

NO: 399/19

MINISTER WEIR: EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES IN APICULTURE

Young Barbadians must avail themselves of business opportunities within apiculture.

This advice has come from Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Indar Weir. He was addressing attendees of a beekeeping forum held at the Gall Hill Resource Centre, Gall Hill, St. John, last Saturday. It was the second in a series of forums organized by the ministry and the Barbados Apiculture Association.

Apiculture is one of five areas within the wider agricultural sector that has been identified by Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley for development, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security has embarked on a national beekeeping programme as a means of making this a reality.

Noting that the value of honeybees extended beyond their critical role in the agro-ecosystem as pollinators, Minister Weir suggested that young women, in particular, consider getting involved in the industry. According to him, they could develop small businesses through the bottling and sale of honey or making soaps and other products derived from honey, wax, royal jelly and pollen, all of which have tremendous commercial value.

“We do recognize the importance of the development of a strong cottage industry in Barbados, where we can engage our females and find better ways to help them become entrepreneurs, and therefore shrink that gap between opportunity and societal failures,” Minister Weir stated.

He added that aside from beekeeping, individuals could get involved in the renting of the bees to serve as pollinators to members of the farming community.

ADD: MINISTER WEIR: EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES IN APICULTURE-1

The Minister of Agriculture and Food Security also expressed excitement at the prospects of this national initiative, noting that they were not limited to employment opportunities, but that they could also bring about a reduction in honey imports.

“Barbados is listed as a net importer of honey and other bee products, but I can assure you that the situation is about to change. I am told that in a three to six-month period, a developing hive can produce up to 40 pounds of honey, with a sale price of \$20 per pound. It would seem that apiculture can provide a viable employment opportunity,” he said.

Mr. Weir stated that efforts would also focus on the planting of flora favoured by bees. This would be conducted under the Ministry’s soon to be rolled out Food Empowerment and Enfranchisement Drive programme.

One of the areas targeted for this expanded agroforestry undertaking is the Scotland District, which Minister Weir said would not only serve to provide foraging for the bees, but also “serve to protect and preserve the very fragile soils in the Scotland District”. **(NP/BGIS)**

ATTENTION NEWS EDITOR:

THE OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE BARBADOS ASSOCIATION OF GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS’ NATIONAL CAREER SHOWCASE WILL TAKE PLACE TOMORROW, TUESDAY, MARCH 26, AT THE LLOYD ERSKINE SANDIFORD CENTRE, TWO MILE HILL, ST. MICHAEL, BEGINNING AT 9:00 A.M.

DEPUTY CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER (SCHOOLS), JOY ADAMSON, WILL DELIVER THE FEATURE ADDRESS. IT IS BEING HELD UNDER THE THEME: “EMBRACING THE OPPORTUNITIES...EXPANDING YOUR VISION” FOR TWO DAYS, TOMORROW, AND WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, FROM 9:00 A.M. UNTIL 3:00 P.M.

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO COVER THIS EVENT.

NO: 400/19

COOPERATIVES' PIONEERING INITIATIVE NOT JUST FOR BARBADOS

"It is a pioneering initiative not only for Barbados, but for the entire Caribbean."

That's how the newly-launched **Cooperative Investment Fund** was described by Minister of Small Business, Entrepreneurship and Commerce, Dwight Sutherland, last Friday night, as he addressed the launch ceremony, at the Accra Beach Hotel and Spa, Rockley, Christ Church.

Minister Sutherland said: "The importance of such an investment fund cannot be overstated, as this facility has the potential to satisfy the critical needs of the cooperatives by affording them access to capital without the possibility of compromising the autonomy and the one-member one-vote structure."

Relating that his early interests in cooperatives came as a result of his grandfather's involvement as a co-founder in a cooperative, he said it taught him the importance of the credit union movement, and remained sentimental as it shaped his "value system as a young man growing up".

Linking the origins of the fund to the current economic situation, Mr. Sutherland pointed out that it was a well-known fact that a number of financial cooperatives had accumulated considerable savings in the banking system over the years and this had generated little or no interests, and notably so, since the minimum wage savings rate was abolished by the Central Bank of Barbados.

"This catalyst has triggered cooperatives to examine viable options and mechanisms through which a significant return on investment can be realized, while maintaining compliance with the Cooperative and Friendly Societies Act Cap 378 A. This led to the ultimate solution in the establishment of the Cooperative Investment Fund Society Ltd., which was registered sometime in August 2018," he added.

ADD: COOPERATIVES' PIONEERING INITIATIVE NOT JUST FOR BARBADOS-1

Minister Sutherland commended the fund, and noted its guiding objectives spoke to the promotion of wealth creation for members, by providing the means whereby investment can be made; the provision of investment and saving facilities for members; as well as the continued development and advancement of the cooperative movement.

And, he stressed: "These objectives are attainable if the principles and values which spur the evolution of the credit union from the meeting term concept into the sophisticated financial institution that exists, are applied."

Further acknowledging the principles included diligence, assiduousness, vision, and community spiritedness, he said the clear evidence that cooperatives achieve common goals and shared benefits for all must be replicated, if they were to reap rewards from this important venture. He also called on board members of all cooperatives to make the fund "the success it can be", and urged them to invest to ensure Barbados' success as a forerunner in the endeavour.

Lauding the cooperative movement, he said worldwide it boasted assets of over US \$1.5 trillion with over one billion members, representing a healthy penetration rate of cooperative involvement globally. Stating that in Barbados the financial cooperative sector had surpassed the two billion mark, while the non-financial sector was steadily approaching the BDS \$10 million mark, the Commerce Minister stressed this must be commended, as both sectors continue to grow in this challenging economic period.

"Financial cooperatives, such as the Barbados Public Workers' Cooperative Credit Union Ltd.; The City of Bridgetown; Shamrock; St. Stephen's and others, have transformed the lives of many ordinary Barbadians and have afforded many of them a higher standard of living.

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ADD: COOPERATIVES' PIONEERING INITIATIVE NOT JUST FOR BARBADOS-2

I can attest to that.... I went through the transformation process by the will of my grandfather," he said, adding that these institutions had become regulated societies, affording members financial options, previously out of their reach, and these contributions should be lauded.

Of the newly-formed Cooperative Investment Fund, he acknowledged that it would enable the movement to carry its achievement "one step further". "The fund will assist in creating an enabling environment for the other small cooperatives to strive, thus creating a win-win situation for both the investor society and the society dependent on the investments," he surmised. **(JG/BGIS)**

NO: 401/19

NATIONAL CONSERVATION COMMISSION PLANT SALE

The National Conservation Commission (NCC) will host a plant sale at its Plant Nursery & Garden Centre, Codrington, St. Michael, on Friday, March 29, and Saturday, March 30, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

There will be up to 20 per cent discount on selected plants.

For further details, persons may call the NCC at telephone number 425-1200.

(SF/BGIS)

NO: 402/19

POLICE CAUTION AGAINST LEAVING VEHICLES UNSECURED AT GAIA

All vehicles placed in the parking areas at the Grantley Adams International Airport (GAIA) must be fully secured.

This advice comes from the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF), who said that the practice of leaving vehicles unsecured with the ignition key and the car park departure card inside of the vehicle until it is collected by persons authorized to do so must cease.

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ADD: POLICE CAUTION AGAINST LEAVING VEHICLES UNSECURED AT GAIA-**1**

RBPF officials explained that a number of vehicles were being stolen from the airport parking area as a result of persons engaging in this practice. **(JRB/BGIS)**

NO: 403/19

MORE INVESTMENT FLOWING IN FOR BARBADOS

As additional investment flows into Barbados, Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley is reiterating that the country is open for business.

Ms. Mottley repeated her message to investors and potential financiers last Friday evening, when she delivered an address during the Sod Turning Ceremony for Sagicor's The Estates at St. George, at Boarded Hall.

The Prime Minister told her audience: "Barbados is here to tell Sagicor and everyone else that we want to work with you. We are open for business, and we want you to help us in the model that allows us to carry as many people with us, recognizing that those who want to live where they love, also may want to live in Barbados, even if they are not from here."

She said there was a global shortage of nurses and Barbados was committed to training a surplus of them at every level, including specialists.

The Estates at St. George is an adult, wellness and amenity-driven community with continuing care facilities on 19 acres. The first community of its kind in Barbados and the Caribbean, it will be built over three phases, and once completed, will offer a range of amenities, including a 4.5-acre green space. The infrastructural works have commenced, and the first phase will offer 120 independent living homes for sale.

Ms. Mottley said Barbados must be a hub for educational and medical services, and opined that the project represented a perfect confluence of what the island's immediate future must be about.

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ADD: MORE INVESTMENT FLOWING IN FOR BARBADOS-1

“Barbadians...have always placed an emphasis on medicine, health and education. The unique advantages that we have as a country, climatic in particular, ...have allowed us to be viewed as that place where people can have a therapeutic experience, almost across the entire island....

“What is our gift from God, has become inextricably linked to our process of development.... This is the essence of who we are and what we can offer as a people by being able to create the surroundings within which people can live comfortably and safely, with an abundance of joy and serenity in their hearts,” the Prime Minister stated.

Executive Vice President and General Manager of Sagicor Life Inc., Barbados Operations, Edward Clarke, disclosed that following infrastructural work, construction of the first phase would commence in the first quarter of 2020. He added that keys were expected to be handed over to proud home owners before the end of the following year.

Mr. Clarke continued: “Sagicor is very pleased to be the promoter of The Estates at St. George, which we see as very timely, firstly because of the contribution it will make towards our ongoing economic transformation and recovery....”

Group Chief Operating Officer at Sagicor Life Inc., Barbados, Ravi Rambarran, pointed out that the project would generate jobs in construction and health care, which would then help to generate revenue through pay roll taxes. He surmised that it would also generate foreign exchange through investment, and ultimately contribute to Barbados’ economic recovery and transformation.

Mr. Rambarran stated: “The project represents part of Sagicor’s strategic business diversification into the provision of active lifestyles for a key target group.

ADD: MORE INVESTMENT FLOWING IN FOR BARBADOS-2

Sagicor will be looking to generate awareness and interest in The Estates at St. George, among age and income-qualified individuals within key audience categories, including Barbadians at home and abroad, Trinidadians...and tourists from the UK, US and Canada.”

Chairman of Sagicor Financial Corporation Ltd, Stephen McNamara, said the Bds\$170 million investment reflected the company’s continued commitment to Barbados and the wider region.

Mr. McNamara noted that the requirement for trained medical specialists and care givers was essential to the operations of the facility. “In an effort to cultivate our practitioners from right here in Barbados and the region, we aim to explore a partnership that will see us at Sagicor and managers of the facility, Origin Inc. of Canada, partnering with the Barbados Community College to upgrade their existing training curricula to generate a stream of trained caregivers.

“Whilst some of these graduates will be absorbed into the adult care services segment of the Barbados services sector, some of them will have the opportunity to be employed at The Estates at St. George,” he said.

The Canadian-based Origin Active Lifestyle Communities Inc., a global leader in the field, will be contracted to manage the operations of The Estates at St. George.

(SA/BGIS)

NO: 404/19

FIRST MEETING OF SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE ON MARCH 27

The Ministry of Labour and Social Partnership Relations will convene its first meeting of the Social Justice Committee this Wednesday, March 27, in the Flamboyant Room North, Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre, Two Mile Hill, St. Michael.

ADD: FIRST MEETING OF SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE ON MARCH 27-1

It will be held under the chairmanship of Minister Colin Jordan, from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

The meeting represents the launch of the Social Justice Committee, which has as its main objectives to consider and make recommendations to the Government of Barbados, directly or through the Social Partnership, on issues of social justice.

These meetings are expected to continue on a monthly basis, in order to reach as many of the organizations comprising the island's third sector. **(JG/BGIS)**

ATTENTION NEWS EDITOR:

YOU ARE INVITED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE TO ATTEND AND COVER THIS MEETING.

NO: 405/19

WINSTON SCOTT POLYCLINIC'S REOPENING DELAYED

The public is advised that the reopening of the Winston Scott Polyclinic has been postponed until 12 noon tomorrow, Tuesday, March 26.

This is to allow the Ministry of Health and Wellness more time to sanitize the clinical areas, after deep cleaning over the weekend, to make the polyclinic medically fit to receive patients.

The ministry apologizes for any inconvenience caused. **(JG/BGIS)**

NO: 406/19

PENSIONERS NOT REQUIRED TO VISIT BRA OFFICES

The Barbados Revenue Authority (BRA) is working closely with the National Insurance Office and Treasury Department to address the matter of registration for contributory pensioners in the new Tax Administration Management Information System (TAMIS).

Pensioners are therefore advised that they are not required to visit the BRA's offices for registration assistance. **(BRA/BGIS)**