

The crew getting ready for the trip to Union Island and Mayreau. (Photos by Haroon Greenidge)

Catamaran companies, others sending supplies to hurricane-ravaged SVG



Chief Executive Officer of Foster & Ince Cruise Services, Martin Ince.

Several local businesses have banded together to assist St Vincent's Grenadine islands with relief supplies following the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl earlier this week.

The first vessel of supplies is expected to leave Barbados on Friday morning for Union Island and Mayreau to deliver specific items, said Chief Executive Officer of Foster & Ince Cruise Services, Martin Ince.

"The last few days have been very, very upsetting and unsettling. Barbados was spared the blow of Hurricane Beryl but our brothers and sisters in the other islands, especially the Grenadines and Carriacou, Petite Martinique have not been as fortunate. So . . . yesterday morning, we took a decision that we needed to do something, we needed to find a way to get some help to the islands," he told reporters on Thursday, adding that he contacted Massy

Barbados and **Goddard Enterprises** to assist with the initiative.

Ince disclosed that some other catamaran companies had initiatives, so they joined forces Wednesday morning "and it started to expand and grow from that".

He revealed that the fraternity then contacted St Vincent's National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) on the plan.

"You just can't leave here with items and turn up in another country. So you have to ensure you get all the permissions in place and . . . St Vincent has been so receptive . . . to receiving the vessels," Ince said.

"So the first boat will leave tomorrow morning. Then we have another two boats that will leave on Saturday and then we will mobilise from there, depending on the quantity of items that we get this morning . . . If we get too much, we're going to have to get some

support from the Coast Guard or the other agencies."

Ince said the donated supplies will address the immediate needs of residents – including water, canned foods, hygiene products, batteries, and torches – identified by NEMO.

"It's Union first, then Mayreau and we will work with them. . . so basically the boat is going there, dropping off and coming straight back," he explained.

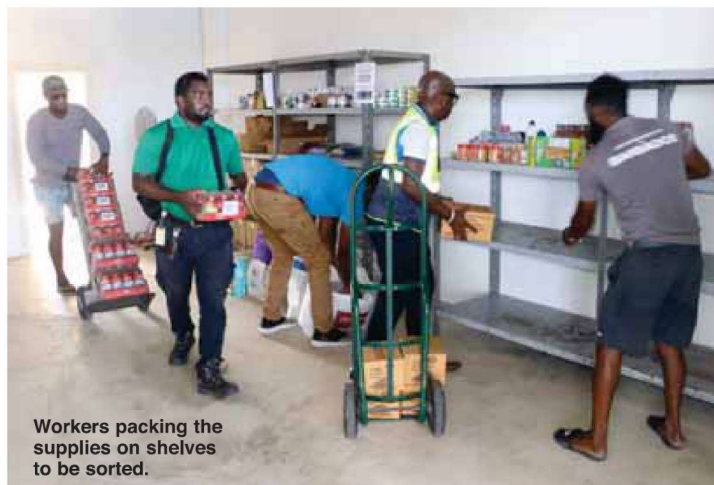
Ince acknowledged that the affected residents will need long-term assistance as they start to rebuild their lives.

"They're going to need a lot of help, and I know the international agencies, local agencies and the governments are working very hard, but . . . we're playing our little part to get some much-needed items to those islands as quickly as we can."

(FW)



Supplies being offloaded to get sorted.



Workers packing the supplies on shelves to be sorted.