

UNITY NEEDED TO COMBAT SARGASSUM

Chief Secretary Orville London is confident that Tobago will be successful in combating the threat it currently faces with the Sargassum seaweed, which has invaded many areas of the island. As London addressed the crowd of residents that packed the Speyside Community Centre for Tuesday night's (August 5, 2015) public meeting to discuss the phenomenon, he said not even nature in its worst form can match Tobagonians' resilience. The Chief Secretary assured the residents that the THA will provide as much resources as it can to alleviate the discomfort residents are currently facing due to a wall of Sargassum on several parts of Tobago's coastline.

He also called on residents to support the THA's efforts.

"I want us to treat this as partners," London declared. "If there is anything you can do to assist, please do. If there are recommendations you can make that you feel will improve the situation, please do. If there are criticisms that you want to make, please do. We need all the assistance all the support all the advice all the guidance we can get."

London said there is no way to predict how the seaweed will affect Tobago in future or stop it from coming ashore. He guaranteed, however, that the THA will continue to battle the problem until it is solved.

"We are going to try as far as possible to make sure we work consistently and we utilise all the resources to bring relief to the people of Speyside and Environs to the community, to the business places and so on."



SARGASSUM THREAT: The waters of Speyside in the vicinity of the Blue Waters Inn is littered with thick layers of sargassum seaweed, as shown in this aerial shot of the area. The THA has moved to begin clean up in the areas hit hardest by the influx of seaweed.

THA TO GET CENTRAL GOVT HELP

Chief Secretary Orville London is welcoming the support of the Central Government for Tobago's Sargassum seaweed clean-up efforts.

London met with Minister of National Security Brigadier General Carlton Alfonso earlier today (August 5, 2015), who took an aerial tour of parts of the island to view the affected areas.

The Minister promised assistance and resources to aid the Tobago House of Assembly's clean-up efforts.

London said: "I'm happy that he has taken the position that something like this requires the joint resources of the

THA and the Central Government and he has committed to doing what is necessary to ensure that we have the level of support and more importantly the level of collaboration (that we need)."

Alfonso said he was surprised at the severity of the situation.

"You would not have had the opportunity to fly over Tobago as I did, so it is bad," the Minister stated. "When I spoke to some of the people in Speyside, clearly there are concerns about health hazards, as one person put it.

"I've given Mr London the assurance that the Defence Force will assist."

DAMME WINS GREEN OFFICE WEEK CHALLENGE

The Division of Agriculture, Marine Affairs, Marketing and the Environment lived up to its name, taking the CEDP Secretariat's Green Office Week Challenge.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (CEDP 2.0) initiative was aimed at creating

awareness and encouraging environmental-friendly activities in the workplace.

The competition, held from July 20-24, was open to all Departments of the Tobago House of Assembly.

It included energy conservation, recycling, carpooling and other "green" initiatives to reduce our

environmental footprint.

The Agriculture Division was exceptional in scoring 98.75 per cent to be the first to take home the challenge trophy.

The Division of Infrastructure and Public Utilities in second, and the Division of Settlements and Labour (80.6), third.

Also competing were the Division of Tourism and Transportation (73.6), TEMA (71.25) and the Assembly Legislature (69.25).

The competition is in line with the first strategic priority area of the CEDP 2.0, maintaining Tobago's brand of "Clean, Green, Safe and Serene".