



## **Millions in Aid for Students** **Education Minister Outlines Assistance Programmes Available to Needy Families**

**ST. GEORGE'S, GRENADA, Thursday, December 12, 2013 – GIS:** The National Budget Debate continued on December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013, at the Grenada Trade Center, where Government Ministers had an opportunity to report on the achievements and future goals of their respective Ministries.

Minister for Education and Human Resource Development, Honourable Anthony Boatswain, reported that under the current administration's watch, no child will be "deprived of an education because of financial needs."

The Education Minister outlined some of the many ways Government assists needy families to ensure that their children are able to attend school.

"The School Feeding Programme, \$3.1 million dollars was allocated last budget and the same was invested this budget. This Programme reaches out to 10,000 students on a daily basis," Minister Boatswain said.

"This year we have reintroduced the National School Uniform Programme and 3,989 families received benefits under this program at an estimated cost of \$756,400 dollars. The School Book Programme, of which \$1 million dollars has been allocated, 26,500 students made use of this Programme. We have also provided assistance to students encountering difficulties paying examination fees and we have allocated \$24,000 dollars to help those students. Traveling assistance was also provided to our needy students."

Students also receive academic assistance in the form of scholarships. Minister Boatswain said that, last year, over \$25 million dollars in scholarships were awarded to 158 Grenadian students.

The Education Minister stressed, however, that this enormous investment that government is making into education and human resource development must be returned.

Minister Boatswain expressed disappointment with the current statistics on test results from the MCT and CPEA and is determined to remedy this problem.

"There is general concern that too many of our primary school students are entering secondary institutions without mastering the basic competency in numeracy and literacy. That is a fact. This ought to be of concern because these are the two fundamental pillars of any educational system," Minister Boatswain said.

"I looked at the figures and in 2012 there was a 100 percent pass score. Every student in primary school who sat the CPEA was sent to secondary school, whether they got a score of 1, 2, 3 or 100, everybody went through. This year, we had to reverse that process because the secondary schools were complaining that students were entering and some were not even able to identify their names, but they were sent to secondary school in the name of universal education."

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