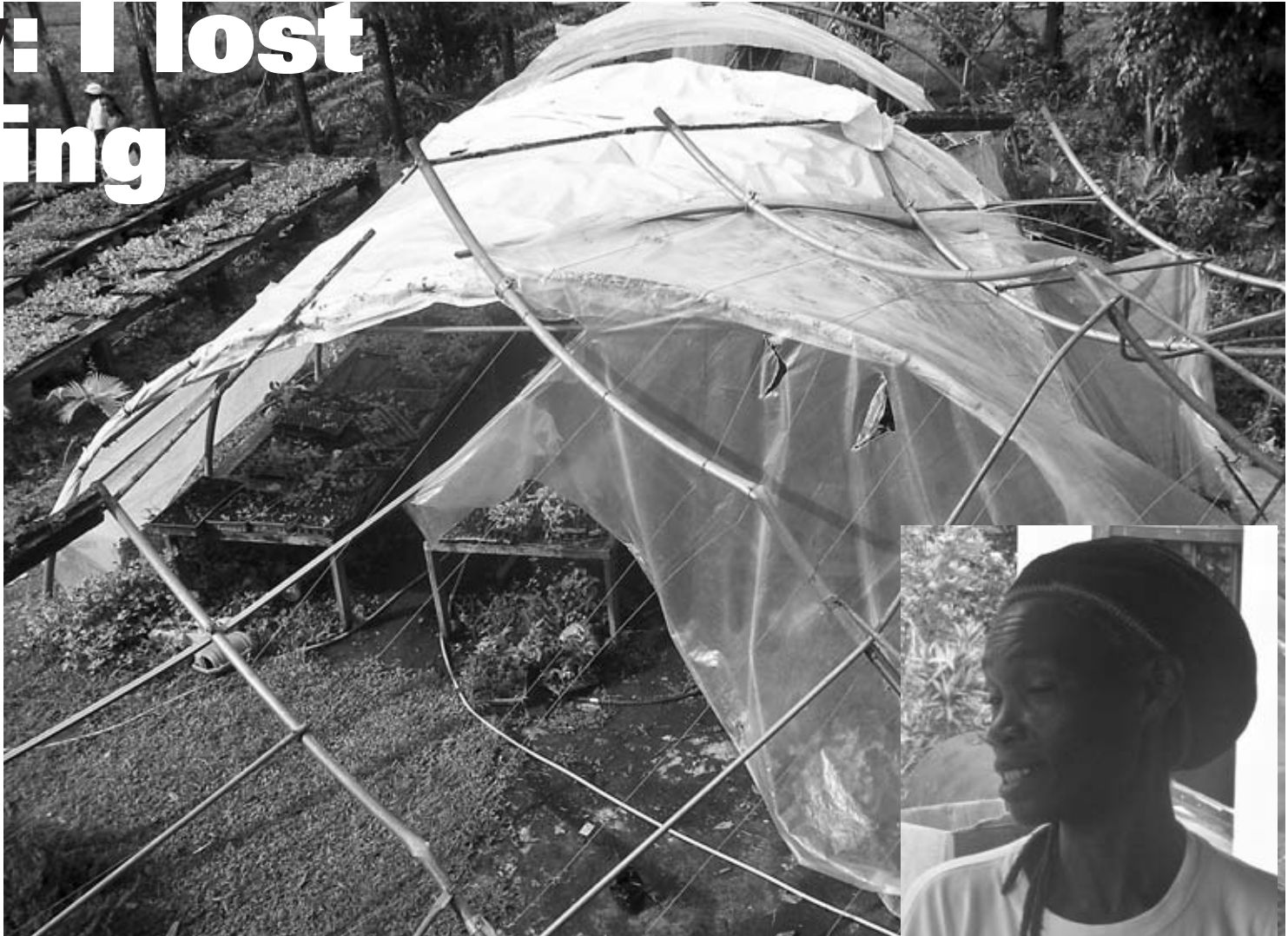
One such person is Nester Billingsy. Billingsy, a farmer of Cane Grove, lost nearly all of her livestock and agricultural produce during the Tomas hit, which lasted over eight hours between October 30 and 31.

"Everything for me destroy. I lost my greenhouse and all me livestock gone...I don't know what to do." said Billingsy while speaking to SEARCHLIGHT on Monday.

Billingsy, a farmer for over 30 years, said dogs from around the area killed her six goats and even bit her donkey. "All ah them gone. Me lose everything and I just need some quick assistance," she pleaded. Her other livestock, which included guinea pigs and rabbits, were nowhere to be found after thorough searches.

She said after the strong winds and rain ceased, she could not believe what had transpired. "This is a real terrible blow we get. I just glad that ever yone safe and I just have to hold the faith," Billingsy said.

Billingsy started her business back in 2002 and took a micro-loan to finance it. She also stated that her greenhouse, which took a great deal of effort to set up, cost her over \$4,800.



**NESTER BILLINGSY'S Green House was severely damaged during the passage of Hurricane Tomas over the weekend. Billingsy (inset) also lost all her livestock and is hoping that she would get some assistance soon.**

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- \* Life Insight (8:55am) \* I Am Blessed (Wednesdays, 6:30pm)

#### Get Your Praise On Sat'dayz

- \* Gospel Traxx with Walt "Baby" Love (9am - 11am)
- \* Kidz Praise (11am - 12noon) \* Teen Light (12noon - 3pm)
- \* Caribbean Gospel Beat (3pm - 6pm)
- \* Inspiration Jammz (6pm - 9pm)

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# Agriculture devastated by passage of Hurricane Tomas

# FOOD BLOW



**THIS MASSIVE breadfruit tree was totally uprooted at South Rivers as Hurricane Tomas left a path of destruction around St. Vincent and the Grenadines.**

THE AGRICULTURE industry in St. Vincent and the Grenadines has been devastated by the passage of Hurricane Tomas.

This is the assessment of the Ministry of Agriculture, which was reported to the nation on Sunday evening, by Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves in an address broadcast on the State-owned National Broadcasting radio.

Gonsalves said the Ministry's preliminary estimates put total losses in the sector at over \$67 million, with most of the losses being from damage to bananas and plantains.

The nation now faces the challenge of having to replant, a process with which farmers will be given assistance.

"We have to assist the farmers with not just this replanting, but with income support during the period when the crops are growing...certainly at least seven months," Gonsalves said.

The prime minister said 2,180 acres of bananas, with a value of \$22.2 million and \$14.4 million worth of plantains, on 1,242 acres, have been wiped out. He also disclosed that last year, bananas earned \$22 million for this country, both regionally and extra-regionally.

There was also substantial damage to other agricultural produce including breadfruit, citrus, coconuts, golden apples, avocado pears, nutmeg, pigeon peas, cinnamon and vegetables.

Losses from damage to fruit tree crops have been valued at \$18.1 million; condiments and spices at \$1.2 million; and vegetables and legumes on an acreage of 23 acres, sustained \$3.7 million worth of damage. Additionally, \$3.6 million worth of agricultural infrastructure, including houses, green-



**BANANAS WIPED OUT: 2,180 acres of bananas, with a value of \$22.2 million and \$14.4 million worth of plantains, on 1,242 acres, have been wiped out.**

houses, farms, fencing etc., was destroyed.

The Prime Minister said Agricultural Region Three, which stretches from Peruvian Vale to Orange Hill experienced 100 per cent devastation. He said in this area alone, over 100 banana packing sheds lost their roofs.

The entire roof at the arrowroot factory at Owia was destroyed.

The Prime Minister said on Monday that a Special Committee on the Rehabilitation of Agriculture, chaired by the Minister of Agriculture and including the Chief Agricultural Officer and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture had been set up.



**THESE COCONUT TREES bore the brunt of hurricane Tomas's power.**



**SUSAN THOMAS-SIMON (right), like many other banana farmers waits for the final and official assessment of her damaged crop. Everything from Simon's field is destroyed.**



## "I only save an orange tree" says farmer

THE banana industry was dealt a further devastating blow with the passing of Hurricane Tomas, leaving some banana farmers to ponder on the sector's future.

"Agriculture was in a bad position, now it's going to be worse," Susan Thomas-Simon, banana farmer of Georgetown told SEARCHLIGHT.

The woman said that this has been, by far, the worse devastation she has witnessed in the 21 years she has been involved in the banana industry.

"I have seen many storms before, where bananas were blown down, but now everything from my field was totally devastated," she continued.

"The only thing I saved was an orange tree," she continued.

Simon's farm comprises two plots at Rabacca Farms amounting to seven and a half acres.

The distraught farmer said that there were a lot of bananas that were to be harvested, but now it is all gone.

She spoke of the hard work put in, especially now that there was greater demand

placed on farmers to improve quality.

Elvin 'Bristol' Simmons said that of the three acres of land on which he cultivates bananas, he recorded a 100 per cent loss.

Simmons, frustrated, said that his farm within recent times was doing well, averaging 90 and 100 boxes per week.

Although he was in despair, Simmons was counting his blessings that there was no further damage other than a coconut tree which fell on the roof of his house at Overland.

The 63-year-old shared the sentiments earlier expressed by Simon, that Hurricane Tomas was the worst natural disaster he had ever experienced.

"I think I have seen everything, but this is by far the worst I have ever witnessed," he said.

Prime Minister, Dr Ralph Gonsalves in his address to the nation said that it was estimated that some 2,180 acres of bananas valued at \$22.2 million and 1,242 acres of plantains valued at \$14.4 million were wiped out. (DD)



**IN PHOTO: Just one of the service lines which fell to the ground after the passing of Hurricane Tomas on Saturday, October 30, 2010.**

## "Our network was sturdy" says Polius

SONIA POLIUS, Country Manager of mobile network service provider Digicel, says that her company had weathered the storm, by remaining available during Hurricane Tomas.

"Our network was sturdy, and we remained up and running."

"Our data services were lost; but that was not a fault of ours here in St. Vincent. This was due to the damage that was suffered at our stations in St. Lucia, and we are working on having it restored."

Polius said that the company had learned a lesson from a storm that had hit a few years ago, and had strengthened their capacity.

The company sent out text messages to its customers informing them of the impending hurricane.

"We built up our infrastructure and I gathered that we were well prepared this time around."

## Steele: "LIME services remained up"

APART from interruptions suffered due to commercial power outages, telecommunications provider LIME said that their services remained up during Hurricane Tomas.

According to a message on the network's local Facebook page, once the 'All Clear' was given by the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO) many of the system failures were attended to and returned to service.

The message, signed by LIME's General Manager

Angus Steele, 'All services were lost beyond the Dry River due to extensive landslides and fallen trees taking with it our cables, that carry the signal to those sites.'

'Our teams are looking at rectifying this ASAP, but I wish to set expectations that it would take some time.'

'A hotline was set up for customers to call to report downed lines and heavy cables to assist us with our work and please feel free to call 452-1155 or short code 646.' The calls are free from mobile and fixed lines.

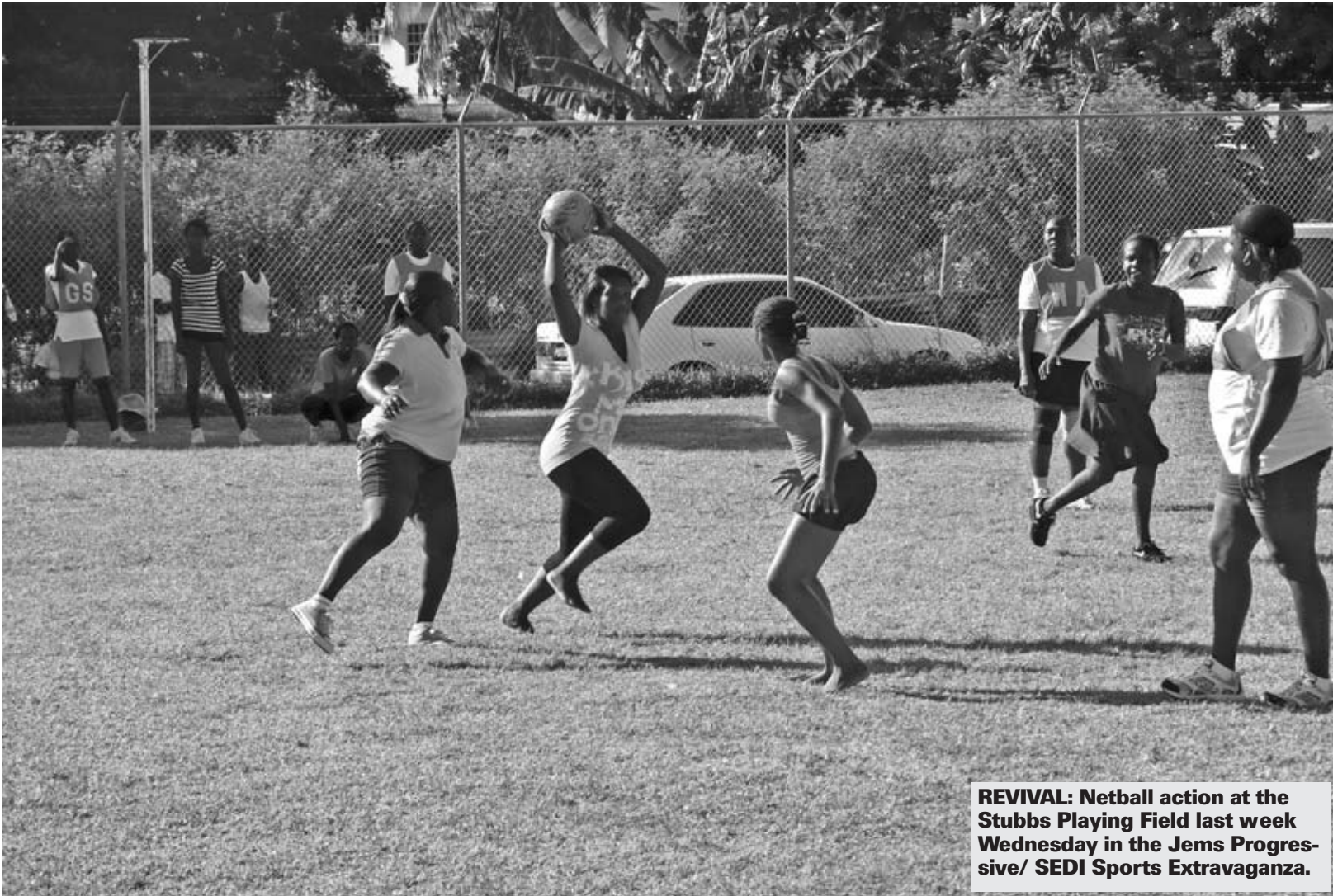


**THIS pole is seen here leaning after the passing of Hurricane Tomas.**



# SEARCHLIGHT Sports

» Another covered sporting facility coming  
 » SVGFF GS calls for cultural changes  
 » Butu gets recall



**REVIVAL: Netball action at the Stubbs Playing Field last week Wednesday in the Jems Progressive/ SEDI Sports Extravaganza.**

## Check the SCORE

### NETBALL

**ASCO Competition**  
 ASCO 5 (13) ASCO 6 (8)  
 Secret Clickers (21) Nah  
 Fren Dem (16)

Evesham Development  
 Org. (17) Bop Clinchers 2  
 (40)  
 Yanja Young Strugglers  
 (40) Pace Setters (40)

Bop Clinchers 2 (35)  
 ASCO 4 (23)

Secret Clickers (16) Vets  
 Sports Club (15)  
 ASCO One (55) CC's  
 Crystal (43)

### FOOTBALL

**Sion Hill Inter Village**  
 Village 2 Walaroo Two  
 0

### English Premier League

Chelsea 2 Blackburn 1  
 Wolves 2 Man. City 1  
 Fulham 2 wigan 0  
 Everton 1 stoke 0  
 Aston Villa 0 Birming-  
 ham 0  
 Liverpool 1 Bolton 0  
 Newcastle 5 Sunderland  
 1  
 Arsenal 1 west Ham 0  
 Man United 2 Tottenham  
 0

### Spanish La Liga

Athletico Bilbao 3 Getafe  
 0  
 Atletico Madrid Almeria  
 1  
 Deportivo 3 Espanyol 0  
 Real Sociedad 2 Malaga  
 1  
 Racing Santander 4  
 Osasuna 1  
 Barcelona 5 Sevilla 0  
 Real Madrid 3 Hercules  
 1  
 Real Zaragoza 1 Valencia  
 1

# BRIGHT SPARKS

SPORTS IN THE South East belt of mainland St. Vincent, are set for a rebirth.

This follows a joint effort of the Jems Progressive Organisation and the South East Development Inc. (SEDI), who staged a two-day Community Development and Sports Extravaganza on Sunday, October 24 and on Independence Day.

The days' proceedings included Football, Softball Cricket, Athletics, exciting events like the Tug-O-War and the Wheel Barrow races, an exhibition Volleyball match, an exhibition Masters Cricket match, Netball and Dominoes.

Without any age barriers, participation was more important than the actual results, as fun was the order of the day.

When the events ended and the scores were tabulated, participants were awarded with bragging rights and trophies for their efforts.

Stubbs Seagulls took first places in both the Football and Softball Cricket. Home Boys, Stubbs - East, docked in second in Football, and second in Softball Cricket was Calder.

The Carapan outfit won the Netball segment ahead of Bonhomme, with Not Nice of Stubbs, the champion in the Dominoes segment and Shed men of Stubbs second.

Also part of the extravaganza, there was an HIV and AIDS exhibition of posters created by primary and secondary school students on themes of abstinence and reducing stigma and discrimination. The JEMS Youth Ambassadors for Positive Living manned the HIV/AIDS education desk, and conducted lively Question and Answer sessions for young people aged 15 and under.

"Sunday was great, and Wednesday was fantastic," summarised SEDI President Albert Harry.

He further told SEARCHLIGHT: "I was really impressed with the large turn out of the men from the community".

"It is not often you would see men coming out to events like these," the SEDI President said.

"There was genuine participation of persons, they did not come for just for the sake of

coming," Harry commented.

Harry, while commending the entire planning committee, singled out Genita Lewis for her extra effort in making the event a success.

With the seeds sown, watering comes early in January when another such event will be staged, but with special emphasis on Track and Field Athletics.

Harry stated that a 20/20 Cricket Competition and a Football Competition are also on the cards for the new year.

The idea for the two-day event last week Sunday and Wednesday, came about in early August, when stakeholders and other concerned persons met in a consultation and came up with Sports Extravaganza, as a way to invigorate sports in the various communities.

The JEMS/SEDI Community Sports and Development Extravaganza was funded by a grant from the U.S. Peace Corps and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with support from telecommunications company LIME. (RT)



# New covered sporting facility coming for SVG

ST. VINCENT AND THE Grenadines is in line to get another covered sporting facility.

And, this country's first and only NBA player, Adonal Foyle, through his Kerosene Lamp Foundation (KLF) is spear-heading that move.

The KLF October issue stated: "We are putting together the plans to build a learning center and covered basketball court to provide kids in St. Vincent and the Grenadines with a safe place to learn and play after school."

"This will mark the start of KLF's ongoing presence in SVG and help us make a more significant and lasting positive impact on children's lives," the KLF release further stated.

The release, without detailing the proposed site for the facility, also said

that the KLF is in the process of raising the necessary funds to make the project a reality.

Foyle, who retired from the professional game last August after 13 years in the NBA, has since been appointed as the Director of Player Development of the Orlando Magic.

This revelation comes on the heels of an announcement last week, made by Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Ralph Gonsalves, that a multi-purpose Indoor Sporting Complex will be soon constructed.

The site earmarked by the government is the Old Anglican School Annexe, located on Lower Bay Street in the capital, Kingstown.

Gonsalves said that he has instructed the

National Lotteries Authority to purchase the building which is owned by the National Properties Limited.

This proposal by the KLF is just the latest in a list of the foundation's humanitarian out-reach efforts.

The KLF last July, took six budding Vincentian basketballers and two chaperones on a two-week camp to Orlando, Florida.

The six, aged 14-16, who were part of the All-Star Student Athletes (ASA) initiative, were Jemmie France - Bequia; Zanif Sandy - Canouan; Nemiah Alexander - Mayreau; Consolo Adams - Barrouallie; Leandro Edwards - Calliaqua; and Azizah Stowe - Union Island.

The six were selected by their coaches from previ-

ous Basketball camps held here by Foyle, called the Athletics and Academics Island Camps.

And as a follow up, local mentors have been identified to work with them individually.

Also among the plans are quarterly meetings to bring them together to spend time with one another; discuss the books that they are reading; learn from successful business people in their community; and to instill a sense of community spirit.

The ASA programme is designed to turn promising young basketball players into successful student-athletes and provide future opportunities for scholarships to help pave the way for their individual success. (RT)



WESLEY "BUTU" CHARLES

## Butu gets recall

VETERAN DEFENDER Wesley "Butu" Charles has earned a call up to this country's senior national Football team, Vincy Heat, for the second round of the Digicel Cup, which gets going this evening at the Mannie Ramjohn Stadium in Marabella, Trinidad and Tobago.

Charles, a former Vincy Heat captain, last represented St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2008, against Canada in the world cup qualifiers.

It was there that Charles caught the eyes of the Vancouver White caps coaching staff, and he landed a contract with them in the United Soccer League.

The 34-year-old Charles was however released last year July, after an altercation with a team mate.

He gained a contract with the Montreal Impact last July after the departure of both Cédric Joqueviel and Stefano Pesoli. Charles has played eight matches thus far, but is set to be cut from that club's roster for the next season.

Charles, the most experienced player on the team by far, joins a youthful team, many of whom he has never played among.

He is among five players who have been included in Technical Director Sammy Carrington's list.

The other four, who did not make the cut for the preliminary Group B round, held here early last month, include: Wendell Cuffy, Paul Farrell, Norrel George and Durwin Ross. While they have been included, Chester Morgan, who is studying in Venezuela, is unable to make the trip this time around.

Morgan wore the captain's armband when the team met Barbados in their last game on October 10.

Also not making the Trinidad and Tobago trip

are Keith James and Romano Snagg. Both played pivotal roles in Vincy Heat's advancement to this round, named Group F.

The other members of the team are Dwayne Sandy, Kenyan Lynch, Reginald Richardson, Oscar Nero, Darren Hamlett, Jolanshoy Mc Dowald, Roy Richards, Damal Francis, Chad Balcombe, Seinard Bowens, Emerald George, Joel George, Cornelius Stewart, Myron Samuel and Shandel Samuel.

Otniel Douglas is the team's Manager and Denis Byam is the Physiotherapist.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines finished second to St. Kitts and Nevis in Group B, after handing a seven-nil licking to Montserrat, and drawing 1-1 with St. Kitts and Nevis and drawing nil-nil with Barbados.

The Vincentians open their campaign this evening against the hosts from 7:30 pm. Prior to that, from 5pm, Haiti meets Guyana.

On Thursday, the Vincentians face Haiti from 5 pm, with Trinidad and Tobago's Soca Warriors facing Guyana from 7:30 pm.

The Vincentians meet Guyana on Saturday also from 5 pm, with Trinidad and Tobago taking on Haiti, in the group's final encounter.

The matches were shifted to the south venue, after the original venue, the Haseley Crawford Stadium in Port of Spain, was deemed unfit because of an unsuitable playing surface.

The winner and runner-up head to Martinique later this month for the Final. Already through to the final phase are Guadeloupe, Grenada, with host Martinique and 2008 winners, Jamaica automatic finalists. (RT)

# SVGFF General Secretary calls for cultural changes

GENERAL SECRETARY OF the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Football Federation (SVGFF) Ian Hypolite is calling for cultural changes ahead of the commencement of this year's Inter Secondary Schools Football Tournament.

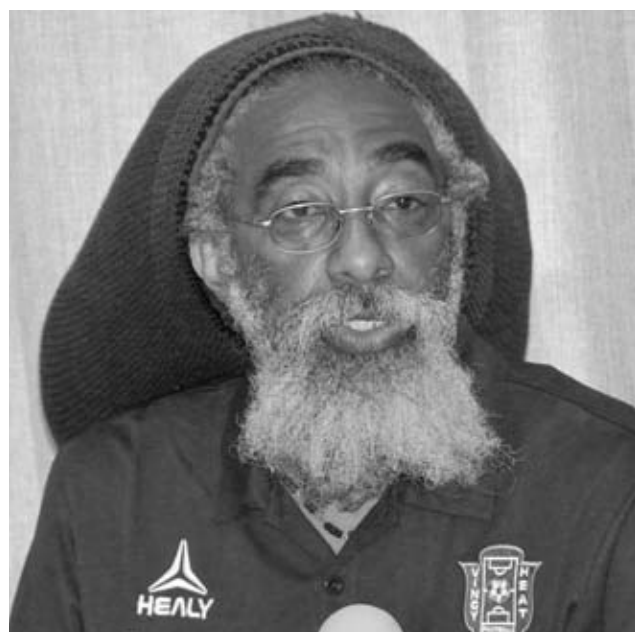
One of Hypolite's proposals is to have the matches played on Sundays from 2 pm, preferably at the Victoria Park.

He sees this as an opportunity for the young footballers to get some recognition.

Hypolite told SEARCHLIGHT: "The SVGFF has signed articles of memorandum with St. Vincent and the Grenadines Broadcasting Corporation to bring a live televised game of the week from Victoria Park at 4 pm on Sundays."

"We are unable to buck the trend and allow school sports on weekends. As a society we need continual updating, framing, deconstructing and reconstructing of values and norms through a cultural metamorphosis," Hypolite proffered.

"My vision is for there to be a game of the week for the senior competition



IAN HYPOLITE

groupings played at Victoria Park every Sunday as a prelude to this televised game which will eventually lead to the televising of the Inter Secondary School Senior Finals on a Sunday at 2 pm from Victoria Park," Hypolite said.

Hypolite said he is not impressed with the standard of support given to youth Football here.

"As General Secretary of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Football Federation, I am able to

compare the level of support to Inter Secondary School Football through my travels to the different islands in our hemisphere, and comparatively speaking, we are definitely lacking community support for our student athletes," Hypolite observed.

"Our parental support is also at a low ebb. Furthermore, the overall involvement from media, community, and corporate sector is woefully deficient," the GS opined.

"It is difficult to create

change, for we are all comfortable with what we are accustomed to. However for us to take the game of the people to the next level we have to invest in the youth, both on and off the field," Hypolite contended.

"I am making a call to all stakeholders involved with Inter Secondary School Football to accept this challenge; to the fence sitters the time has come as if there is no struggle, there is no progress; and there is no progress without struggle, power concedes nothing without demand," Hypolite reasoned philosophically.

The secondary schools competition was set to begin tomorrow November 3, but has had to be reset owing to the disruptions in the schools' programme after the passage of Hurricane Tomas last weekend.

Sixteen schools are registered in the Under-16 Division and twenty-two in the Under-21 category.

The Campden Park Secondary is the reigning Under-16 champions, and the Bequia Seventh Day Adventist, the returning Under-21 winners. (RT)



# Job-Sprott - VINLEC electricity services 80 percent restored

AT LEAST EIGHTY percent of the Vincentian population should wake up with electricity in their homes today.

That is according to St. Vincent Electricity Services (VINLEC)'s Communications Officer Tamara Job-Sprott.

Job-Sprott told SEARCHLIGHT yesterday, Monday, November 1, that the remaining 20 per cent of VINLEC customers should have service restored by this Friday, November 5, with the exception of a few households.

She said that there were currently 18 crews working towards restoring electricity to the country, following the destructive work of Hurricane Tomas last Saturday, October 30.

"We have eleven VINLEC crews out and seven other crews, including tree trimming units, working tirelessly to restore power."

"We have a lot of trees down on poles and lines so we are trying to get those cleared as soon as possible."

She called for customers to be patient, since the company is doing all in its power to have things back to as normal as possible.

Job-Sprott said that other challenges faced by the crews also include the large numbers of transformers and meters that

have been damaged as a result of the high winds accompanying Tomas.

Job-Sprott acknowledged that the hardest hit areas: North Leeward and North Windward will take a bit longer to have power restored, but indicated that possibly by Friday, November 5, there should be some electricity in those areas.

She said that there was major work done on Saturday and Sunday in other areas, with some restoration of power in a number of areas that were affected; however, there were some 'pockets' of communities that are still without electricity, which will soon be back on stream.

"There are still some pockets in Kingstown, Mesopotamia, Central Leeward, Windward...."

The official sent out a stern warning to persons not to touch downed electrical wires, saying that some of these may still be live.

"Under no circumstance are you to touch them. You must assume that they are live and leave them alone."

"We are asking persons to make reports of downed wires, broken meters and any other problems that they are experiencing so we could fix them and have power restored."



ST. VINCENT ELECTRICITY Services (VINLEC) workers repairing a meter at a resident's house at Mount Wynne, that was damaged during the passing of Hurricane Tomas.

# Hurricane Tomas's pathway of destruction

HURRICANE TOMAS, which hovered for over eight hours over St. Vincent and the Grenadines, unleashing fury and destruction, began life last week as Invest91, an area of disturbed weather to the southeast of the eastern Caribbean.

At 5 pm on October 29, the weather system was designated Tropical Storm Tomas, then was upgraded to Hurricane status at 11am on 30 October.

After a sharp northward tack during the night of October 29, Tomas tracked directly over Barbados as an intense Tropical Storm during the early morning hours, the large eye structure passing right over Barbados at around 4.30 am local time.

Tomas then tracked westwards, reaching Category 1 Hurricane status just west of Barbados and passing between Saint Lucia and St Vincent at around 4 pm local time. The southern part of St Lucia was within the strongest, northern eye-wall of Tomas, while the northern parts of St Vincent received the southern and leading/trailing eyewalls.

The eastern outer bands of Tomas cleared the Windward Islands early on October 31, although heavy rain showers persisted.

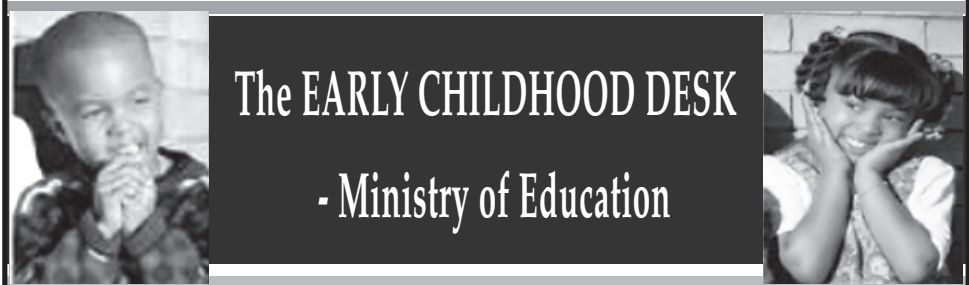
For Barbados, the entire island was affected by severe Tropical Storm force winds, with gusts to Hurricane force. Due to the track of Tomas directly over the island, these winds persisted at a high level for a relatively long time. Storm surge and wave action was also significant.

Hurricane force winds affected the southernmost part of Saint Lucia as well



SATELLITE image of Tomas over St. Vincent

as the northern and eastern areas of St Vincent. The southwestern parts of St Vincent avoided hurricane force winds due to the protective effect of the interior mountains. The Grenadines received Tropical Storm force winds, high in the north, minimal towards the south of the chain. Again, storm surge and wave action were significant, and of particular note is likely high wave action on the leeward coast of St Vincent, which received very rare onshore westerly winds as the storm passed to the north.



## Promoting reciprocal respect in the classroom

Teachers should consider it very important that their students succeed. They should set high standards, and they should also be able to help any students that have minor troubles. They should use instructional strategies that are appropriate to the ages and capabilities of the students in their classes. Teacher development materials claim that teachers should "Make individuals active partners in their learning. This includes: building respectful teacher-learning relationships that take learner's views and experience fully into account. Unfortunately, many teachers operate on the premise that children should be the ones to show respect since they are minors. While this may be true, respect must be earned and teachers are no exception to this rule.

### Promoting Reciprocal Respect in the Preschool Environment

Preschool teachers promote respect when they:

- Model the behaviour they expect from the children. Many of our preschoolers enter the preschool environment lacking some of the social skills preschool teachers or supervisors may expect them to display. Teachers should not assume that all preschoolers know that they should say, 'Please can I have?' or 'Please can I go?' rather than 'Teacher me want ...' Teachers should therefore model these social graces so that the children can imitate since this is one of the methods through which young children learn. In addition, there is nothing wrong with teachers greeting children warmly when they get to school instead of waiting for them to do this. After a while they will do so without much prompting.
- Seek to develop favorable attitudes in the classroom. This depends on the ability of the teacher to satisfy the social and psychological needs of the students. Children come into our schools with individual needs for affirmation, for instance, a hug or just saying, "You are looking so smart this morning," or "I know you can behave nicely" will go a long way to reinforcing positive self esteem within our children.
- Avoid negative comments about children in their presence. Too often, preschool teachers speak about children to other adults while the children are listening, unaware that children are very sensitive to nuances in our voices and our body language.
- Incorporate social skills in instructional activities. A lesson on serving others where preschoolers practice saying, 'please' and 'thank you' can reinforce respectful behaviour. Using story time activities to show that phrases like 'I'm sorry', 'excuse me' and 'thank you' should be a part of their vocabulary.
- Deal with disruptive behavior and conflicts in a manner that allows children to verbalize their feelings rather than retaliate in a hostile manner. For instance, a preschooler should say, "Damien, I don't like what you did just now" rather than retaliating by hitting him back. Let children use their words to express their feelings.

In Primary schools, teachers can promote reciprocal respectful behaviour. For instance, wrong answers should not provoke negative reactions on the part of the teacher, but need to be perceived as part of student's learning process. On many occasions, teachers either dismiss children totally when they give incorrect answers or embarrass them. Others go as far as whipping children for giving answers that are not what they are expecting. This can cripple children emotionally or drive fear in the children so that even though they may know the answer to a question, they may never offer a response. An effective classroom climate is one that provides continual support and encouragement so that failure, when it does occur, does not undermine students' self-esteem regarding their learning. Teachers need to realize that children respond according to the tone that is set in the classroom. Students who perceive themselves as trouble makers make trouble. Those who perceive themselves as good students are obliged to live up to this image. Hence the teacher should avoid saying and doing things that tend to downgrade students.

Next Week: The Organizational Environment



# Health

## Medical treatment of PME

### Let's Talk Sex

◆ Dr. Rohan DeShong



THIS WEEK, I will explore the use of medical therapy or a pill to fix Premature Ejaculation (PME). Lots of couples are primarily interested in "performance and pleasure", not in relationships. I say couples, because the woman is equally likely to complain of her man coming quickly and not being satisfied, and the man being dissatisfied at not performing his "work" properly. Lots of men therefore resort to medications. Before I give a patient medication, I do a thorough interview and examination to make sure that he has no infections in the urinary passage including the prostate and I treat these. I also try to help him to get treatment for psychologic issues like recreational drugs of abuse including alcoholism. Finally, I treat impotence. You'd be surprised how many men actually suffer from PME due to impotence. In other words, some men actually do have impotence, but because he cannot get it up properly, it causes anxiety such that when it does come up, he comes quickly. Hence, I treat his impotence first and this usually resolves his PME. Studies have also shown that treatment of men who suffer from impotence with Viagra also helps them to stay up longer. I mentioned this in my previous discussion on the treatment of impotence.

The treatment of premature ejaculation with medication actually occurred "by accident" as a lot of men taking medication for mood problems like anxiety and depression actually found that they took longer to "come". These medications called SSRIs or the medical term "selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors" include medications like Prozac, Paxil or Zoloft. They are used

at a lower dose than is used to treat their primary diseases anxiety or depression. These are what is called "off label" use. That is the FDA of the US has not licensed these medications for the treatment of PME, but medical professionals use them as they are proven to work with minimal side effects. It is usually just a matter of time before they are licensed for such, because studies have been done and are being reviewed and presented to the FDA for approval. As I said, Paxil, Prozac and Zoloft are used in the treatment of anxiety, phobias and mild clinical depression. The good thing about using these medications for PME is that they usually work at 1/4 to 1/2 the normal dose used to treat anxiety. At these lower doses, they have fewer side effects and can be use as a "day only" dose i.e. only on the day when they are needed. In other words, the man does not need to take the tablet every day, only on the day when he plans to make love or have sex. This can be as early as 4-6 hours before intercourse. This means possibly once or twice a week for some men. The benefit of this is that he does not have to worry about taking a tablet every day and worry about the side effects of stopping long term treatment (withdrawal side effects).

The obvious drawback is that you are not curing the problem, but for people in transient or unstable relationships, these tablets are ideal. Obviously, when you stop taking the tablets, the problem recurs in most persons, but interestingly, some couples are helped permanently, as these pills can be used to tide the relationship over the initial anxiety period after starting a relationship. Some men are not helped immediately by the day only dose, but may need to take the low dose pill every

day for at least 3 weeks before they notice a prolongation of the erection. Fortunately, this is not common.

The side effects of SSRIs include dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, blurred vision and skin rashes, but as I said, these are rare at the doses used to treat. Interestingly, these medications can cause impotence and loss of desire if taken at the higher dose and for prolonged periods.

The other class of medications used to treat premature ejaculations is called the TCADs or tricyclic antidepressants. These were the original antidepressant medications and include medications such as amitriptyline and clomipramine. The latter named medication is also called Anafranil. It was and continues to be the premiere medication used to treat PME. The dose is as mentioned only about 1/4 of the normal dose so side effects are minimal. The main side effect is drowsiness, especially when combined with alcohol. Therefore men are cautioned against using the medication and operating heavy machinery. Again, like the SSRIs Anafranil can be taken only on the day when you need to use it and as soon as 2-6 hours before intercourse. The main side effects of both types of medication occur if these medications are taken for a long period of time at the higher dose and the withdrawal side effects then become a problem. The withdrawal side effects occur when the person stops using the tablets after taking them daily for a long time (at least 6 weeks). These side effects include nausea, vomiting, agitation, dizziness, headache, anxiety and difficulty sleeping.

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SEARCHLIGHT

Is it possible to have your period after menopause?



Ask the Doctor

Dear Doc,

To my greatest surprise at age sixty-five, I got another period. Why is this so?

Merle

Dear Merle,

It is not a period!

Any vaginal bleeding after menopause MUST be investigated by your doctor.

Menopause is considered to have started when more than one year has passed since the last period in a woman whose ovarian functions have stopped. Generally this condition arises with age, but can happen whenever the ovaries have stopped functioning, for instance if they are surgically removed.

If there is any vaginal bleeding after

menopause has been established, other reasons for bleeding must be investigated. The number one reason to investigate post-menopause bleeding is to rule out cancer of the uterus. Your doctor might decide to obtain an ultrasound of the uterus and can also have a Dilatation and Curettage (D&C) to collect a sample for laboratory examination. The D&C may also stop the bleeding, but you might also require medications to assist.

All post-menopausal bleeding must be investigated properly by your doctor.

Doc

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## Beyond sugar numbers in Diabetes

### Sugar Matters

◆ Dr. Anita Ramsetty



These past few weeks we have talked a lot about monitoring blood sugar levels themselves, both with your own glucose meter as well as with the A1C lab you get drawn every three months. Those readings will all guide your medical team towards changing/stopping diabetes medications that affect your blood sugars. Without any of those pieces of information, NO ONE can make an educated decision regarding adjusting your medica-

tions. Symptoms are not adequate, so your coming into clinic and saying, "my blood sugars feel high/low" or "I feel fine all the time" tells me absolutely nothing about where your blood sugars actually fall along the range of 40-400. Symptoms of low sugars do exist of course, but are sometimes not as reliable as you think; I have had patients swear in clinic they have a falling blood sugar and when we checked they were normal or even high, and same

when we rechecked them a few minutes later. The lesson is that you need the numbers to make informed decisions about treatments.

Now there are other numbers that your doctor/nurse will be looking at also, which is why every few months/year you need to have blood drawn. Yes, it is a pain to go to the lab. Yes, no one likes having a big needle stick in the arm. And yes, sometimes it costs money. IT IS WORTH all the trouble people, it is worth it. As a reminder, these are a few other laboratory tests that your doctor/nurse NEEDS at some point to ensure

that not only are you staying healthy, but that your medications are not having negative side effects, that your diabetes is not affecting other organs, and that there isn't another explanation for some of your symptoms.

Liver tests: diabetes can make your liver abnormal, believe it or not, and it is important to know this up front. In addition, there are medication side effects that can damage the liver, as well as a result of infections and other conditions. Your medications may need to change if your liver is not working as well as it should or shows some damage.

Kidney functions tests, blood and urine: Your medical team will likely ask you to give urine once or twice a year (outside of checking for infection), as well as a blood test. Both will look for damage to the kidneys, which comes from diabetes. It is ESSENTIAL to catch kidney damage early and work to prevent it through blood sugar control and blood pressure control.

Remember: diabetes is one of the leading causes of kidney failure, next to high blood pressure. Other tests your doctor may ask for include a blood count (to look for anemia, infections etc),

Vitamin levels, and reproductive hormone levels. All of these can be abnormal for various reasons in people who have diabetes.

So get thee to the lab! Your doctor is not asking for those tests just for fun, or random reasons. Those tests are important to tracking your health, so please have them done when asked.

Until next week, stay safe and healthy Vincies!

● Anita Ramsetty, MD  
endodocs@endocrine-help.com  
Medical Director Endocrine Care Group  
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**A SECTION of the massive breadfruit tree which fell and severed the CWSA Montreal water main, disrupting service.**



**CWSA EMPLOYEES working to repair the broken Majorca main at Riley. Below is the 70ft tree that fell on a section of the Majorca transmission main.**

# CWSA teams restore 75 per cent of water supply

# ON STREAM

WHILE 75 PER CENT of Vincentians have had their water supply restored following the passage of Hurricane Tomas, some residents of a few communities on St. Vincent may have to wait a few more days, and the Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CWSA) is thanking the public for their patience and understanding.

At press time on Monday evening, Manager of the Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CWSA) Garth Saunders told **SEARCHLIGHT** that it may take a few days before the Majorca, Montreal and Hermitage systems are fully restored.

He said while the Majorca and Montreal systems in the Marriaqua Valley are back up, small areas which these systems service may still be without water for the rest of the week, as the water supply is gradually restored. Both these systems were severely affected by landslides and fallen trees. In the Riley area, a 70ft tree fell on a section of the Majorca transmission main.

The communities served by the Montreal system include Belmont, Calder, McCarthy, Enhams, Diamond, Ratho Mill, Harmony Hall and Choppins, while the Majorca system serves Riley, Ashburton, Gomea, Dauphine, Fairburn, Fountain, Belmont, Fair Hall, Rockies, Dorsetshire Hill, Arnos Vale and Redemption Sharpes.

While the CWSA has been able to gain access to most of the damaged areas of their systems, Saunders said the repair team has not yet been able to get access to the Hermitage system which supplies the North Leeward area from Barrouallie to Richmond. He said this area has major blockages at its intakes and in the interior of the island. Up to Monday evening,

access roads to the broken pipe lines were still blocked. He however expressed hope that they would be able to get to the pipes and have the repairs completed by the end of the week.

The new Jennings system, which serves the Windward coast from Colonarie, southwards to Diamond, should be back up and running by midday, today, Tuesday, November 2, Saunders said. The General Manager said this system was

also affected by blockages and supply line problems. Here too, accessing the pipelines proved problematic, as in repairing the system, a river had to be crossed "eight or nine times".

The Mamoon system, a recently commissioned system which supplies the Upper Largo Heights and Green Hill areas of Kingstown, was expected to have been restored by last night.

Residents of Georgetown and its envi-

rons, from Chester Cottage in the south to Tourama in the north, were also expected to have their water supply restored by last evening, as work continued on the Perseverance system, which was also affected by landslides and fallen trees.

The Fancy system was only marginally affected and was restored on Sunday afternoon, while up to press time, work

● **Continued on Page 2**

