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## Editorial

We share the joy of Barbadians who are excited by the progress made so far in reviving the Four Seasons project at Black Rock.

We commend, in particular, the work of financial consultant Dr. Avinash Persaud, the executive chairman of Paradise Beach Limited, who has been charged with responsibility by the Government to get the very important project back on track.

It has been no small task. The figures involved, by Barbadian standards, are staggering -- and once completed the Four Seasons project will be one of the most expensive ever undertaken in this region. Its coming on stream will be a matter of pride for Barbados.

We are talking of a project with an assessed value of US \$550 million [over BDS \$1 billion] at December 2008, which when completed will comprise a hotel of more than 100 rooms and scores of luxury villas. During its construction peak it is anticipated that more than 1,000 persons will be employed at the complex and afterward hundreds of Barbadians will find work there.

In short, Four Seasons is important to the Barbados economy, both today while we struggle through tough economic times, and in the long-run as we try to inject new life into our mature tourism product.

Four Seasons' restart is also of critical importance because its continued closure sends the wrong message about doing business in Barbados, given the number of wealthy investors who had already poured considerable sums into the project and who, under the circumstances, would have been unlikely to do anything to promote additional investments in Barbados.

Additionally, the litigation that could have resulted would have kept the country's name in the spotlight in an unfavourable way for a considerable time.

We now look forward to the resumption of actual construction and all that it will bring. While the actual Four Seasons project has been dormant for nearly two years, one of the most exquisite pieces of commercial beach-front real estate in Barbados has been idle for over two decades, ever since the old Paradise Beach Hotel went out of business in the 1980s.

We note that Dr. Persaud has explained that the tendering process for contracts will be carefully and fairly administered, and we hope this process will give preference to local and regional workers and companies first, and that we will not see another influx of Chinese labourers when there is no evidence to suggest the skills required are not available here.

In the meantime, though, we tip our hat to Dr. Persaud for an excellent job so far.

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