

Walkers on solid ground

QUARRY NOT RUNNING OUT OF SAND – WARREN

No need to panic, the Walkers Sand Quarry is not running out of sand, according to the operators of that quarry.

A report in yesterday's **Sunday Sun** indicated that about three to four months' supply of sand remained at the St Andrew quarry, quoting information "allegedly taken from a 4-page report by the Energy

Division, following a site visit on May 25" by a source.

However, Operations Manager of Island Development Limited Shae Warren told **Barbados TODAY** the company had more than enough of the product to satisfy current demands beyond four months.

He explained that the information in the story might have been in relation to stage four of the mining process.

The company was given permission to mine sand in four stages, but Warren said an application for permission to mine a fifth stage was currently before the Town and Country Planning Department and he was

expecting a response soon.

"The quarry is not running out of sand. What is happening is that we are in our fourth stage of mining permissions and we submitted an application for a fifth stage of mining. So right now we are approaching the end of stage four and awaiting permission for a fifth stage. So I think the story that is being voiced is relating to stage four, but there is no indication that stage five is not coming," Warren explained.

"We are dealing with a finite resource and ultimately that resources will dwindle, but that is not eminent," he added

"The application is in with Town and



Shae Warren

Country Planning and everything we have seen so far doesn't indicate that we won't receive permission, but we can't speak on behalf of Town and Country Planning. We are expecting a response on the permission any day now. So we anticipate there won't be any issue or disruption in our supply," Warren assured. (MM)

Domestic violence a public problem

Head of the European Union Delegation Ambassador Mikael Barfod said domestic violence was a complex problem that needed to be understood in its entire social context.

His comments came as he addressed the European Union-funded **None in Three** domestic violence prevention project, which was convened to disseminate information on preliminary research findings.

"Violence against women is a crime with an impact far beyond the immediate moment of violence. Violence against women impacts us all, even those of us who have never personally experienced it. It impacts the families of these victims,

it impacts our society, and it impacts our everyday lives. We all pay for these consequences," Barfod said.

"Domestic violence is not something that can be neatly compartmentalized into what happens in the private sphere. Domestic violence can effect a victim's participation in the workforce, including their ability to find work and to attend or stay at work, as well as their performance and productivity while at work."

The EU diplomat, who is winding up his tenure in the region, said there was the mistaken view that domestic violence was only a working-class problem, noting that it permeated all facets of society, irrespective of education, environment or class.

Barfod contended that while regional societies must tackle violence among adults, efforts must also be made to change the attitudes and values that children learn when they witness this behaviour, in order to break the cycle of violence.

"We know that when you are in a broken family and your role model is a violent male, boys grow up believing that this is the way they are supposed to act. And girls think that it is acceptable for men to treat them this way. We hope that these debates will be picked up by civil society organizations and religious leaders, since there is the view that the church could play a major role in preventing domestic violence.

"Often boys are not raised to be men, but are raised not to be women. Boys are taught that girls and women are 'less than'. It is important for men to stand up to not only stop men's violence against women, but to teach young men a broader definition of masculinity that includes being empathetic, loving and non-violent," Barfod told the gathering.

He said he hoped the **None in Three** sessions would further equip social service, health and other professionals to pick up the signs of violence and direct women towards help at an early stage. The EU official also placed emphasis on the need for timely research, as he said it could improve the understanding of the nature and scope of the problem and its causes.

Barfod described the Caribbean in general as being faced with the challenge of defining the boundaries of family and redefining domestic violence, stressing that men must be included in these efforts.

"We need to also consider male victims of domestic violence, as there is very little support for them. We also need to consider the practice of over-punishing children since this is where the youth have their first experience of violence," the diplomat said.

He said he was excited about the **None in Three** project's innovative methods for early and continuous education, using a medium that was likely to appeal to children and young people, since research indicated that 40 per cent of girls aged 14 to 17 reported knowing someone their age who had been hit or beaten by a boyfriend; and approximately one in five female high school students reported being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner.

As part of the **None in Three** project, an immersive, role-playing computer game will be developed that can be used in schools as an educational tool to develop empathy and emotional intelligence and to reduce the negative attitudes developed in childhood which fuel violence in later relationships. (PR)

Youths call for complete overhaul of education system

Panellists at the recently held **Ask We Bajan Youth** town hall meeting hosted by the Barbados Youth Development Council (BYDC) all agreed that the education system needed a complete overhaul.

The panel of five young people from different organizations examined issues such as climate change, media relations, access to health care, education and the Student Revolving Loan Fund.

Stressing that education ought not be about academics only, CARICOM Youth Ambassador Alternate Kaila Headley said there was also a need for more schools to focus on the technical aspect.

"CXC [the Caribbean Examination Council] is based on regurgitation; you simply read and write back. We need an education system focused on creating critical thinkers rather than regurgitators," she said.

"We are not investing enough into

our youth. Even with youth programmes like BYDC and CARICOM Youth Ambassadors, we have to beg for sponsorship for something as simple as a panel discussion or an outreach programme, and there is a clear lack of funding for education," Headley added.

She explained that it was not a case of students being lazy or looking for handouts, but that there were too many roadblocks.

"Just look at the Student Revolving Loan [Fund] which is basically broke. We have young people working at gas stations barely making their tuition fees" she said.

I Am A Girl Barbados Founder Alian Ollivierre shared Headley's sentiments. However, Ollivierre suggested that students who did not repay their loans were contributing to the problems facing the Fund.

"The Student Revolving Loan [Fund] is supposed to revolve and when it doesn't then we come into problems," Ollivierre

said.

The panellists also said there was insufficient youth representation at the governmental level, which hindered youth development.

Leader of Government Business at the Barbados National Youth Parliament Krystal Hoyte pointed to the need for more youth at the table, especially during the drafting of legislation that directly affect them.

"One area that definitely needs youth representation is the grey area in legislation concerning access to health care. We have 16 and 17-year-old teens who can consent to sexual activity but cannot see a doctor for counselling, testing or contraception. That is a clear grey area..." Hoyte said.

The panel also included Dia Parris of the Barbados Association of Future Office Professionals and Co-director of Barbados Gays, Lesbians Against Discrimination Ro-Ann Mohammed. (KH)