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SOLAR JOBS

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RAW PAIN:

The pain of losing 73 people on the fateful Cubana Airlines flight 35 years ago is still raw, as seen on the faces of those who attended the memorial this morning in Paynes Bay, St. James. In the photo, Cuban Ambassador, Lissette Pérez and the pilot's son Wilfredo Perez Rodriguez, fix the ribbon on the wreath placed at the base of the monument.

Race heating up

SOLAR DYNAMICS LOOKING TO JUMP- START SOLAR ENERGY MARKET

by Shawn Cumberbatch

The race to exploit the sun's energy for electricity production, while cutting the country's big fuel import bill, is about to heat up.

Barbados sun energy pioneer Solar Dynamics Limited will in a matter of weeks launch a big effort to jump-start the solar electricity market here, and it is teaming up with a Guyana company to do so.

Barbados TODAY was informed of the new development, which will see an unknown number of individuals finding jobs and the Grazzettes Industrial Park company pumping substantial funds into the establishment of its new solar electricity division.

Solar Dynamics is teaming up with Farfan & Mendes, a Guyanese enterprise it has supplied with solar water heaters for several years, and from which it is now looking to gain additional expertise in the area of photovoltaic systems for the production of electricity.

This arrangement and its intent were announced by Solar Dynamics Managing Director James Husbands and Farfan & Mendes Technical Manager for Alternative Energy, Martin Carto, today.

"Give me your deposit today and within four weeks you will have your installation. The typical installation we expect will take about a week. We will be working with qualified electrical contractors from the point of view of inspection and certification that is required with Government's Electrical Engineering Department and to ensure that the best practise obtains for the installation," Husbands said confidently.

"Based on the current cost of electricity there is widespread interest from domestic consumers in the band of \$100 per month to \$2,500 per month. A number of commercial entities have inquired of us what it will cost and of course commercial entities can install up to 50 kilowatts.

As far as jobs were concerned, he told **Barbados TODAY**: "We certainly will have to increase our workforce. In this division itself we have already started to strengthen our management to support this initiative in finance, administration as well as the technical side."

"So the organisation is being strengthened to ensure that we buttress our management systems to support the expansion..."

The Barbadian company recently strengthened its management team and had also brought on board a Solar Electricity Specialist to meet the expected demand from Barbadian households and businesses keen to slash their



Solar Dynamics will be looking to install hundreds of these photovoltaic panels being discussed by (from left) James Husbands, solar electricity specialist Dino Barrow and Martin Carto of Farfan & Mendes.

electricity bills.

"We have done a number of proposals for customers, both at the corporate as well as individual levels, and we are at the stage where we are writing contracts for customers. We are the stage now where we can offer the public written proposals on systems," Husbands explained.

"We are actually going out and doing system sizing and identifying what would be required for customers to benefit, either from a stand alone system or a system that is integrated with the infrastructure of the power company."

"So essentially you can have a system, which feeds into the Barbados Light & Power network. So generally you will generate enough energy during the course of the day that will cover your daytime needs as well as your nighttime needs," he added.

Carto said his company was keen to help its counterpart here exploit the "huge" potential for alternative energy using

the sun's power and would be offering its technical support in addition to sourcing the best photovoltaic panels from Canadian Solar Inc. and Kyocera Solar.

"We are coming to Barbados on the invitation of Solar Dynamics to assist in the development of the possibilities that exist here locally. We want to bring our expertise ... to Solar Dynamics so that we can minimise the learning curve as it exists here," he said.

"The possibilities are so many that you really need to know your market and the technical side because there are so many applications and there are so many things that you could put to a particular application that you really need to get it right in the first instance."

Husbands said his company would not be approaching the venture in a half hearted manner and "will be making an investment in this area of business".

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Not giving up on justice

America's foreign policy toward Cuba over the past 52 years came in for a severe tongue-lashing today from psychologist Wilfredo Perez Rodriguez.

Perez Rodriguez, son of pilot Wilfred Perez who was among the 73 people who perished in the mid-air bombing of Cubana flight 445 on October 6, 1976 off Barbados' West Coast, was speaking during a memorial wreath-laying ceremony at the Cubana monument at Payne's Bay, St. James.

Perez Rodriguez, who was 17 at the time of the tragedy, said Cuban people fought for their independence for more than 100 years and began to make their own decisions as a nation on January 1, 1959. He described this as the "sin" for

which America has never forgiven Cuba. He stated Cuba had been the victims of a state policy that was tantamount to a "war" against his country.

"Terrorism, blockade and distortion of the reality of Cuba have been three of the options that have been tested against Cuba for more than 10 US administrations," he noted, asserting that many Cuban families had been affected by violent actions hatched in southern Florida and often with the complicity and protection of American authorities.

He bemoaned the fact that one of the perpetrators of the Cubana bombing, Luis Posada Carriles, had found safe harbour in the United States and was "walking free on the streets of Miami". He questioned why

US authorities had not extradited Carriles to Venezuela where he faces criminal charges.

Perez Rodriguez said there could be no good terrorism and bad terrorism when innocent human beings were killed.

He indicated he had studied psychology in response to the sadness and hatred which the killing of his father had initially evoked and for 26 years he had been assisting those in need. He described it as the best tribute to the legacy of his father. He said too he no longer harboured any hatred.

Perez Rodriguez said the tragedy had introduced him to the name "Barbados" and he had nothing but love and gratitude for Barbadians. He praised all those who

had responded to the tragedy 35 years ago.

Among those who participated in the ceremony were the Royal Barbados Police Band under the baton of Superintendent Keith Ellis, Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxine McClean, Chinese Ambassador to Barbados Wei Qiang, president of the Clement Payne Movement David Comissiong, head of the Israel Lovell Foundation Trevor Prescod, president of the Barbados-Cuba Friendship Association David Denny, attorney-at-law Robert "Bobby" Clarke, St. Michael North East MP Mia Mottley and Cuban consul Onestes Hernandez, who translated for Perez Rodriguez during his speech. (WG)