

ACHIEVEMENTS *2016*



PARTNERSHIP FOR PROSPERITY



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Country on Solid Growth Path

In his address to the nation on March 3 after assuming office, Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness gave a commitment to foster a partnership between the Government and the Jamaican people. He also pledged to promote an inclusive, prosperous society and to eradicate social and economic inequality.

The months that followed were marked by the push to secure economic growth and job creation through initiatives that seek to restructure the country's bureaucratic system to enable efficient and quick decision-making and to improve the ease and speed of doing business to facilitate investments.

Growth of 2.3 per cent was achieved for the July to September quarter, the highest since 2007.

Government Pushes For Economic Growth

- The Prime Minister established an Economic Growth Council (EGC), led by international business tycoon, Michael Lee Chin.
- The EGC has so far produced a Call to Action report, which outlines eight specific growth initiatives, with the aim of achieving five per cent growth in four years. A declaration of intent has also been signed with private sector groups, unions and civil society. The EGC will monitor the progress of the Government in achieving the growth target and will report to the country.
- The Prime Minister announced a tripartite monitoring framework for the Pre-cautionary Stand-By Agreement (SBA) approved by the Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in November 2015. The new monitoring framework will assess the



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (3rd left) shows the 'five in four' with (from left) Member of the Economic Growth Council (EGC), Adam Stewart; EGC Chairman, Michael Lee Chin; and Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Nigel Clarke, during a signing ceremony and call to action at the Courtleigh Auditorium on November 7. A declaration of intent was signed to underscore the Government's commitment to policies set out in the growth initiatives published by the EGC to achieve five percent growth in four years.

fiscal and monetary indicators, as well as social and public sector issues according to the requirements of the SBA.

Increased NHT Benefits
Mindful of the link between social development, the raising of living standards and sustainable economic growth, the Prime Minister announced a range of increased National Housing Trust Benefits in his budget presentation to Parliament.

- The measures, which took effect June 1, include interest-free loans for persons earning less than \$12,000 per week; reduction of interest rate from four per cent to two per cent for contributors earning between \$12,001 and \$20,000 per week; while persons earning between \$20,001 and \$30,000 weekly are eligible for loans at four per cent, down from six per cent.
- The NHT's Home Grants programme has been adjusted so that contri-

butors who earn a maximum of \$12,000 weekly can apply for a grant of up to \$1.5 million instead of the previous \$1.2 million.

- Additionally, the amount for which an applicant can apply to buy a house lot has moved from \$1.5 million to \$2 million.
- The Land Administration Management Programme (LAMP) distributed 1,066 new land titles for the year and 668 clarified titles.

Partnership Agreement

- In December, Prime Minister Holness signed a Partnership for a Prosperous Jamaica Agreement which renews commitment to the social partnership model. The Agreement, to be spearheaded by the National Partnership Council, was signed by representatives of the state, civil society, private sector and the trade unions. It aims to significantly improve the country's economic growth and social development over the next four years.

Prime Minister Hosts Foreign Leaders

- President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, His Excellency Nicolas Maduro Moros, made an official visit to the island in June, which led to agreements on trade, energy and culture.
- In July, Prime Minister Holness hosted the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Keith Rowley, for meetings and consultations which led to a commitment of enhanced dialogue and cooperation between the two countries.

Regional Co-operation

- The Prime Minister appointed a 17-member Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Review Commission, chaired by former Prime Minister, Bruce Golding.
- The Government joined other countries in the region to develop solutions and strengthen initiatives to tackle the threat of international banks ending their correspondent banking relationships with local and regional financial institutions.

- Prime Minister Holness addressed the United Nations General Assembly in New York on September 23. He proposed an initiative that calls for highly indebted middle-income countries to be given access to development assistance. He urged international support for the move, which he said would allow countries to receive assistance in the form of investment, favourable trade, technology transfer, security and energy.

Launch of Youth Advisory Board

- The Government, in November, launched the country's first ever Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica, which comprises 16 young people who will serve for the period 2016 -2018. Prime Minister Holness said the new group embodies the Government's commitment to treat youth as full and equal partners in the decision-making process.

Ja House Fellowship

- The Prime Minister launched the Jamaica House Fellow-

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Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left) hands over a title to Stedford Latouch, at a Land Administration and Management Programme (LAMP) titling ceremony held on August 23 at Jamaica House. Some 220 land titles were presented to recipients from across the island.

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Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left) cuts the ribbon to open the 43rd staging of Expo Jamaica 2016, at the National Indoor Sports Centre in Kingston on April 14. Others assisting (from 2nd left) are: President, Jamaica Manufacturers' Association (JMA), Metry Seaga; Chief Executive Officer, FLOW, Garfield Sinclair; President, Jamaica Promotions Company (JAMPRO), Dianne Edwards; and President, Jamaica Exporters' Association (JEA), Michelle Chong.

ship Programme, which offers qualified and highly motivated Jamaicans the opportunity to grow professionally, while contributing to national development by serving as paid Fellows at Jamaica House.

Advances in Security

- The Prime Minister hailed the successful staging of Exercise Tradewinds 2016 for building the country and region's capacity to conduct counter-transnational organised crime operations. Phase II of the Exercise was hosted in Jamaica jointly by the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) and the United States Southern Command (US SOUTHCOM) from June 20 to 28.
- Mr. Holness announced the creation of the Office of National Security Advisor (NSA), and the appointment of former Chief of Defence Staff, Major General Antony Anderson, to the post in November 2015. The creation of the office of the NSA is a critical move in supporting

and coordinating Jamaica's national security superstructure.

National Identification System

- A White Paper was tabled for the introduction of a National Identification System (NIDS) in Jamaica, which the Prime Minister indicated is set for roll out in January 2018. NIDS will be used to capture and store personal identity information for citizens and persons resident in the island.

Access to Information

- The Access to Information Unit carried out a week of activities in September to observe 'Right to Know Week' under the theme: 'Right to Know... Power to Change'. The campaign was used to raise awareness of an individual's right to access Government documents, while promoting freedom of information as an essential ingredient for democracy and good governance.

JSIF Committed To Development

- Jamaica's capacity to produce clean Irish potato

seedlings has been enhanced with a \$19-million allocation from the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF). Under the programme, the money spent annually to import 90 per cent of Irish potato seeds into the island will be cut significantly, while the availability of first-generation seeds will be guaranteed.

- JSIF launched a National Community Tourism Portal to promote licensed community-based tourism enterprises across the island. The portal is part of the Government's US\$15-million Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) project, being implemented with funding from the World Bank.
- Through the REDI project, JSIF constructed seven agro-processing facilities in seven parishes to support Micro and Small Scale Rural Agro-processors. A Cocoa Drying and Curing Facility for the Jamaica Cocoa Farmers' Association was also constructed.

- JSIF constructed and equipped 48 classrooms at five Primary and All-Age schools in St. Ann, Manchester and St. Catherine using the design and build construction methodology. More than 7,000 persons benefitted from these interventions. The additional classrooms will assist in significantly reducing or totally removing the institutions from the shift system.

- With funding from the Petro Caribe Development Fund, JSIF has been working with the Ministry of Education to eliminate pit latrines in rural schools. During the year 18 Primary and All Age schools received sanitation units which will benefit approximately 1,200 persons. The schools are located in the parishes of Clarendon, St. Catherine, Hanover, Manchester, St. Elizabeth and St. Mary.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd left), cuts the ribbon to officially open business process outsourcing (BPO) company, IBEX Global's offices in Portmore Pines, St. Catherine, on October 27. He is joined by (from left) CEO of IBEX Global, Robert Dechant; President of Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), Dianne Edwards; and Country Manager of IBEX Global, Dagleish Joseph. The office in Portmore opened with 550 persons with a view to increasing that number to 1,000 when the facility is fully built out.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness interacts with children following a ceremony by the Land Administration and Management Programme (LAMP) to hand over 220 land titles at Jamaica House, on August 23.

Economic Reform Programme on Track

JAMAICA REAPED significant dividends from continued steady implementation of the Economic Reform Programme (ERP) throughout the year.

Notable among the gains were:

International Monetary Fund (IMF) Approval

- The multilateral organisation approved a three-year, US\$1.64 billion precautionary standby successor agreement to replace the four-year Extended Fund Facility (EFF).
- Jamaica passed its 14th and final EFF quarterly review conducted by the IMF's Staff Mission Team near the end of the year. The country was deemed to have consistently met the key benchmarks, including the Primary Surplus Balance, which now stands at 7.25 per cent of Budget, as well as the Net International Reserves (NIR), which ended the year at more than US\$2.4 billion.
- Revenue inflows were also well above budget, with the outturn being more than \$200 billion, or 5.8 per cent higher than projected.

Economic Programme Oversight Committee (EPOC)

New members were selected for this committee, set up to oversee the programme's implementation.

The entity will be co-chaired by Jamaica Money Market Brokers (JMMB) Group Chief Executive Officer, Keith Duncan, and Bank of Jamaica (BoJ) Governor, Brian Wynter.

Mr. Duncan replaces Sagicor Life Jamaica Limited's President and Chief Executive Officer, Richard Byles, who held the position for the duration of the EFF's implementation.

Multilateral Funding Support

Jamaica continued to enjoy additional funding support

from other multilateral organisations. These included:

- A US\$30 million **World Bank** loan to further boost the national disaster and climate risk management programme. The loan, to be disbursed over a six-year period under the Bank's Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project, will support the Government's programme to reduce environmental hazards.

The project, being implemented by the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), comprises four components. These target technical assistance for improved disaster and climate resilience; risk reduction; contingent emergency response; and project administration.

Specific focus will be placed on disaster response and recovery; creating a safer environment for schools; and disaster risk financing and insurance.

- A US\$100 million **Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)** loan to fund the 'Financial System Reform Support Pro-

gramme' aimed at facilitating increased access to business financing.

Economic Growth

Third quarter growth of 2.3 per cent was recorded for the July to September period, representing the highest out-

turn since 2007. This was mainly attributed to a 28.8 per cent growth in agriculture and an over two per cent spike in the hotel and restaurant sector.

The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) projects fourth quarter fiscal year growth

ranging between one and two per cent for October to December, with a similar overall forecast for 2016/17.

Employment Up

The total number of persons employed as at July 2016 stood at 1,186,900. This represented an increase of 39,400 persons relative to July 2015.

The Statistical Institute of Jamaica's (STATIN) Labour Force Survey indicated that this is the highest level of employment ever recorded in a single month.

The number of employed males rose by 9,700 to 663,100 and employed females by 29,700 to 523,800. Youth employment also increased by 16,200 to 152,100 persons.

Conversely, unemployment declined to a five-year low of 12.6 per cent for the period.

Inflation Down

The rate of inflation continues to decline, with the outturn for the September quarter falling to 1.9 per cent. The BoJ reported that this was 0.9 per cent lower than the figure for the June quarter. It further indicated that the September



Finance and the Public Service Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw (left), emphasises a point while addressing journalists during the 13th International Monetary Fund (IMF) quarterly review media briefing, at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) on August 19. Listening is Head of the IMF Staff Mission Team to Jamaica, Dr. Uma Ramakrishnan.



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw (left) and General Manager for the Caribbean Country Department of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Therese Turner-Jones, sign the US\$50 million loan agreement under the Fiscal Structural Programme for Economic Growth (FISPEG) III. The signing was held on December 19 at the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, National Heroes Circle. Observing the proceedings are Senior Negotiations Officer, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Nadine James (standing) and Senior Operations Associate, IDB, Brodrick Watson.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (5th left), along with his wife and Member of Parliament for St. Andrew East Rural, the Most Hon. Juliet Holness (3rd right), lead Government Ministers into Gordon House at the Ceremonial Opening of Parliament on April 14. Others (from left) are: Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang; Minister of National Security, Hon. Robert Montague; Attorney General, Hon. Marlene Malahoo Forte; Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Derrick Smith; Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange; and Local Government and Community Development Minister, Hon. Desmond McKenzie.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left) makes a point during an interview with News Correspondent for African and Caribbean Social Affairs at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Elaine Dunkley, at Jamaica House on April 7.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) gives words of encouragement to grade six student at Brown's Hall Primary in St. Catherine, Omade Williams (centre), after gifting him with a tablet at the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) on May 11. Omade's grandmother, Veronica Gordon, is at left. The Prime Minister donated devices to Omade and his younger brother, Joel Folkes, following a recent meeting with Omade, who had delivered a letter to OPM in which he had written about himself and his ideas on policies to help Jamaican youth. The Prime Minister urged him to utilise the tablet for school-work and assignments.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left) greets Ardenne High School sixth form student, Joelle Notice (right), during the launch of the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, at the Office of the Prime Minister in Kingston, on November 24. At centre is teacher, Ardenne High School, Caniggia Palmer.

Economic Reform Programme... cont'd from page 4

outturn represented the eighth consecutive quarter in which inflation declined, with the rate for the 2016 calendar year projected to fall below two per cent.

Improved International Rating

Jamaica's sovereign senior unsecured and provisional shelf ratings was upgraded from CAA2 to B3 by international financial rating entity, Moody's Investors Service, which revised its outlook for the economy from stable to positive.

The factors supporting these outcomes include: significant and sustained consolidation and strong commitment by the Government to reduce the national debt; and significant improvement in the current account, as well as more favourable external conditions.

Working Group

During the year, a Working Group was established to address exchange rate movements. The Group has been weekly basis for discussions aimed at ensuring that the exchange rate reflects market realities and is in line with the country's economic and social goals.



Finance and the Public Service Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw (left), and World Bank Country Manager for Jamaica, Galina Sotirova, exchange signed copies of the agreement for the institution's US\$30 million loan provision for the National Disaster and Climate Risk Management Programme. The signing took place at the Ministry's National Heroes Circle offices in Kingston in July.

Income Tax Threshold

The Government embarked on phase one implementation of the new \$1.5 million income tax threshold on July 1. The undertaking, being carried out in two segments, saw the initial figure increased to \$1,000,272, up from \$592,800. Under the initial phase, persons earning up to \$19,236 weekly or \$83,356 monthly will pay no income tax. This provides them with an additional \$8,489 on their salaries. This action by the Government has benefitted more than 250,000 Jamaicans.

The threshold will move to \$1.5 million as of April 1 this year, resulting in persons earning up to \$125,008 being exempt from paying income tax. This will amount to an additional \$10,413 on their salaries.

Income ranging between \$796,536 and \$6 million will continue to be taxed at 25 per cent, while the rate on earnings exceeding \$6 million, in July was increased from 25 to 30 per cent.

Budget

Estimates of Expenditure, totalling \$579.93 billion, were tabled by Minister Shaw at

the opening of the 2016/17 Budget Debate in the House of Representatives in April. This was 28 per cent less than the \$808 billion revised Budget for the 2015/16 fiscal year.

Recurrent (housekeeping) expenses were earmarked at \$459.37 billion, while capital (development) spending was \$120.56 billion.

Prior to this, the House of Representatives approved a Resolution that provided the new administration, which assumed office in March, with the sum of \$83.83 billion to carry on its business until 2016/17 Budget was finalised.

Legislation

Several pivotal pieces of legislation were debated and passed in the Houses of Parliament. Notable among these were the:

- **Income Tax (Amendment) Act**

This piece of legislation, which was approved by both Houses, aims to ensure that incentives provided to businesses under the Jamaica Stock Exchange (JSE) junior market, are maintained.

- **National Insurance Act**

Both Houses approved proposed amendments to the legislation, which now enables the Government to administer timely adjustments of the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) benefits for pensioners and other beneficiaries.

- **International Financial and Business Services**

Three key pieces of legislation that are expected to better position Jamaica as a place of choice to facilitate the administration of these provisions were passed.

They include: *the General Partnership Act 2016*; *the Partnership Limited Act 2016*; and *International Corporate and Trust Service Providers Act*.

The General Partnership Act will formalise the process for foreign alliances pursuing business transactions



Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Fayval Williams, addresses the opening of the 12th Inter-American Network on Government Procurement (INGP) conference, at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, in St. James, on November 29.

in Jamaica and facilitate mergers and conversion of such arrangements.

The Limited Partnership Act aims to accommodate commercial activities not deemed suitable for other categories of business arrangements in Jamaica.

The International Corporate and Trust Services Act seeks to promote and maintain high standards of conduct, ethics and competence in these provisions.

- **Banking Services (Deposit Taking Institutions) (Agent Banking) Regulations:**

The House of Representatives approved the Regulations, which will enable aspects of banking engagements to be transacted through agents authorised by the Supervisory Authority.

The objective is to widen banking access beyond existing deposit taking institutions' branch networks and electronic access channels, to include the use of third party-owned locations that will offer products and services alongside their own.

These entities include gas stations, supermarkets, hardware stores, money transfer and remittance

operations, and lottery outlets.

The legislation is awaiting the Senate's deliberations and approval.

Jamaica Customs Agency/ASYCUDA

The Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA) is reporting significant stakeholder compliance with its Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA) world system since its full implementation in April.

ASYCUDA is a web-based system designed to transform the JCA to a paperless operation through its use of electronic documents.

The platform is capable of interfacing with other government and non-government technology systems, thereby facilitating electronic applications for permits and licences.

The overall benefits include simplified procedure for customers, reduced waiting time, more accurate and consistent tax calculation, and safeguarding the country's revenue.

The facility has been implemented at all major ports of entry in Kingston and Montego Bay, St. James, as well as the Ocho Rios pier in St. Ann; Falmouth pier in Trelawny; and Ian Fleming International Airport in Boscobel, St. Mary.

Government Going for Sustainable Growth

Upon taking office in March 2016, Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, announced the formation of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC), which is charged with drafting the blueprint to drive economic growth and sustainable development.

The Ministry brings together seven critical portfolio areas: Land, Environment, Climate Change, Investment, Water and Wastewater, Housing and Works. It has oversight for 48 Agencies, Departments and Divisions, which are responsible for approximately 68 subject areas.

Throughout the year, the Prime Minister met with directors and heads of agencies in the Ministry where he urged them to ensure that a supportive environment for the private sector is facilitated. He said the Ministry was established to be the centre of policy development, facilitation and implementation in Jamaica.

Highway Projects

- On March 23, the Prime Minister officially opened the North-South leg of Highway 2000, which was constructed at a cost of US\$600 million. The 67-kilometre stretch extends from the Mandela Highway near Caymanas in St. Catherine to Mam-mee Bay in St. Ann. It strategically links the northern and southern sections of the island, and provides opportunities for investment projects.
- The Government finalised arrangements with the Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of China to access loan funding for road improvement projects in the southeastern and southwestern sections of Jamaica. The projects will cost US\$384 million, US\$57 million of which will be provided by the Jamaican Government.
- Work is advanced on the widening of the Mandela



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (right), listens as Chief Executive Officer, Kingston Wharves Limited, Grantley Stephenson, outlines some of the expansion and new development initiatives being undertaken to transform the Kingston Wharves into a premier transshipment facility during a tour of the Kingston Wharves by the Minister in October.



Work underway on the upgrading and extension of Marcus Garvey Drive in Kingston.

Highway from a four to six lane carriageway. This project, which started in August, is valued at US\$64 million and is being done through the Major Infrastructure Development Programme (MIDP).

Improvements to Roads and Bridges

- The National Works Agency (NWA) commenced the US\$20.5 million reconstruction of the Marcus Garvey Drive Road in March. This project

includes the widening of approximately 2.44 kilometres of roadway and the installation of side-walks and a median.

- The \$35 million realignment of the Grange Lane and Municipal Boulevard intersection to form a four-way cross road with Passagefort Drive was completed in November. This was funded by the Road Maintenance Fund.
- The Harbour Head Bridge in Port Morant was replaced at a cost of \$50 million.

Work is underway for the \$700 million construction of the Kupius Bridge in Clarendon and the \$35 million installation of a bridge at Rentcombe in St. Catherine.

- Several road rehabilitation and drainage improvement works were carried out by the NWA, including the \$432 million improvement of the Tombstone to Gutters stretch in St. Elizabeth; the \$700 million work from Mineral Heights to Dawkins in Clarendon; and \$400 million work from Riley-Dias to Glasgow in Hanover.
- The NWA also spent \$65 million on sea defence works along the Falmouth coastline. The project, which was completed in November, involved the construction of retaining and parapet walls and the reinstatement of sections of roadway.

Facilitating Small Business

- A Memorandum of Understand was signed

for US\$7.2 million in loans and grants to be made available to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the tourism and agricultural sectors, to finance climate change adaptation initiatives. This is being implemented under the Adaptation Programme and Financing Mechanism Project, a component of the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR) in Jamaica, with funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

- Through the Development Bank of Jamaica's (DBJ) Innovation Grant from New Ideas to Entrepreneurship (IGNITE) programme, 27 entrepreneurs were awarded up to \$4 million each in grants totaling \$37.5 million. The entrepreneurs received up to 70 per cent of a project cost, to implement innovation activities in the creation and growth

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Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Daryl Vaz (centre), and former Mission Director for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Jamaica, Denise Herbol (right), are shown an exhibit by Meteorological Officer at the Meteorological Service, Jamaica (MSJ), Rohan Brown, during a forum held at the Knutsford Court Hotel, New Kingston, in March, to mark World Meteorological Day. The event was organised under the Jamaica Rural Economy and Ecosystems Adapting to Climate Change II (Ja REEACH II) Project, a four-year initiative funded by USAID.

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of new firms in the productive sectors.

BPO Projects

- In August, the Prime Minister broke ground for 63,000 sq.ft of office space to facilitate expansion of the growing Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) industry in the Montego Bay Free Zone. This project is to be completed in early 2017. In October, Mr. Holness officially opened the IBEX Global facility in Portmore, which had so far employed 550 persons.
- The DBJ approved four loans valued at over US\$37 million for the build out of BPO space in Kingston and Montego Bay. The agency has committed to further loans totaling US\$58 million to support the build out of 771,550 sq. ft of space to provide 16,720 jobs.

Wigton III

- In June, the PM commissioned into service Wigton III, the 24-megawatt expansion of the wind farm in Rose Hill, Manchester. The new facility, which began supplying energy to the national grid in March, is projected

to generate 63,072 megawatt-hours annually.

Water Projects

- An artificial groundwater recharge system was completed at Innswood, St. Catherine and is now operational. Minister with responsibility for Water, Works and Housing, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, says the facility's development reflects the Government's approach to effectively manage and administer the delivery of water.
- Ground was broken for the installation of 4.6 kilometres of pipeline for the Hounslow to Newell water supply project in St. Elizabeth on July 14. The project is being undertaken at a cost of \$60.5 million and will benefit some 1,000 residents of Newell, Bigwoods, Bethany and environs. It is scheduled to be completed in March 2017.
- In September, the National Water Commission (NWC) signed a US\$1 million grant agreement with the United States Trade and Development Agency

(USTDA) to help fund a one-year energy efficiency and renewable project, which will improve the NWC's operations.

Development of Trans-shipment Sector

- The Government successfully divested the Kingston Container Terminal (KCT) to Kingston Freeport Ter-

minal Limited (KFTL). There is agreement between the Port Authority of Jamaica and KFTL for the development and expansion of the terminal, Jamaica's main trans-shipment port.

- The Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ) launched a Port Community System (PCS), to manage all trade logistics processes. The PCS is an open electronic platform, which enables the secure exchange of information between public and private stakeholders in the port community. Following its full implementation, the PCS will enable savings of US\$10 million annually.
- In November, Prime Minister Holness joined with German and local investors in ushering a ship repair industry into the local economy with the launch of German Ship Repair Jamaica (GSRJ) Limited. He pledged support to the entity, which has established a rela-

tionship with the Caribbean Maritime Institute (CMI), to train persons in ship repair services.

Housing Developments

- Work started in April on a \$7 billion residential subdivision development with 760 houses in Innswood, St. Catherine. The subdivision, known as The Orchards, is being done through joint venture between SCJ Holdings Limited and Rivi Gardner and Associates.
- Ground was broken and two model units showcased for the Winchester Housing Development in Hanover. Some 1,003 housing units, starting at a price of approximately \$4.7 million, are to be constructed by contractors, Selective Homes.

Protecting the Environment and Mitigating Climate Change

- The Government received a copy of a United Nations Environmental Programme



Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Derrick Smith (3rd left), listens as Tourism Specialist at the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), Beverly Stewart (left), gives highlights of tourism projects being undertaken by the Fund, during a tour of exhibitions at a launch ceremony for the Fund's 20th anniversary at Spanish Court Hotel in Kingston on October 25. They are accompanied by JSIF's Managing Director, Omar Sweeney (right) and Park Ranger from the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park, Herma Dawes.



Minister of State with responsibility for Works in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Everald Warmington (centre), along with members of the National Works Agency (NWA) examine a section of a damaged roadway during a tour of Eastern Portland, in April, after sections of the parish were severely affected by heavy rains.

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Security Ministry Boosts Efforts in Crime Fighting

The Ministry of National Security spent billions of dollars to equip and boost the Jamaica Constabulary Force's crime fighting capabilities, by incorporating the latest technology and techniques, providing equipment, upgrading infrastructure, and providing vital training for its personnel.

These were facilitated under the Ministry's five-pillar strategy to fight crime, which focused on: swift and sure justice; crime prevention through social development; situational prevention; effective policing; and reducing re-offending.

CCTVs

- More closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras were installed in major towns across the island. These included: Mandeville, Manchester; Montego Bay, St. James; Spanish Town, St. Catherine; Negril, Westmoreland; Kingston; Port Maria, St. Mary; and Christiana, Manchester.

Upgraded Police Stations/Facilities

- Police stations were built and upgraded across the island through a combined investment of \$331 million from the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), the National Housing Trust (NHT) and the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).
- Several mobile stations were rolled out. The temporary and convenient posts offer local communities more contact with police officers.
- A number of police stations were renovated and refurbished across the island, including the Negril Police Station in Westmoreland; Denham Town, Kingston; Lionel Town and Four Paths, Clarendon; and Spanish Town and Central Village, St. Catherine.



Minister of National Security, Hon. Robert Montague (2nd left), tries out the closed-circuit television (CCTV) system installed at the Islington Police Station in St. Mary. The system was donated by Quest Security. Others (from left) are Advisor to the Minister, Peter Jones; Assistant Chaplin for the Area Two police division, Lenford Newell; and head of the division, Assistant Commissioner of Police, (ACP) Fitz Bailey.

- The Whitehouse; Savanna-la-Mar, Bethel Town and Whithorn police stations in Westmoreland were equipped with a number of basic items in order to improve the work environment.
- The refurbished physiotherapy building at the Medical Services Branch, located at the National Police College of Jamaica in Twickenham Park, St. Catherine, was officially opened. It provides rehabilitative services for JCF members.
- The Jamaica Combined Cadet Force (JCCF) acquired an airplane from the British Government which will be used in its student pilot training programme. It replaces an airplane which became inoperable 14 years ago.
- The Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) provided \$50 million for the repair of 100 police vehicles under an initiative dubbed 'Operation Quick Fix'.

Equipment

- A total of 3,500 less lethal weapon kits were donated by the United States Government for the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF). Under the Less Lethal Programme, the JCF will receive 7,000 pieces of equipment, including batons, handcuffs, utility belts and pepper sprays.
- One hundred and twenty (120) body cameras were deployed in six police divisions across Kingston and St. Andrew. The first areas that benefitted

Vehicle Acquisition

- The Ministry procured 200 pre-owned, economical vehicles to boost the mobile capacity of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).
- Two motor cars, donated by the National Road Operating and Constructing Company (NROCC), were added to the JCF's fleet. The vehicles will be used to increase patrols on the North-South Highway corridor in an effort to reduce road fatalities.

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scoping study entitled 'Green Economy: A Tool for Sustainable Development,' along with a separate document highlighting how a green economy relates to Jamaica's national development plan, Vision 2030. The documents provide a response to the country's challenges, such as poverty, inequitable sharing of resources and environmental degradation.

- Jamaica was among the first countries in the Caribbean and within the wider group of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to complete its Biennial Update Report (BUR), which is one of the reporting requirements for developing countries that are parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The Jamaican Government ratified the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which seeks international agreement to halt or reverse the adverse effects of climate change, ahead of Prime Minister, Andrew Holness' attendance at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP22) in Morocco in November.

- The Ministry has embarked on a series of consultations island-wide under its Youth Environmental Advocacy Programme (YEAP). Launched in the year under review, YEAP is aimed at increasing young people's knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the environment.
- Some 1,000 volunteers participated in a beach

clean-up exercise at Half Moon Bay in Hellshire, St. Catherine, hosted by the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), as part of activities for International Coastal Clean-Up Day (ICCD) on September 17.

- In May 2016, the Forestry Department partnered with the Jamaica Money Market Brokers (JMMB) Limited in the reforestation of 2.4 hectares of denuded lands in Silent Hill, Manchester. Over 1,000 forest tree seedlings (mixed species) were planted. This is part of the agency's Adopt-A-Hillside Initiative geared at encouraging private sector participation in national reforestation efforts.
- The Forestry Department also visited 102 schools across 13 parishes to build awareness about its functions and the importance of forests. Public participation in tree planting activities by the agency was facilitated through the distribution of more than 22,000 seedlings for the annual Labour Day and National Tree Planting Day (NTPD) activities.

Beautification Programme

- State Minister with responsibility for Works, Hon. Everaldo Warmington, in November, announced plans for 'National Clean-up and Environmental Beautification Initiative'. The project entails drain cleaning, harvesting of plastic bottles for recycling, and bushing.

Security Ministry Boosts Efforts... cont'd from page 9

included St. Andrew Central, St. Andrew South, Kingston Eastern, Kingston Central and the Motorised Patrol and Traffic Divisions. Over time, the body camera project, which is a collaborative effort between the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) and the United States Embassy, will benefit the rest of the Force.

- Five police stations in the Corporate Area received first aid kits to provide police vehicles with the requisite tools to offer care to victims at accident scenes. The police stations were: Matilda's Corner, Papine, August Town, Gordon Town and Grants Pen.

- The analytical capability of the State-run Institute of Forensic Science and Legal Medicine was boosted with the acquisition of a scanning electron microscope (SEM) valued at approximately \$42.3 million (US\$328,000). The state-of-the-art equipment will enable the laboratory to better analyse trace evidence such as gunshot residue, paint and glass fragments, among other elements, which are collected by the police from crime scenes. It was provided by the United States (US) Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, with support from the US Embassy in Jamaica.

New Recruits

- A total of 497 new recruits joined the Jamaica Constabulary Force.
- The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) welcomed 199 new soldiers to its ranks.
- The Department of Correctional Services welcomed 143 new correctional officers.

Training/Workshop

Improved and continuous training was a major strategy of the Ministry.



National Security Minister, Hon. Robert Montague (2nd left), is assisted by British High Commissioner to Jamaica, His Excellency David Fitton (left); and senior Jamaica Combined Cadet Force (JCCF) officer, Lieutenant Colonel Victor Beek, to commission a Cessna airplane at the Caribbean Aviation Training Centre at Tinson Pen Aerodrome in Kingston. The aircraft, donated by the British Government, will be used in the JCCF's aviation training programme.

- Over 300 police personnel and front-line responders benefitted from training to effectively recognise, deal with and respond to victims of rape, sexual harassment and domestic violence. The sensitivity training falls under the Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence Project, which is jointly funded by the British High Commission and the United States Embassy in Kingston.

- Law enforcement personnel and Justices of the Peace (JPs) in St. James, Trelawny and Westmoreland received training on separation of gender (in lock-ups), caution statement, child diversions, among other issues.

- Members of the JCF received training on the Lottery Scam Act, border security, domestic violence and conflict resolution.

- Representatives from Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) Coast Guard, the Marine Police and Immigration Officers received training in port security.

- Police personnel received training in maritime and land operations as part of Exercise Tradewinds

trained in the United States.

FBI Office And Lottery Scam Taskforce

- Plans are in place for the reintroduction of the Lottery Scam Task Force by the Jamaica Constabulary Force and for the establishment of an office of the US Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) office in Jamaica.

National Task Force Against Trafficking In Persons (NATFATIP)

- Jamaica was upgraded to Tier 2 from the Tier 2 Watch List in the United States (US) Department of State 2016 TIP report. A Tier 2 ranking means that the country is making important strides in tackling human trafficking and is well on the way to full compliance with international trafficking laws and standards.

Townhall Meetings

- The Ministry staged a number of townhall meetings across the island which attracted hundreds of Jamaicans. The meetings were staged as part of measures to inform the

public of the Ministry's plans and programmes.

Stay Alert Mobile Application

- More than 18,000 persons downloaded the Stay Alert App. The app allows persons to send photos and videos to the police control centre. There is also a panic mode to alert law enforcement in times of crisis.

Citizen Security And Justice Programme (CSJP)

- Residents of Majesty Gardens, in Kingston, benefitted from parenting and skills training as well as infrastructure development, through the Inner-city Renewal Programme (IRP). The programme was offered through collaboration with Government agencies and the private sector, for the improvement and sustainability of inner-city communities.
- Fifty young people from the CSJP communities benefitted from counselling and support services to help them better understand and cope with

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State Minister in the National Security Ministry, Senator the Hon. Parnell Charles Jr. (centre), cuts the ribbon to officially open the renovated physiotherapy building at the National Police College in Twickenham Park, St. Catherine. Observing are Chief Executive Officer of the National Health Fund (NHF), Everton Anderson (left), and then Police Commissioner, Dr. Carl Williams.

Protecting the Poor and Vulnerable

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security continued to provide support to the most vulnerable in society through several social security programmes.

SOCIAL SECURITY PATH Programme

- The Government provided over \$3.85 billion to beneficiaries of the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH).

Over 2,000 students on the PATH programme will benefit from a \$30 million provision under the extension of the Transportation Allowance Grant (TAG), a pilot project. Each child will benefit to the tune of \$3,000 monthly.

- Sixteen persons were selected to be Youth Ambassadors for PATH. The young leaders will engage 3,000 students in 30 schools over the next 12 months.
- Amendments to The National Insurance (Amendment) Act, which will allow for the National Insurance Service to be reviewed every three years instead of every five, was passed by the House of Representatives.



Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Shahine Robinson (2nd right) greets staff of Kingston Container Terminal during a tour of the facilities in May.

- The Government, under the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Trade and Competitiveness Project (CTCP), provided assistive software for the blind and visually impaired. The software is available through the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities (JCPD).
- The Early Stimulation Programme (ESP) officially opened a new \$30 million facility in Portland, with funding from the Digicel Foundation. More than 100 children with special needs will benefit from diagnosis and early intervention services.
- The Abilities Foundation was approved as the testing site for Microsoft Literacy Certification for Persons with Disabilities.
- The Jamaica Empowerment Partners for Persons with Disabilities (JEPP), which comprises 60 members from agencies

serving persons with disabilities, was established to advance the inclusion agenda of the disabled. The group will focus on priority goals for the sector such as access to information, support and essential services, employment and workforce integration.

- The National Council for Senior Citizens (NCSC) celebrated 40 years of advocacy and service under the theme: 'Showcasing Our Legacy, Promoting Inter-generational Solidarity'. The senior citizens participated in a number of activities throughout the year to mark the milestone anniversary.

LABOUR

The Ministry gave special focus to the issue of decent work as well as facilitating employment opportunities and improved wages. In Parliament, Minister Shahine Robinson tabled nine Instruments adopted from the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Annual General Conference for ratification, including Convention (189) which speaks to Decent Work for Domestic Workers.

- The National Minimum Wage and the Minimum Wage for Industrial Security Guards were increased to \$6,200 per 40-hour work week and \$8,854 per 40-hour work week, respectively.
- Some 8,794 workers went to Canada and 6,210 to the United States to participate in the Overseas Employment Programme.

- More than 500 staff members at the Ministry participated in an Occupational, Safety and Health (OSH) Bill sensitisation session in preparation for passage of the legislation.



Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Shahine Robinson, presents Synshazzae Higgins with an award for more than 40 years of service to the Canada/Caribbean Seasonal Agricultural Workers Programme (CCSAWP). Occasion was the 50th anniversary and awards ceremony of the programme held at the Meliá Braco Village resort in Trelawny on November 13.



Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Shahine Robinson (left), shares a light moment with members from the 'Recycled Teenagers' dance group at the press launch for the 40th anniversary of the National Council for Senior Citizens (NCSC) in May.

Security Ministry Boosts Efforts... cont'd from page 10

trauma due to crime and violence. The youngsters from the CSJP's central region, covering the parishes of St. Catherine and Clarendon, participated in psycho-educational workshops.

- Forty-five at-risk youth benefited from an internship through a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the CSJP Phase III and the Jamaica Public Service Company (JPSCo) valued at \$8.7 million.

Counter Terrorism And Organized Crime Investigation Branch (CTOC)

- The Counter Terrorism and Organized Crime Investigation Branch (CTOC) seized more than \$1.5 billion worth of items found in breach of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), over the past 12 months. The items seized resulted from 32 major operations conducted islandwide, which led to 112 interviews, 25 arrests for serious IPR breaches and 12 convictions. Some of the items confiscated included over six million CDs, DVDs, 33,000 counterfeit foot-wear, 25,000 pieces of apparel, counterfeit cigarettes, bleaching cream, T-shirts, rum and handbags.

- 'Operation Uplift', which is aimed at strengthening the fight against Trafficking in Persons (TIP), was officially launched. Operation Uplift will continue to focus on investigation, training and heightening awareness, with investigations to be expanded into asset forfeiture.
- More than 31 tactical operations were conducted by the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Unit with 12 victims identified and rescued. Approximately 24 persons were arrested and charged; six for human

trafficking offences and 18 for offences such as living off the earnings of prostitution and rape, and misleading and deceptive conduct.

Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA)

- PICA began undertaking measures to introduce a facial recognition feature in the production of passports as a means of guarding against identity theft. The feature was initially introduced at the 15 immigration kiosks at the Norman Manley International Airport, in Kingston, and the Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay.

- The agency took its mobile unit service to residents of May Pen, Clarendon; Port Maria, St. Mary and surrounding areas.

Department of Correctional Services

- A pilot project for the electronic tagging of inmates was officially launched and is being conducted to assess the use of electronic monitoring devices for low-risk offenders. The initiative will allow low-risk offenders to serve their sentences within their communities with



Former Chief of Defence Staff Major General Antony Anderson (2nd left) and United States Ambassador to Jamaica, Luis G. Moreno (left) boarding one of two vessels donated by the United States to the JDF.

Department of Correctional Services (DCS) supervision, and access to rehabilitation support.

- The Department launched an active HIV programme in juvenile detention facilities. The initiative provides inmates 12-18 years with the requisite medication.
- The teaching and learning process of juveniles was enhanced by implementing a 'learning by doing' concept.



Rank and file members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) display body-worn cameras during the launch at the Police Commissioner's Office in St. Andrew.

- Twenty-one former remandees and wards of the State received business start-up grants valued at over \$6 million, through an Organization of American States (OAS) initiative. Dubbed 'Pitch It': Learning and Investing in Your Future, the project seeks to improve the lives of youth in conflict with the law, by addressing their emotional, social, educational and economic challenges.
- Twenty-six Department of Correctional Services (DCS) officers participated in a two-week multinational training programme, in Cannon City, Colorado, USA, which was hosted by the Correctional Management Institute (CMI). The engagement covered several topics, including: case management duties and responsibilities; offender programmes for success and reintegration preparation; alternatives to corrections; parole operations and early release supervision; and searches and shakedowns.

'Kick Out Crime and Violence'

- The Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom (UK) signed a \$20.7 million grant agreement with 'Fight for Peace' in Jamaica, to provide positive alternatives for inner city youth. 'Fight For Peace' is open to young people aged 7 to 29 years living in the communities of Hannah Town, Denham Town, Trench Town, Fletcher's Land, Parade Gardens and Tivoli Gardens, in Kingston.

Self-Contributory Health Insurance Scheme For Security Guards

- Over 20,000 registered security guards are to benefit from a self-contributory health insurance scheme provided through Guardian Life. It includes an individual plan for \$997 per month, a family plan for \$1,473 per month, and a \$2,725 scheme to facilitate higher categories of wage earners.

Major Strides in Tourism

Jamaica's status as a destination of choice for tourists was further underlined by record earnings generated from significant visitor arrivals during the year.

Visitor Arrivals & Earnings

Jamaica achieved a major milestone when the island welcomed a record 3,836,847 visitors last year. This surpassed the 3.6 million visitors recorded in 2015, representing a 3.9 per cent increase.

Stopover arrivals totalled 2,181,282, representing a 2.7 per cent increase, while the 1,655,565 cruise passengers gracing the island's shores, was 5.5 per cent more than 2015.

Jamaica also registered record arrivals during the Christmas season, with 60,886 stopover visitors and cruise passengers travelling to the island between December 22 and 28. This was an 11.1 per cent increase over the corresponding period in 2015.

Preliminary figures show that gross foreign ex-

change earnings for 2016 totalled US\$2.55 billion. This was 6.3 per cent more than the US\$2.4 billion generated in 2015.

New Markets

Jamaica continued its successful new and emerging marketing thrust, with focus being placed on Latin America and Eastern Europe. Primary among the factors facilitating this undertaking was relaxation of the visa travel requirements for countries in those newly targeted regions. A similar gesture extended to China is yielding significant visitor travel from that country, particularly for recreational purposes.

The Ministry also initiated the process to cement a multi-destination marketing arrangement with other countries such as Cuba, Mexico and the Dominican Republic.

Hotel Construction

Nearly 2,400 new hotel rooms were added to the country's stock. Among the notable properties were: RIU Reggae - 450; Royalton Blue Waters - 225; Royal



Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett (right), presents a commemorative plaque to 'Harmony of the Seas' Captain, Johnny Faavelen, in recognition of the ship's inaugural call to Jamaica in November. 'Harmony of the Seas', which is the world's largest cruise vessel, docked at the Falmouth port with over 8,000 passengers and crew.

Decameron Cornwall - 142; AM Resorts' Breathless Resort - 150; Zoë Try Montego Bay - 50; Gran Bahia Principe - 400; Moon Palace - 750; and Melia Braco - 230.

An additional 1,035 rooms, now under construction, are slated to come on stream in 2017.

They include: Royalton Negril Resort & Spa - 600; The Hideaway at Royalton Negril Resort - 166; Azul Sensatori - 51; Azul Beach - 98; and Spanish Court West - 120.

In addition, 32 high-end rooms and eight two-bed room apartments are being built at The Renfrew in Kingston, while redevelopment work is underway at the former Wyndham New Kingston Hotel which was acquired by the Courtleigh Hotel Group.

Shovel-Ready Projects

Karisma Hotels and Resorts will be undertaking the US\$1 billion 'Sugar-cane by Karisma Jamaica', the largest single hotel development in Jamaica's history, for which they

signed a contract with the Ministry.

The project is being developed in Llandoverly, St. Ann, and will provide 5,000 new rooms, at least 8,000 direct jobs and indirect employment for 10,000 additional persons, on completion.

Attractions

The Prospect Outback Attraction in St. Mary has been expanded and re-branded as the 'Yaaman' Adventure Park.

The development, which was officially opened by Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, was undertaken at a cost of US\$1 million by Dolphin Cove Limited, which owns and operates the property. Yaaman Park offers horseback and dune buggy rides and a 'wet and dry' tour, among other activities. It provides direct employment for approximately 200 persons and an additional 150 indirect jobs.

Beach Development

A total of 12 beach parks are now being upgraded

under the National Beach Development Programme.

One of these, Burwood Beach, in Falmouth, Trelawny, which was renovated at a cost of \$28 million, was officially handed over to the Trelawny Municipal Council.

The facility, which can be accessed free of cost, now boasts sanitary conveniences, a children's play area as well as showers, with plans to add a restaurant and bar.

Funding Support

The Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) has partnered with the National Export-Import (EXIM) Bank to provide a \$1 billion revolving loan facility to enable the upgrading of small and medium-sized properties and attractions.

The Ministry has partnered with JN Small Business Loans Limited to establish a \$20 million loan facility for the operators of small resorts and attractions in Treasure Beach in St. Elizabeth.

The provision, which forms part of the Ministry's National Community Tourism Policy, will enable beneficiaries to access up to \$2 million.

It aims to assist stakeholders to diversify the sector's product offerings by facilitating community developments.

Growth Agenda

The sector is being repositioned to contribute significantly to the Government's goal of five percent economic growth over the next four to five years, while also generating intra-sectoral growth.

To this end, five pillars of tourism growth have been established with the aim of generating US\$ 5 billion in earnings, while attracting five million visitors and generating 125,000 direct



Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett (2nd left), is presented with the award of 'World's Leading Personality for Outstanding Services to Travel' by World Travel Awards President and Founder, Graham Cooke (2nd right), at the 23rd Annual World Travel Awards ceremony in the Maldives in December. Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (right), and a World Travel Awards hostess share the moment.

Major Strides in Tourism... cont'd from page 13

jobs and 15,000 new hotel rooms.

These include: tapping into new markets; developing new products; promoting investments; building new partnerships; and human capital renewal.

Linkages Network

- The newly established Tourism Linkages Network will be pivotal in this regard. The Network will focus on developing seven strategic areas aimed at diversifying the sector's product offerings while enhancing its competitiveness.

These include: Manufacturing; Agriculture; Gastronomy; Sport and Entertainment; Health and Wellness; Shopping; and Knowledge, which will be spearheaded by Technical Working Groups under the chairmanship of Sandals Resort International's Chief Executive Officer, Adam Stewart.

Cruise Ship Port of Calls

- On December 6, Jamaica welcomed six cruise ships, which docked in Kingston, Ocho Rios, Falmouth and Montego Bay, bringing over 10,000 passengers.

These included: the 'Monarch', the largest vessel to call on Kingston, which was hosting a cruise ship for the first time in three years; the 'Norwegian Epic' and 'Coral Princess' which were hosted by Ocho Rios; the 'Thomson Dream' and 'Aida Amar' which stopped in Montego Bay; and the world's largest cruise ship 'Harmony of the Seas', which made its second appearance in Falmouth, following its inaugural call on November 22.

This is the highest number of cruise ships to dock in Jamaica in one day since 2012, when a record seven arrived. The country also welcomed the 'Carnival Vista' which

made its inaugural call in April, docking in Ocho Rios.

National Cruise Council

- A 13-member Board, chaired by businessman, Michael Belnavis, has been appointed to liaise and monitor cruise shipping activities on behalf of the Government. It aims to incorporate the private sector into a structured and organised framework, thereby allowing them to establish contacts with the powerful Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) and other bodies dealing with cruise governance across the region.

National Community Tourism Portal

- This newly established web-based platform aims to facilitate and promote licensed community-based enterprises island-wide.

It forms part of the Government's US\$15 million Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) being implemented by the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), with World Bank funding support.

Stakeholder Training Destination Assurance Initiative

- A total of 100 district constables were trained under this joint initiative with the Ministry of National Security. These officers, who will function under a special arm of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), have been dispatched to boost safety and security in resort areas. These include: Kingston; Montego Bay; Ocho Rios, Port Antonio; Falmouth; and Negril. It is expected that their presence will serve to significantly reduce tourist harassment.

Artisans

- A total of 180 artisans were trained and certified under the US\$500,000



The world's largest cruise ship, 'Harmony of the Seas', docked at the Falmouth port in Trelawny.

Craft Enhancement Project. Participants were trained in small business planning and product development and craft creation utilising various materials.

The project formed part of a larger regional project undertaken by the Organization of American States (OAS).

Jamaica House in Rio

- Jamaica was the toast of the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Summer Olympics in Brazil in August, where the country mined 11 medals, including six Gold, three Silver and two Bronze, and earned rave reviews for its 'Jamaica House' hospitality hub that attracted over 20,000 patrons.

The success of the hub, which provided patrons with a taste of local culture and cuisine, resulted from aggressive marketing initiatives spearheaded by the Ministry and Jamaica Tourist Board.

There is great anticipation of significant benefits to be derived from both endeavours.

Legislation

Work continues to create the legislative framework that will facilitate the sector's ongoing development. Among these are the:

- Timeshare Vacation Act – which paves the way for Jamaica to formally introduce timeshare vacation schemes into Jamaica's product offerings, thereby diversifying their provisions;
- Travel Agency Act – which is being amended to facilitate a regulatory framework for the sub-sector based on world class standards and industry best practices;
- Tourism Workers Pension Act – Cabinet approved drafting of this piece of legislation which aims to create a much needed scheme that will benefit several categories of employees. They include: Red Cap porters, craft vendors, ground transportation operators and hotel workers.

This clears the way for amendment to the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) Act to enable the disbursement of \$1 billion seed funding for the scheme.

The facility will be administered by similar fiscal arrangements governing other pension schemes, with contributions being tax-free.

AIRBnB MoU

- The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) and home-sharing accommodation company,

AirBnB have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a cooperation framework to further boost and diversify the country's tourism product.

The partnership will help to expose visitors to Jamaica's rich culture and showcase the country's globally-renowned warm hospitality.

Awards

- Jamaica capped a remarkable year by copping nine prestigious World Travel Awards (WTA) at the 23rd annual presentations in Maldives, Southern Asia, in December.

Heading these is the World's Leading Personality Award for Outstanding Services to Travel, which was presented to Minister Bartlett.

This was his second such for the year, following the WTA Caribbean Leading Personality Award in September.

Jamaica also picked up awards in Maldives for being adjudged the World's Leading Cruise Destination and World's Leading Wedding Destination.

Other awards included: the World's Leading Luxury Hotel Villa (Ian Fleming Villa at Goldeneye); World's Leading New Island Resort (Melia Braco Village); World's Leading Villa Resort (Round Hill Hotel and Villas); World's Leading Family Resort Brand (Beaches); World's Leading All-Inclusive Company (Sandals Resort International); and World's Leading Caribbean Attractions Company (Island Routes Caribbean Adventure).

Norman Manley International Airport

- Meanwhile, the Norman Manley International Airport was deemed the Most Improved Airport in Latin America and the Caribbean by Airports Council International (ACI).

Thousands of Jobs to be Created in Bauxite Industry

The Government secured the re-opening of the Alpart alumina refinery in St. Elizabeth, which will create jobs for thousands of Jamaicans over the next three years.

Bauxite Industry

- The plant, formerly owned by UC Rusal, was sold to Chinese-controlled company Jiquan Iron & Steel Company Limited (JISCO) in July.
- Some 700 Jamaicans are to be employed in 2016/17 following first phase upgrading works at a cost of US\$200 million.
- JISCO will be investing US\$2 billion to establish an industrial zone at Nain, employing more than 3,000 persons. The industrial zone will comprise bauxite mines, an alumina refinery, a coal-fired power plant, a local electricity network, rolling wire mills, and a range of aluminum products, among other enterprises.
- There was a seamless transition of ownership of The Noranda Jamaica Bauxite operation in St. Ann.
- New owners of the company, Dada Holdings, acquired the plant from Noranda Aluminum Holding Corporation for a purchase price of \$24.4 million. Noranda will pay out outstanding liabilities amounting to US\$19 million to Jamaica over the next three years.
- The Jamaican Government has partial ownership in the company, which employs more than 800 people, and has the capacity to produce up to 5.2 million metric tonnes of premium-grade bauxite annually.
- Under the new arrangement, the Government will be abandoning the Bauxite Levy in favour of a profit-sharing arrangement with the new owners.

- Cabinet approved a Jamalco-proposed project for the construction of a natural gas-fired cogeneration plant to provide 94 megawatts (MW) of baseload capacity to the national grid.
- The plant, to be constructed at the Jamalco facility in Clarendon, will also provide steam to the entity's refinery, leading to lower production cost for alumina. American company New Fortress Energy (NFE) has been engaged to construct the cogeneration facility at a cost of some US\$160 million. It is projected for completion in December 2018.

Minerals Industry

- A three-year programme aimed at positioning the country to take advantage of the lucrative minerals sector was launched in October.
- The 13.1 million-euro Development Minerals Programme, being funded by the European Union (EU), is being undertaken in six African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states. The programme seeks to build the profile and improve the management of Neglected Development Minerals (NDM), which include industrial and construction minerals, and dimension and semi-precious stones.
- The project, being implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), will also strengthen the capacity of key stakeholders such as small-scale mining enterprises, community groups, business development centres, and regulatory agencies.

JUTC

- The Government is to spend \$1.3 billion this fiscal year to increase the bus fleet.



Minister of Transport and Mining, Hon. Michael Henry (right), speaks with China's Ambassador to Jamaica, His Excellency Niu Qingbao, during a function for the official handover of 35 new buses to the Jamaica Urban Transit Company (JUTC), held at the entities training depot on Lyndhurst Road in Kingston.

- Thirty-five buses were acquired at a cost of \$500 million and deployed in September, bringing the fleet to 500.
- Four refurbished buses were also brought into service.
- Bus service was extended to sections of Clarendon in September. This benefited school routes in and around May Pen, particularly Garvey Maceo High in south west Clarendon.

Rail Service

- A sum of US\$250 million will be invested in the resuscitation of the country's cargo and passenger rail service by the Government and several investors, including United States (US) company Herzog International.
- A non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalise the arrangement was signed by the Ministry of Transport and Mining, through

the Jamaica Railway Corporation (JRC), and Herzog Jamaica Limited, which is a subsidiary of Herzog International, in December.

- The project will be undertaken in segments. Phase one will see the development of the Montego Bay to Appleton leg, with work to get under way before the start of the winter tourist season in 2017. The others are Phase 2a – Spanish Town to Ewarton, Spanish Town to Clarendon Park; Phase 2b – Appleton to Clarendon Park; Phase 3 – Spanish Town to Kingston; and Phase 4 – Connecting Vernamfield to the existing main line.

Aviation

- A new state-of-the-art air traffic control tower, constructed at a cost of CDN\$20 million, was commissioned into service at the Norman Manley International Airport.
- The tower will greatly enhance the reliability and efficiency of the country's air navigation



Air Traffic Controllers on duty at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston

Agriculture Reaps Massive Growth

The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries implemented several programmes and initiatives which led to consistency of supplies, sustainable incomes for farmers and entrepreneurs and facilitated strong growth of the sector.

The Ministry also continued to foster the development of

the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises through the provision of loans, grants, technical assistance and capacity building.

Growth in the Agricultural Sector

- After growing by 13.5% for the April to June 2016 quarter, agricultural production accelerated by 28 per cent for the July

to September quarter, compared to the corresponding period in 2015. The sector was expected to grow by 30 per cent for the final quarter of the year ending December.

Support for Irish Potato Farmers

- The Government is providing some \$1.1 billion to assist farmers under

its Irish Potato Expansion Programme, to meet a target of 1,200 hectares of production. Nearly \$50 million of this will be in grants while the rest will take the form of inputs as well as extension services provided by the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA).

Farmers will be trained under the project in spray calibration, new planting techniques, and appropriate use of fertilisers.

The National Potato Expansion programme is part of the Government's overall strategy to strengthen Jamaica's food security by reducing imports, boosting self-sufficiency as well as income for farmers.

Garden, Portland, with focus on the production of bananas, plantains, sweet potato and peppers for the local and export markets.

- The agro-parks initiative is being expanded with some 3,000 acres of irrigated lands at Ebony Park and Spring Plain in Clarendon.

The programme is aimed at modernising the country's agricultural sector and increasing production, in order to reduce the import bill, and to boost employment.

FISHERIES Levy on Conch Exports Reduced

- The levy on each pound of conch exported was reduced from US\$0.75 to US\$0.50, as part of efforts to get the exporters to expand their businesses and further develop the conch industry.

Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries, Hon. Karl Samuda, successfully piloted a resolution in Parliament for conch exporters to be granted permission to pay the levy for the 2016 season in instalments.

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Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. J.C. Hutchinson (2nd right), presents a bag of Irish potato seeds to farmer, Anthony Johnson (2nd left), during an Irish potato Stakeholders' Seminar in New Market, St. Elizabeth. Sharing in the occasion (from left) are St. Elizabeth RADA Parish Manager, Nathan Samuels; Chief Technical Director in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Dermon Spence, and Shakeera Thomas, representing Glastonbury Purveyor Company, producer of the Irish potato seeds.

Thousands of Jobs to be Created... cont'd from page 15

system, in addition to enhancing the work environment for the air traffic controllers.

- It is part of a \$4.92 billion upgrading project, which is expected to be completed by October 2017. The work includes the manufacturing and installation of a new state-of-the-art air traffic management system, new L-Band primary and Mode-S radar technology

as well as the installation of a voice communication and control system.

CMI

- The Caribbean Maritime Institute (CMI) has received \$402 million in grant funding from the Petro-Caribe Development Fund for the establishment of a Festo Authorised and Certified Training (FACT) Centre for specialised engineers.
- The centre, which is slated to become oper-

ational in September 2017, will be the first of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean and will offer world-class training and certification in robotics, mechatronics and automotive engineering.

- The Caribbean Maritime Institute (CMI) entered into a partnership with the Sam Sharp Teachers' College to provide tertiary training for skills in the maritime industry.

Road Safety

- The public was invited to provide feedback on the new Road Safety Act, which is before Parliament. The bill covers areas such as the establishment of the Island Traffic Authority and its functions; the road code; classification of vehicles; revocation of certificates of fitness; application, grant and refusal of learners' permit or drivers' licence; and offences relating to the licensing of a driver.

- Jamaica adopted the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Road Traffic Safety Standard aimed at reducing injuries and deaths.
- The standard, which focuses on the specific requirements for Road Traffic Safety Management systems, also outlines the processes needed for the development and implementation of the Road Traffic Safety Policy.

Agriculture Reaps Massive Growth... cont'd from page 16

General Consumption Tax (GCT) Act Amended to Benefit Sector

- The Act was amended to allow for the expansion of the list of zero-rated items for the agricultural sector. The amendment is to ensure that farmers have affordable access to modern equipment and inputs, thus improving growth and export prospects.

Training

- Some 640 young people from rural communities received training and certification in heavy equipment operation, small equipment repairs, housekeeping and apiculture. The course was certified by the HEART Trust/NTA and is part of a three-year programme implemented by the Jamaica 4-H Clubs through funding from the Sugar Transformation Unit.
- Students at the College of Agriculture, Science and Education (CASE) are to benefit from practical training in dairy production under a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in July. The \$30-million agreement will, among other things, see Seprod offering internship opportunities to CASE students.

Climate Change Resilience

- Over 2,700 grants were made to small farmers to assist in the production of approximately 1,000 hectares of crops to generate over \$1.2 billion of farm income. The funds were also used for the installation of 14 water harvesting, small-scale irrigation and productivity schemes.
- Provision of 100 grants was made to small farmers to establish land husbandry infrastructure on their farm holdings to help prevent soil erosion. They also received training

in climate-smart best practices.

- To support year-round agricultural production, over 240 small farmers received small-scale on-farm drip irrigation systems through the Ministry.

National School Garden Programme Relunched

- A programme aimed at establishing a garden in every school was re-launched in October 2016. A new feature will be the establishment of a breakfast programme in the schools.

Under Phase 1 of the programme, each of the 13 participating schools will receive seeds, fertilizer, irrigation systems, small hand tools, chemicals, knapsack sprayer, fencing, water storage tanks and livestock in some instances.

Training to be provided will include land preparation, plant and animal husbandry, record keeping, small business development, management and marketing.

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Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Karl Samuda (left), exchanges greetings with Chief of Mission, United States Agency for International Development Agency (USAID) Jamaica, Maura Barry Boyle (2nd right), prior to the opening ceremony for the climate smart agriculture symposium at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston on September 13. Others (from 2nd left) are Acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Reginald Budhan; and Deputy Chief of Mission at the United States Embassy in Kingston, Eric Khant. The two-day symposium, which was organised by the USAID-funded Jamaica Rural Economy and Ecosystems Adapting to Climate Change II (Ja REEACH II) project in collaboration with the Ministry, was held under the theme 'Growing Agriculture and Incomes in the Face of Climate Change'.



Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, Hon. Karl Samuda (2nd left), examines peppers being shown by Newport-Fersan Limited's Business Development Manager, Hedda Rose-Pitter (left), at the Denbigh Agricultural, Industrial and Food Show in May Pen, Clarendon, on Saturday, July 30. Looking on, from 3rd left, are Newport-Fersan's Managing Director, Dennis Valdez; and Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS) President, Norman Grant.

Agriculture Reaps Massive Growth... cont'd from page 17

MICRO, SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (MSME) OFFICE

The MSME Office was established to serve as the focal point for implementation and monitoring of the MSME and Entrepreneurship Policy. The Office seeks to tackle the cross-cutting issues across Government to ensure the timely achievement of the action items outlined in the policy, as well as the deliverables under the Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) 2015- 2018.

The Office supervises the Government of Jamaica/European Union (GOJ/EU) Small and Micro Enterprise Credit Scheme, and the Government of Jamaica/Government of the Netherlands (GOJ/GON) Project.

Jamaica Business Development Corporation

- The Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC) and First Angels

Jamaica (FAJ) signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under which micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) will receive assistance to deliver winning business pitches. This comes under the JBDC's Accelerator Programme which was launched in November and will select and train entrepreneurs to set up and operate a business.

Launch of REACH

- The Regional Entrepreneurial Asset Commercialisation Hub (REACH) was launched in November. REACH aims to build the commercialisation capabilities of competitively selected Caribbean entrepreneurs and firms. The project, executed by the University of the West Indies, will provide institutional capacity building, training, and mentorship in three main areas:

1. Technology commercialisation
2. Creative industries intellectual asset management, and
3. Product branding value capturing.

Opening of COJ Western Office

- A branch of the Companies Office of Jamaica (COJ) was opened at the Office of the Prime Minister (Western), in Montego Bay.

BSJ Launches Focal Point

- The Bureau of Standards Jamaica (BSJ) launched the National Accreditation Focal Point (NAFP) Jamaica in August. The NAFP provides assistance through information, training and mentorship to certification and inspection bodies and laboratories seeking to attain international accreditation.

Consumer Alert Initiative

- The Government reintroduced the Consumer

Alert Initiative, which entails the publication of survey data on the most competitive product prices offered by merchants.

Information is given on supermarket products; fuel, including gasoline and diesel oil; and banking fees.



Chief Executive Officer of the Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC), Valerie Veira (left), points out features of the JBDC's 15th anniversary logo to the agency's Corporate Communications Manager, Suzette Campbell. The logo was unveiled at the launch of the JBDC's Small Business Exposition and Conference which was held at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston.



Finance and the Public Service Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw (left) and Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, Hon. Karl Samuda (2nd left), share a laugh as they examine cassava used in the production of Red Stripe Beer. The occasion was a tour of the company's plant on Spanish Town Road on August 3. Managing Director of Red Stripe, Ricardo Nuncio; and head of Corporate Relations, Dianne Ashton Smith, also share in the exchange.



Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, Hon. Karl Samuda (right), listens as Technical Representative for Canadian entity Lambert Peat Moss Inc., Ramon Alvarado (left), provides details on a bag of plant seeds produced by the company, which was on display during a stakeholder seminar at Caymanas Golf and Country Club in St. Catherine on September 20. The seminar was jointly staged by Lambert Peat and Jamaica Floral Products Limited/Evergrow Garden Centre under the theme 'High Quality Growing Media at the Root of High Quality Seedling Growth and Crop Production'. Also listening (from 2nd left) are Lambert Peat's International Sales Manager, Richard De Quesada; and Jamaica Floral Products Limited/Evergrow Garden Centre General Manager, Burrell Scarlett.

Expanding Health Benefits

Ensuring that prescription drugs were available at affordable prices, particularly for the elderly; providing modern equipment, introducing new policies to make the health sector more efficient, and tackling the Zika Virus (Zik-V) were among the Health Ministry's major achievements.

BUSTAMANTE HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN

New Children's Heart Centre

- Construction of a new US\$10 million Children's Heart Centre commenced at the Bustamante Hospital for Children in Kingston. It is expected to be opened this year.

The new centre will facilitate at least 150 cardiac surgeries per year. Last year, the hospital performed 41 of these surgeries.

The facility has been made possible through the collaboration of the South East Regional Health Authority (SERHA) and several public and private stakeholders. It will cater to children between the ages of zero to 12 years, who have heart ailments and are in need of specialist cardiac care.

- Diagnostic services at the hospital have also been improved with the installation of a new \$68.5 million fluoroscopy unit. It is the second of its kind in the public sector, and the first for children. The unit will reduce the processing time for X-rays from 90 to 15 minutes.

University Hospital of The West Indies

- The National Virology Laboratory at the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI), was upgraded at a cost of \$10 million. It is used to test for viral infections.

The facility is the only such facility in the island, and is crucial to obtaining quick results when persons are diagnosed with Influenza (H1N1), rubella, measles, and other respiratory illnesses.

- The UHWI has extended its surgery hours from 4:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., to reduce the waiting time at the health facility. This forms part of the Ministry of Health's overall plan to improve efficiency of healthcare delivery and reduce the waiting time for patients.

Mandeville Regional Hospital

- The Mandeville Regional Hospital received equipment valued at over \$80 million. The machines which are now in use at the High Dependency Unit at the hospital are part of the Programme for the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality (PROMAC), funded by the European Union (EU).

Fight Against Zika Virus

- As part of its fight against the Zika Virus, the Ministry



Minister of Health, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (right), cuts the ribbon to officially open the Drug Serve Pharmacy at the Kitson Town Health Centre in St. Catherine. Others (from left) are: Parish Manager for St. Catherine Health Services, Beverly Needham; Chief Executive the National Health Fund (NHF), Everton Anderson, and Public Health Nurse at the facility, Christeen Smart-Guy.

spearheaded scores of 'Search and Destroy' missions across the island to eradicate mosquito breeding sites, and to educate households on ways to keep the pests from breeding.

This was bolstered by several public education campaigns

targeting as well as working through different organisations to disseminate health messages.

- The Government established a Fund with an initial \$50 million to provide support for the families of babies born with Zika-related microcephaly.

children from zero to 18 years, a 100 per cent increase.

- The Ministry of Health has embarked on a pilot project to speed up the time persons can get their prescriptions filled.

The Public Sector Pharmacy Partner Programme, which will be rolled out over the next three months, will see the Ministry, through the NHF, partnering with a number of private pharmacies to facilitate speedier dispensing of medication to persons issued with prescriptions at public hospitals and clinics.

Upgraded Service

- A Reduction in Waiting Time Project was introduced in seven hospitals under a \$350 million pilot in April. This is to significantly reduce patient waiting time at the Accident and Emergency (A&E) rooms. Full roll out of the service is expected by April 1 this year.

The initiative was introduced at the Bustamante Hospital for Children



Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Winston De La Haye (left), administers polio drops to young Mickayla Edwards, during the official launch of the 14th Vaccination Week in the Americas at the Emancipation Park in New Kingston on April 23. Others observing (from right) are: Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Dr. Carissa F. Etienne, and Mickayla's mother, Carla Peart.

New Policies

- The Government implemented a policy which requires insurance cardholders to make contributions to the public health system when they utilise the cards to obtain medication.
- Cabinet also approved the Charities Policy Procedures Guidelines for Gifts and Donations, to make it simpler for local and international groups and individuals to support health facilities on the island.

Drugs

- The National Health Fund (NHF), an agency of the Ministry of Health, commenced its \$70 million increase of subsidy of drugs, respiratory devices and diabetic supplies for

Science, Energy and Technology Ministry Pushes Renewables

Commissioning of renewable energy plants, increased savings from energy efficient initiatives, the accessibility of free Government data online and the resumption of net billing were among some of the achievements of the Science, Energy and Technology Ministry.

ENERGY

Renewable Energy Plants Commissioned

- Wigton Wind Farm, Wigton III, officially commissioned into operation, continuing transmissions to the national grid. It is expected to generate 63,072 megawatt hours annually with its new facility consisting of 12 two megawatt wind turbines, a 9.6 km transmission line, and a new substation constructed by the Spanish firm Gamesa.

- BMR Jamaica Wind Farm at Potsdam, Malvern, St. Elizabeth officially commissioned into operation. It will provide energy to the Jamaica Public Service grid at US12.9 cents per kilowatt hour.
- Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) arrived at the Bogue Power Plant in St. James, Montego Bay in October.
- The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programme (EECP) continued the installation of Building Management Systems at the Kingston Public Hospital (KPH), Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ), Donald Sangster Building, and Montego Bay Revenue Service Centre. Several entities acquired dedicated Internet Protocol (IP) addresses for the external monitoring of their energy



Minister of Science, Energy and Technology Dr. the Hon. Andrew Wheatley (right) uses a laptop to access the Open Data Portal at its launch on June 24 in Kingston. Country Manager for the World Bank, Galina Sotirova (left) looks on. In the background (from left) are Chief Information Officer in the Ministry, Louis Shallal, and Director of Technology, Gary Campbell.

consumption usage/patterns.

- The EECP installed a total of 1,000 square metres of solar control film at the Ministry of Education's Head Office and at the May Pen Revenue Service Centre. Energy efficient air condition retrofitting was also completed at the May Pen Revenue Service Centre. Retrofits were also completed at the Blood Bank.

TECHNOLOGY

Jamaica Open Data Portal Launch

- In July, the Ministry officially launched the Jamaica Open Data Portal to make government data machine readable and more easily accessible online. It was supported by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), in collaboration with the World Bank.

The move made Jamaica the first English-speaking Caribbean nation to launch an Open Data portal, joining more than 40 such programmes in the world. Additionally, an Open Data Policy is being developed and training has taken place to build capacity among government officials on managing the portal and creating open budget data visualisations for the portal.

Consultations on the Proposed Information and Communications Technology Bill

- Between July and September 2016 the Ministry facilitated two workshops with the dual purpose of informing and inviting comments from Government and private sector stakeholders on the provisions to be included in the proposed Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Bill. When passed,



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) cuts the ribbon to officially commission into service Wigton III, a 24-megawatt expansion of the wind farm in Rose Hill, Manchester, on Thursday, June 2. To his right is Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Dr. the Hon. Andrew Wheatley. Also pictured are (from left): Member of Parliament for Manchester Southern, Michael Stewart; Former Mayor of Mandeville, Brenda Ramsay; Chairman of Wigton Windfarm Limited, Duane Smith; President and Chief Executive Officer of the Jamaica Public Service Company (JPSCo), Kelly Tomblin; and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology, Hilary Alexander.

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Health Care... cont'd from page 19

in Kingston; Spanish Town Hospital, St. Catherine; May Pen Hospital, Clarendon; Mandeville Regional Hospital, Manchester; Cornwall Regional Hospital, St. James; and St. Ann's Bay Hospital, St. Ann.

- The Ministry of Health plans to engage private sector pharmacists to assist in delivering certain basic services provided at public healthcare institutions.

Portfolio Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, said legislation to this end is being reviewed to determine the extent of the pharmacists' involvement.

- Care for newborns at the Westmoreland based Savanna-la-Mar General Public Hospital has been enhanced with the acquisition of a Special Care Unit at a cost of \$24 million.

Accreditation

- Work has started to develop a national policy that outlines the country's road map towards the accreditation of facilities within the health sector. The initiative, titled a 'National Policy on Health Sector Quality Assurance', will form part of the Ministry's 10-year strategic plan.

Under the initiative, Jamaica will partner with Accreditation Canada to strengthen and standardise health sector assurance in the island. Accreditation Canada, through its standards and accreditation programmers, works with healthcare organizations to help them improve quality, safety and efficiency, so they can offer patients the best possible care and service.

Science, Energy and Technology... cont'd from page 20

the ICT Bill will replace the existing Telecommunication Act, which was promulgated in 2000.

Launch of Mobile Postal Service

- Launched in the community of Steer Town in St. Ann in August, the Mobile Post Office is an initiative of the Postal Corporation of Jamaica and is expected to serve over 50 communities and adjoining districts currently without a static postal point.

CYBER SECURITY Government Employees Trained in Cyber Security

- The Cyber Incident Response Team trained 80 Government information and communications technology experts over two days in Novem-

ber. The training is aimed at enhancing the education of these ICT professionals in basic cyber standards that should be adopted.

- In July, the Ministry collaborated with the Jamaica Bankers Association (JBA) to launch a cyber security public education and awareness campaign in an effort to heighten awareness about the potential risks associated with using the Internet and social media platforms, and to promote safeguards to reduce vulnerabilities. The campaign was supported by the JBA at a cost of \$15 million.

KingstOOOn 2016

- The KingstOOOn 2016 Animation Conference and Afro-Descendant

Film Festival was held on March 12 and 13 at the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts and included professional animators, studio executives, students, educators, artists, investors and animation enthusiasts from across the Caribbean, diaspora and around the world.

SCIENCE Jamaica Wins Caribbean Youth Science Competition

- Titchfield High School defeated 28 teams representing six countries to win the Caribbean Youth Science Forum (CYSF) Competition 2016 in September. Students were required to use recyclable materials to

design a system to purify at least one litre of water within 30 minutes that was fit for consumption.

Opening of Science Labs

- The Scientific Research Council (SRC) opened four of eight science labs in participating primary and secondary schools under its Improving Innovation Capacities in the Caribbean (INVOCAB) project. INVOCAB is being done in conjunction with the Trinidadian agency, National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (NIHERST) and is a science-based project geared at helping students to improve performance in science and technology subject areas.



A shipment of Liquefied Natural Gas which arrived at the Port of Montego Bay aboard the feeder ship, 'Anthony Veeder', on October 22.

Fast-Tracking Public Sector Transformation

The Government remains committed to undertaking public sector transformation as a priority under the Economic Reform Programme (ERP).

This move is to assist in containing public sector wages to 9 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), while further enhancing the efficiency with which State entities deliver services.

The commitment has been reaffirmed under the new three-year, US\$1.64 billion successor precautionary stand-by agreement reached with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Public sector transformation is a central component of the new agreement, which was approved by the IMF Executive Board in November, and is a carryover from the four-year Extended Fund Facility which the new arrangement has replaced.

Public Sector Transformation Oversight Committee

A Public Sector Transformation Oversight Committee (P-STOC) has been appointed to oversee the undertaking, which will be guided by a Cabinet-approved Action Plan. It is co-chaired by Cabinet Secretary, Ambassador Douglas Saunders, and the Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions (JCTU) Vice President, Danny Roberts.

Its membership comprises representatives of the public and private sectors, trade union movement, academia and civil society.

Salary Negotiations

The Government concluded salary negotiations with 97 per cent of public sector bargaining units for the 2015/17 contract period. The groups signing Heads of Agreement for a seven per cent increase include: Pharmacists, Nurse Practi-

tioners, Medical Consultants, Probation Officers, Health Education and Promotion Officers, Matrons and Assistant Matrons at infirmaries, the Police Officers Association (POA), the Probation Aftercare Officers' Staff Association, the Jamaica Medical Doctors Association (JMDSA) and the Jamaica Civil Service Association (JCSA).

The agreement with the JCSA also included tertiary education grants; the establishment of a workplace policy; and transportation for workers utilising the government employee transport service.

Public Sector Pension Reform

The Government remains committed to implementing the proposed contributory public sector pension scheme by April this year.

The Bill to formalise proposals for the arrangements was re-tabled in the House of Representatives by Portfolio Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw.

It proposes that Government workers contribute five per cent of their salary towards their pension; and that benefits be computed using an average of the final five years of the beneficiaries' salary instead of the final pay, as now obtains.

Additionally, retirees would still have the option of receiving either a lump sum of their entitlements and a reduced pension or full pension benefits.

Capacity Strengthening and Infrastructural Development Jamaica Customs Agency

Marine Surveillance

The Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA) is now better equipped to support the operations of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) Marine Division and Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) Coast Guard.

The agency's fleet of patrol boats has been increased to two, following the acquisition of a 27-foot Boston Whaler vessel. The agency has also obtained two additional boats which are being refurbished.

Motor Vehicles

The agency's mobile fleet has been increased with the acquisition of six new motor vehicles, purchased at a cost of \$36.1 million. The units, inclusive of three pick-ups, a truck, a bus and motor car, will serve to boost the JCA's border protection capabilities and administrative operations.

Infrastructure Development

Several sections of the head office at Customs House, Newport East in Kingston, have been renovated and upgraded at a cost of just over \$31 million. The work includes the construction of a Transport and Property Services Unit, refurbishing of the canteen and paving of the driveway.

Additionally, the agency opened its Alison Moore



State Minister for Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Rudyard Spencer (left), presents a signed copy of the 2015/17 Heads of Agreement to Probation Aftercare Officers' Staff Association President, Kerryann Davis (right). Looking on is President of the Union of Clerical, Administrative and Supervisory Employees (UCASE), which represented the group, Vincent Morris. The signing took place at the Ministry's offices in Kingston.

Multipurpose Room, named in honour of the entity's first female Commissioner, at Customs House.

The room is used to host meetings and business functions, and also serves as recreational space for staff.

Tax Administration Jamaica

Tax Administration Jamaica (TAJ) now has a Western Training Centre in Montego Bay.

It caters to the training needs of TAJ employees and those of other agencies. The facility is also available to host similar sessions for the public.

Public Sector Corporate Governance Awards

The Ministry partnered with the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (PSOJ) to establish this initiative to recognise and reward public bodies establishing high standards of corporate governance disclosure and practices.

Additionally, it aims to promote awareness of and adherence to the principles of good corporate governance and encourage improvements in the standard of disclosure.



Finance and the Public Service Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw (right), and State Minister, Hon. Rudyard Spencer (centre), are briefed by Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA) Customs Officer, Peter Limtom, before taking a trial run in the 'Skip McLaughlin' following the vessel's commissioning at the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) Marine headquarters in Newport East, Kingston.

Foreign Affairs Ministry Protects Interests of Jamaicans

Speedy resolution of immigration issues between Jamaica and the twin island republic of Trinidad and Tobago and appointments of Jamaicans to key diplomatic positions were some of the highlights of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

Leaders Visit

- Prime Minister Dr. Keith Rowley of Trinidad and Tobago led a high-level team for a working visit to the island in July. Outcomes from the visit to Jamaica included the finalisation of a Draft Action Plan which strategically outlines cooperation programmes and activities related to the following issues:
 - The Status of Implementation of the CSME Regime in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, including the Free Movement of Skilled Nationals, Trade in Services, the Right of Establishment, Trade in Goods, and the Movement of Capital.
- Other points of discussion were:
 - Immigration relations between Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago;
 - The Caribbean Court of Justice;
 - The ruling in the Shanique Myrie Case,
 - The treatment of Nationals;
 - Consular Matters, including the detention of nationals and Work Permit/ Residency Processing and
 - Air Services/Transportation.

Visit of Caricom Secretary General

- Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretary-General Irwin LaRocque visited Jamaica for discussion on a number of issues. Among them were:
 - Information dissemination among Caricom youth



Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, meets with members of the National Council on Coastal Zone at the Ministry in July.

- Reform of the Community; including the Secretariat,
- Challenges with correspondent banking
- Cricket
- The free movement of CARICOM nationals.

Other Visits

- Venezuelan President, Nicolas Maduro Moros visited Jamaica and held talks with Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness; Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister,
- Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith and other Cabinet Ministers. Among the discussions held was a recommitment to the PetroCaribe Agreement; the expedited agreement on the Refinery Upgrade Project; strengthening of cultural ties, including a system to provide musical training for young people.
- His Imperial Highness (HIH), Prince Ermias Sahle-Selassie, arrived in the island for a nine-day

visit in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the State visit of his grandfather, the late Emperor of Ethiopia, His Imperial Majesty (HIM), Haile Selassie.

- Director General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Roberto Azevedo, visited Jamaica and participated in a number of meetings with Government officials and representatives of the public and private sectors. During this visit it was announced that Jamaica ratified the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation.

Diplomatic Relations

- The year also marked 50 years of diplomatic relations between Jamaica and Mexico, Spain and Panama.
- Fourteen Government Officers from the Office of the Prime Minister, Jamaica Defence Force and Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade completed a six-month Spanish Training Programme hosted by Argentina.
- A Framework Agreement for the establishment of a Joint Commission bet-

ween Jamaica and Panama was signed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, on June 26 during her visit to Panama for the opening of the expanded Panama Canal. The agreement provides a mechanism for a structured bilateral cooperation programme in the areas of commerce, tourism, logistics, language training and civil aviation.

Regional and International Engagements

- At the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Council meeting in April, Minister Johnson Smith led the successful lobby for the approval of intra-ACP funds to support the fight against the mosquito-borne Zika Virus. Jamaica also made interventions on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the future of the ACP and the ACP-EU relationship, sustainable development and climate change.
- The Minister attended ACP Summit in Papua New Guinea to discuss the future of the ACP and the ACP-EU relations.
- The Minister attended the meeting of the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR) in Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines in May. It focused mainly on the CARICOM-United States of America Summit and other CARICOM-European Union cooperation matters.
- Jamaica participated in the Mexico-Jamaica Bi-national Commissions meeting in Mexico City in May, which ended with Jamaica signing an agreement on the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to income tax. Both



Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, shares a light moment with President of the United Nations Association of Jamaica, Dr. Lucille Buchanan, during a meeting at the Ministry in July.

Laws Passed to Strengthen Financial, Justice and Security Sectors

The country's financial, justice and security agenda was advanced through Parliament's enactment of several pieces of legislation in 2016.

Legislation Passed

1. The Insurance (Amendment) Act
2. The Firearms (Amendment) Act
3. The Maritime Drug Trafficking (Suppression) (Amendment) Act
4. The Local Government (Financing And Financial Management) Act
5. The Local Government (Unified Service and Employment) Act
6. The Judicature (Resident Magistrate's) (Change of Name) Amendment) Act
7. The Special Economic Zones Act
8. The Local Governance Act
9. The Judicature (Supreme Court) (Amendment) Act
10. The Representation of The People (Amendment) Act
11. The DNA Evidence Act
12. The Appropriations Act
13. The Jury (Amendment) Act
14. The Interpretation (Amendment) Act, 2016
15. The Financial Administration and Audit (Amendment) Act, 2016
16. The Financial Services Commission (Amendment) Act, 2016
17. The Law Revision (Amendment) Act, 2016
18. The National Insurance (Amendment) Act, 2016
19. The Legal Reform (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Restorative Justice) Act, 2016
20. The Proceeds of Crime (Amendment) Act
21. The Children (Guardianship and Custody) (Amendment) Act
22. The Betting, Gaming and Lotteries (Amendment) Act
23. The Jamaica Racing Commission (Amendment) Act



Prime Minister the Most. Hon. Andrew Holness and other Government Ministers at the State Opening of Parliament on April 14.

24. The General Partnership Act 2016
25. The Partnership Limited Act 2016
26. The International Corporate and Trust Service Providers Act 2016

Legislation Tabled

1. An Act to Amend the Public Management Act 2016
2. The Caribbean Maritime University Act 2016
3. The Pensions (Public Service) Act 2016
4. The Constitution (Amendment) (Established Fund) (Payment of Pensions) Act 2016
5. The Integrity Commission Act 2016
6. The Arbitration Act 2016

Motions Approved

1. The House of Representatives unanimously approved a motion calling for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba by the United States (US).
2. Joint Select Committee to Review the Sexual

Offences Act and other similar legislation.

Capacity Building

1. The Parliament hosted Madame Fu Ying, Chair-

person of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China in May.

2. The National Youth Parliament was held in November

Foreign Affairs Ministry Protects... cont'd from page 23

countries also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of a Mexican Chair at the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the renewal of the collaboration agreement between the National Autonomous University of Mexico and UWI.

- Jamaica assumed Chairmanship of the Caribbean Forum of ACP States (CARIFORUM) in July and also the role of the CARIFORUM High Representative for the CARIFORUM/EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Jamaica chaired the 24th Meeting of the CARIFORUM Council of Ministers Meeting held in November.

- Jamaica was also represented at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development held in Nairobi, Kenya, in July
- Jamaica initiated discussions with the United Kingdom on the implications for trade of its decision to withdraw from the European Union (Brexit).

Key Appointments

- Audrey Marks was appointed Jamaica's Ambassador to the United States for a second time. She was also appointed Permanent Representative to the Organisation of American States (OAS).
- Seth George Ramocan was appointed as Jamaica's High Commis-

sioner to the United Kingdom.

- Trudy Deans was appointed Jamaica's Consul General to New York.
- Antonia Hugh was appointed Jamaica's High Commissioner to the People's Republic of China.

The Diaspora

- Diaspora Task Force was established. Led by Dr. Rupert Francis, alternate Diaspora advisory board member for the west and mid-west USA and retired captain in the Jamaica Defence Force, the task force seeks to leverage the Diaspora network of criminal justice practitioners to support the Government, key agencies and other partners in tackling crime.

Government Abolishes Auxiliary Fees at Secondary Level

The Government, in 2016, abolished auxiliary fees at the secondary level and increased funding to institutions from \$ 2.6 billion to \$5.3 billion.

- Under the policy, tuition support per student was increased from \$11, 500 to \$19,000.
- A total of \$300 million was allocated to hire part-time sixth-form teachers. There were also increased amounts for utility payments and laboratory resources, among other things.
- In June, the first payment of more than \$1.4 billion was disbursed to schools enabling the early preparation for the new academic year. Additional amounts were paid in two tranches in September and December.
- The highest level of funding has been provided to schools that accommodate students with the lowest attainment on entry, who have the greatest difficulty in learning, and who are from the poorest socio-economic backgrounds.



Education, Youth and Information Minister, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid (centre), cuts the ribbon to open a new classroom block at the Mandeville Primary and Junior High School on November 2. Looking on are Managing Director of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), Omar Sweeney (left), and Head Boy of the school, Kevanny Gayle.

Additional Secondary Education support

- Approximately \$800 million was spent on textbooks for the new school year.

- Wards of the state and students on the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH) received subsidies for additional Caribbean Secondary

Education Certificate (CSEC) subjects.

Alternative Pathways to Secondary Education (APSE)

- 47 schools were placed on the programme, which aims to introduce seven years of secondary education.

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

- A sum of \$140 million has been allocated to provide TVET training and equipment for schools.

Career Advancement Programme (CAP)

- \$800 million was allocated for CAP, representing an increase of more than \$190 million over the previous last year. CAP is being offered in 110 institutions with over 8,000 students enrolled in secondary-level institutions, community colleges, teacher-training colleges and private institutions.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was

signed with the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation to manage the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technology in 57 secondary and tertiary schools.

Primary Schooling

- The maintenance grant for all primary schools was increased by 40 per cent.
- \$77 million was provided for the implementation of the National Standards Curriculum (NSC). This new curriculum focuses on project-based and problem-solving learning, with Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics/ Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEM/ STEAM) integrated at all levels. The roll out has begun at Grades 1, 4, 7, 8 and 9.
- 13,000 teachers were trained for the phased implementation of the NSC.

Early Childhood

- \$30 million was allocated to reactivate the early intervention programme for children up to three years, as well as their mothers. The initiative aims to provide stimulation for children before they enter the formal education system. It addresses nutritional and psychosocial gaps to ensure better education and training outcomes.
- 18 institutions were certified and plans are being made for 100 more to be accredited by August this year.
- Early childhood education teachers benefitted from a further 15 per cent increase in salary.
- Under the Housing, Opportunity, Prosperity and Employment (HOPE) programme teachers from 800 early childhood institutions were trained and placed in schools.



Additional classrooms constructed at the Discovery Bay All-Age School to remove the institution from the shift system. They were built through the Jamaica Social Investment Fund's (JSIF) Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) programme.

Gov't Abolishes Auxiliary Fees... cont'd from page 25

Special Education

- The Special Education Unit placed 133 new students at a cost of \$16.8 million for the 2016/17 academic year.

Teacher Development

- The Ministry offered 300 scholarships for persons to be trained as teachers of mathematics, science and technical education. Another 300 teachers of various subjects benefited from in-service training to upgrade their qualifications.

Safety and Security

- Over 1,000 representatives of schools were trained in safety and security techniques and 400 young people recruited to be placed in schools as safety and security officers. A total of 276 have already been placed.
- The Caribbean Maritime Institute (CMI) cadet programme was introduced in 10 schools in September. Some 100 police youth clubs have been introduced in 100 schools.

Infrastructural Development

- \$706.4 million was allocated for the Infrastructure Development Programme for the 2016/2017 fiscal year to undertake renovations and extensions to primary and secondary schools and construction of a Diagnostic and Early Childhood Centre at Sam Sharpe Teacher's College.
- Windsor Castle All-Age School in Portland and Horace Clarke High in St. Mary were outfitted with science laboratories under the European Union (EU)-funded Improving Innovation Capacities in the Caribbean (INVOCAB) Project, which is managed by the Scientific Research Council (SRC).
- The Japanese Government provided approximately \$88 million to effect improvements to a number of schools.

- A total \$76 million was allocated for the Ministry's Sanitation Programme.
- 34 schools were removed from the shift system.

HEART Trust/NTA

- The HEART Trust/NTA launched its up-skilling programme to enable persons to enhance their on-the-job skills. Over 2000 persons have been trained so far. This programme involves collaboration with the Joint Council on Tertiary Education (JCTE).

Youth Services

- Youth Information Centres (YIC) were restructured with the objective of bringing alienated and marginalised youth back into the economic mainstream and giving them a sense of belonging. The YIC engaged 1,000 young people in training in personal development, entrepreneurship, youth leadership, advocacy, counseling, and behaviour modification.
- 700 secondary school student councillors were trained under the Ministry's governance programme.
- The National Youth Parliament was re-convened in November.
- A total of 16 youth were selected to serve on the Youth Advisory Council of Jamaica (YACJ) to assist with the development, implementation and monitoring of Government policies. The YACJ was launched in November as part of the thrust of Government to boost youth participation.
- The National Youth Service (NYS) placed 6,000 youth in summer jobs, an increase over the 5,200 employed in 2015. The Graduate Work Experience programme was strengthened with 500 college and university graduates placed, up from 312 in 2015.



State Minister for Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Floyd Green (centre), peruses a chart on display at one of the Early Childhood Commission's (ECC) booths during the agency's certification fair at Jamaica College in St. Andrew, on Friday, August 26. Looking on (from left) are ECC Officer, Donna Wilson; and former Chairperson, Professor Maureen Samms-Vaughn.

- A total of 160 youth with mild intellectual disabilities were prepared for the workplace.

- \$233 million was allocated to the Jamaica Values and Attitude Programme (JAMVAT), an increase of \$100 million over the previous year. Under JAMVAT students are placed in different sectors of the workforce to conduct 200 hours of voluntary service. Students attending 33 tertiary institutions are participating in the programme.

- \$1.6 billion was allocated to the New Employment Opportunities for Youth in Jamaica (NEO-Jamaica) project, which is being spearheaded under the Youth Upliftment Through Employment (YUTE) initiative of the Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (PSOJ). It is being jointly financed by the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) and local stakeholder partners.

- 10,000 unattached young people, ages 17 to 29, are expected to benefit over a three-year period. Participants will receive vocational training and job placement opportunities that are to be provided by approximately 100 partner

companies, which will also offer internships.

Children Services

- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed in June for the implementation of the Transitional Living Programme for Children in State Care (TLP-CSC). The programme focuses on job and life skills training and mentorship.
- The Smiles Mobile counselling centre continues to reach children in need of support. The team, comprising two psychologists, one social worker and a part-time psychiatrist, provides psychosocial intervention for 673 children across 10 facilities in the South East Region, the Metcalfe Street Remand

Centre and the Rio Cobre Correctional facility.

- The team provided assessment and treatment for 1,302 children in care. Officers assigned to the CDA Intake Services Desk and those stationed in government-run residential child care facilities conducted 6,805 individual counselling sessions and 1,173 group sessions.
- The Break-the-Silence campaign was strengthened with an \$11 million injection from the Jamaica Social Investment Fund and the Caribbean Development Bank.
- The "Our Children Ja" campaign was launched to improve citizens' knowledge about the education, health, protection and parenting of children.

INFORMATION DIVISION

Information Policy

- The Ministry is introducing an overarching information policy to cover the access, dissemination and preservation of Government information. This includes the development of a funding model for sustainable public broadcasting.
- The Ministry will continue to roll out initiatives under the Education Broadcasting Network working with the Public Broadcasting Corporation of Jamaica (PBCJ).



Students who gathered at the Tivoli Gardens High School, in Kingston, release balloons at the official launch of the 2016-2017 school year.

Local Government Uplifting Communities

The Ministry of Local Government and Community Development continued its active outreach in communities, impacting the lives of many Jamaicans, particularly the most vulnerable.

National Clean-Up Campaign

- One of its major challenges was to help in containing the spread of mosquito-borne diseases such as the Zika and ChikV, by eliminating mosquito breeding sites in and around communities.
- The scope of works included drain and gully cleaning; removal of garbage and old tyres, refrigerators, stoves, washing machines and other bulky items; bushing, distribution of nets to cover water drums; as well as mobilisation and training of health information and public education through town hall meetings, distribution of flyers and town criers.

Municipal Corporations

- Following amendments to legislation earlier this year, parish councils have been renamed municipal corporations, with secretaries managers or town clerks renamed chief executive officers.
- Audits were undertaken in several of the island's municipal corporations including, Manchester, St. Catherine, Hanover.
- The Trelawny Municipal Corporation received \$29 million from the Equalization Fund to undertake beautification, road maintenance, drain cleaning and garbage disposal in the parish.
- The St. James Municipal Corporation received \$13 million from the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) to upgrade and beautify sidewalks along two major thoroughfares in Montego Bay. Areas under this project include Sam

Sharpe Square, City Centre, St. James Parish Library grounds, the historic Dome and the 'The Clock' at the top of Barnett Street.

- The St. James Parish Municipal Corporation also beefed up its cadre of mobile municipal wardens, who work with members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) to ensure that law and order is maintained across Montego Bay. The Council also employed approximately eight anti-litter wardens.
- The St. Thomas Municipal Corporation is crafting a sustainable development plan for the parish which is slated to be completed within the next 18 to 24 months.
- The construction of a new Municipal Corporation Building in Westmoreland is over 70 per cent complete.
- Work began on the \$50 million family-friendly recreational space in downtown Kingston which is being built by the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation

Anti-Litter Law

- The Ministry began pursuing measures aimed at strengthening the anti-litter law. Among these are amendments to significantly increase the fines and custodial sentences for breaches.
- Several public education campaigns were undertaken regarding the proper disposal of commercial and domestic waste.
- A new cadre of municipal police officers received training at the National Police College of Jamaica at Twickenham Park, St. Catherine. Also, the Ministry reviewed the complement of municipal officers at the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA).



Local Government and Community Development Minister, Hon. Desmond McKenzie (centre), and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Denzil Thorpe (left), assist a resident of Majesty Gardens in South West St. Andrew dispose of an old refrigerator, during the implementation of the national clean-up programme in the community.

Improved Infrastructure

- More than 7,000 residents of Giddy Hall and its environs in South West St. Elizabeth will benefit from a new community centre, to be built at a cost of just over \$11 million. The centre is being funded through a grant under the Government of Japan's Grant Assistance for

Grassroots and Human Security Project, and will replace the existing 65 year-old facility, which has deteriorated badly. Among the facilities to be installed are a computer lab, a library, a fashion designing centre and an art and craft centre.

- A special committee was established to spearhead

development and renovation of the May Pen Cemetery. Activities to be undertaken are: restoration of vandalised graves which will be carried out in collaboration with the Public Health Department; repairs to the perimeter fence and access roads; and general landscaping.

- Ground was broken for the construction of a \$20 million Cambridge Community Development Resource Centre in St. James. The facility, to be located in the Cambridge town square, is being built through funding by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under its Community Empowerment and Transformation Project (COMET) Phase 2. The building will provide space for community meetings, a homework centre, as well as educational and social events. A police post will also be established, as part of measures to improve police/community relations.



Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie (second left), examines the plans for the pilot 'water shop' to be erected at Pennants in Clarendon. Explaining details of the project is Director of Technical Services in the Ministry, Dwight Wilson (right).

Local Gov't Uplifting... cont'd from page 27

Road Improvements

- The 2.2 kilometres of upgraded roadway in Lime Hall, St. Ann, was officially opened. The road, repaired at a cost of \$16 million, will benefit over 2,000 residents.
- The Lyndale Housing Scheme road was rehabilitated by the St. Mary Parish Council at a cost of over \$13 million through funds provided by the Local Government Ministry.
- Access to the Riverton City disposal site in West St. Andrew has significantly improved with the completion of rehabilitation work on the 1.65 kilometres of roadway leading to the area. Undertaken through a US\$1.8 million grant from the Mexican Government, the project included the concrete paving of the roadway and installation of a proper drainage.

Water Infrastructure

- Ground was broken for the establishment of minor water systems in Pennants, Clarendon. This project will see the construction of mini water posts with at least six 1,000-gallon water tanks at various locations. Similar projects will be replicated island wide.
- Repairs were undertaken on minor water systems in St. Thomas and Portland which were damaged during heavy rains in May.

Infirmaries

- Work began on the new female ward at the St. James infirmary in Albion, Montego Bay. The St. James Municipal Corporation, which is spearheading the initiative, has already raised \$10 million of the projected \$28 million to complete the works. The project, which is slated for completion in 2017, will have 11 triple occupancy rooms; bathroom facilities, common areas, an exami-



Local Government and Community Development Minister, Hon. Desmond McKenzie (2nd left), breaks ground for the new Portland Infirmary in Port Antonio. Others (from left) are: Portland Mayor, Councillor Wayne McKenzie; Matron of the Portland Infirmary, Janet Golaub; and Chairman of the Board of Supervision, Dr. Lee Martin.

nation room and a reception area. The infirmary accommodates 48 male and 12 female residents.

- Ground was broken in Portland for the commencement of infrastructure work on the Port Antonio Infirmary.
- 15 persons received new houses through partnership with Food for the Poor.
- Food for the Poor also partnered with the Ministry to construct two drop-in centres in Hanover and St. Ann valued at \$24 million.

Poor Relief

- Twenty-four million dollars was allocated in the 2016/17 Budget to upgrade the Poor Relief Department's drop-in centre on Hanover Street in downtown Kingston.

Markets

- Tender documents for the construction of the new \$68 million Port Maria

market in St. Mary market are being reviewed. The two-storey facility, to be built at the site of the present market, will house approximately 70 vendors on the first floor, while the second floor will facilitate business space for entrepreneurs. This modern building will have two external staircases, an elevator and access aids for the physically challenged, in keeping with the building code. The new market will also have water harvesting, solar power and light-emitting diodes (LEDs), among its features, as well as adequate proper parking space.

- Renovation works were carried out at the Papine, Ocho Rios and Santa Cruz, Buff Bay and Clarks Town markets.

National Building Act

- The revised Building Act, which will facilitate improved oversight and regulation of the built

environment as well as the adoption and efficient application of the National Building Code, has been tabled in Parliament. It aims to replace the Kingston and St. Andrew Building Act and the Parish Councils Building Act.

Street Light Complaints Desk

- A complaints desk has been established at the Ministry to deal with matters relating to street lights.

Jamaica Fire Brigade (JFB)

- The Government signed a US\$987,822 contract with Rosenbauer for the acquisition of two new trucks for the Jamaica Fire Brigade (JFB).
- Three new fire trucks valued at US\$1.36 million were added to the JFB's fleet. The trucks were deployed to the parishes of Kingston, St. James and St. Ann, which have a high volume of calls and a large number of vulnerable communities.
- Work commenced on one of the three new fire stations that will be constructed in Montego Bay, St. James; Yallahs, St. Thomas; and Port Maria, St. Mary. Financing for the project falls under the Disaster Vulnerability Project, funded by the World Bank
- Numerous safety and security equipment were acquired by the Brigade.
- Terms of reference for an agreement between the JFB and the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) are being finalised. The agreement will strengthen the capacity of the JFB to forensically investigate fires.
- The JFB expanded its Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to offer a range of first responder services at the station level. These include: basic burn and wound

care, blood pressure checks, blood sugar tests, general first aid and advice on minor trauma incidents. Ambulances were also procured.

- A \$1.7 million disaster risk-reduction sensitisation programme was launched targeting primary school students island-wide. It aims to heighten the youngsters' awareness of the dangers and challenges posed by natural and other hazards. The project will be undertaken in four phases, beginning early this year.
- Fire fighting kits were handed over to teams in two communities which completed critical training in Bush Fire Management. The project, which received £70,000 (J\$12.6 million) in funding from the British High Commission, began as a pilot under the National Community Fire and Life Safety Education Programme in the Mavis Bank community in St. Andrew and Nain in St. Elizabeth.
- Fire-fighters received continuous training throughout the year in a bid to ensure their state of readiness to effectively respond in the event of an earthquake.
- 100 recruits were trained and deployed while hydrants were repaired.

ODPEM

- Some 300 schools in Kingston and St. Andrew, St. Thomas and St. Catherine simultaneously staged earthquake drills.
- The agency launched the Jamaica Educational Seismic Network, under which seismographs were installed in a number of schools in partnership with the Earthquake Unit and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information.

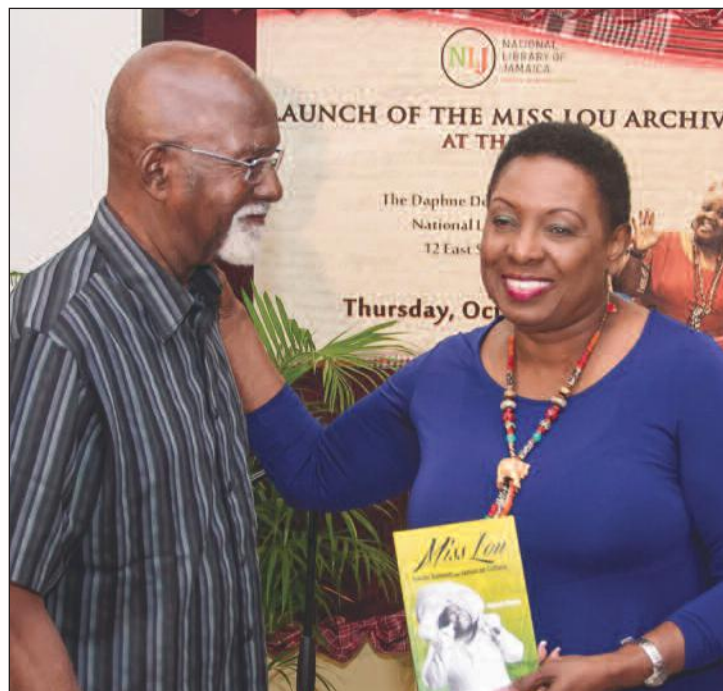
Promoting Sport and Culture for Development, Protecting Women

Promoting sport and culture as vehicles of development as well as adopting initiatives to address gender-based violence and empower women highlighted the thrust of the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport in 2016.

The Bureau of Gender Affairs conducted public education sessions on the identification, reporting and prevention of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence at various locations throughout the island.

Protecting Women and Girls

- A National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence (NSAP-GBV) was drafted. The action plan, which is to go before Cabinet in May, will serve as a monitoring and enforcement mechanism to facilitate a holistic approach toward the elimination of gender-based violence in Jamaica. It was crafted by the Bureau of Gender Affairs and other stakeholders.
- The British High Commission and the United States Embassy in Kingston provided £21,136 for a Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence Project. Approximately 300 police personnel and front-line responders are to benefit from training to respond to gender-based violence.
- Sensitisation sessions were held with 50 public sector workers on gender mainstreaming under the National Policy for Gender Equality.
- The Ministry conducted 28 sensitisation sessions aimed at building awareness of gender issues among Jamaicans.
- The He-for-She campaign was launched, which engages boys and men in promoting the health and well-being of women and



Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Minister, Hon. Olivia Grange (right), accepts a book on Miss Lou and Jamaica Culture from Poet Laureate of Jamaica, Professor Mervyn Morris (centre), at the launch of the Miss Lou Archives at the National Library of Jamaica on October 20.

- girls. It is a spinoff of the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's flagship programme, Every Woman, Every Child.
- Fifty-eight adolescent mothers were registered to sit the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate examinations (CSEC) under a programme devised by the Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation (WCJF). Additionally, 477 adolescents were reintegrated into the educational system.
- An Attend-On-Demand Enrolment Programme was implemented by the WCJF. This is to facilitate older girls who wish to attend the institution to access specified services rather than the full slate of activities.
- World Heritage Site, including the erection of signage at two of three gateways leading to the area. Also, recommendations were submitted and accepted by the Ministry of Transport and Mining concerning modifications of boundaries for prospecting licences.
- A World Heritage Economic Opportunities workshop was held to reach over 150 persons living in and around the Blue and John Crow Mountains. The workshop facilitated direct interface between community members and stakeholders from sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing.
- A contract was signed with the International Fund for Cultural Diversity in May to undertake the revision of the National Culture Policy to reflect current trends and to

Culture and Heritage

- Measures were undertaken to protect the Blue and John Crow Mountains

Local Gov't Uplifting... cont'd from page 28

NSWMA

- A nine-member Enterprise Team was established to manage the establishment of a waste-to-energy system as well as to outsource solid-waste collection and solid-waste management.
- Additional garbage trucks were procured to boost the company's fleet. The trucks are expected to arrive early 2017.
- The Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) provided just over 2,000 bins and two wood-chipping machines, valuing nearly \$22 million, to the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA). These will be used to assist in improving garbage collection and disposal in 30 communities under a waste separation and compost project being undertaken with input from Recycling Partners of Jamaica. Funding has been provided by the World Bank.
- The NSWMA removed debris which partly contributed to flooding along sections of lower Marcus Garvey Drive in Kingston.
- The communities of Rollington Town in Kingston and Caribbean Estates and Caymanas Country Club in St. Catherine participated in a \$7.5 million recycling pilot project, slated to impact 2,000 households. The Waste Reduction through Waste Separation, Waste Diversion and Recycling Project aims to reduce the high volume of plastic bottles at the Riverton disposal site.

Thirty-one new municipal police officers joined six local government authorities across the island after

completing a six week training course at the National Police College in Twickenham Park, St. Catherine. They were assigned to the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC), the St. Catherine, Portland, St. Mary, Manchester, and St. James parish councils. They will enforce municipal laws and regulations and help to maintain public order.

Social Development Commission (SDC)

- Approximately 4,500 jobs were created at the community level under the Local Economic Development (LED) Support Programme. The programme, which is being implemented by the Social Development Commission (SDC), aims to stimulate sustainable economic development through the growth of the micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) sector and community economic enterprises. It is being funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) under its Caribbean Local Economic Development Project (CARILED).
- Hundreds of persons in various communities were trained in project, financial and money management, leadership, record keeping and organisational strengthening.
- The SDC also assisted individuals in the area of entrepreneurship and in this regard, 244 local economic development support plans were completed, as well as 55 business models completed and 73 project proposals developed. In addition, 306 capacity building sessions were held.

Cont'd on page 30

Promoting Sport and Culture... cont'd from page 29

position the cultural and creative industries to drive economic growth. The Ministry conducted 15 consultations with non-governmental organisations, cultural practitioners, Ministries, Departments and Agencies, as well as other stakeholders to discuss the policy.

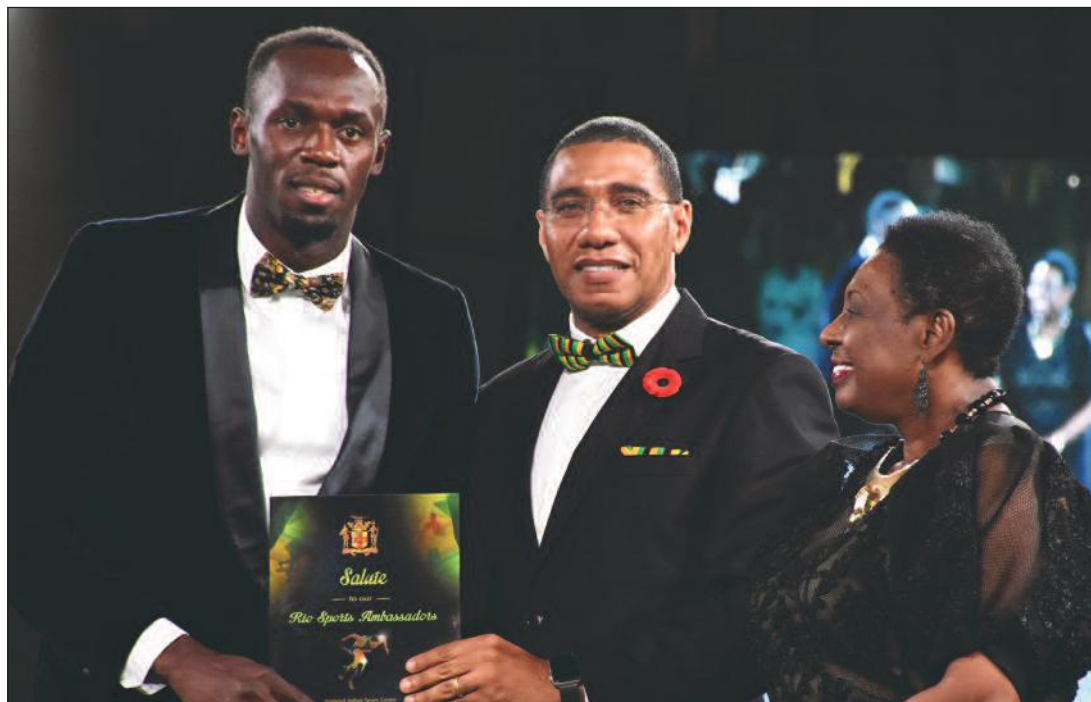
- The Institute of Jamaica, which keeps and displays Jamaica's historical artefacts, hosted five exhibits, two displays and events, including a heritage festival to showcase various aspects of Jamaica's culture.
- The Louise Bennett Coverley Archives was launched in October at the National Library of Jamaica. The archive is a collection of her unpublished and published material, including personal and professional correspondence, radio scripts and photographs. The catalogue is accessible from the library's website.
- Cabinet approved the purchase of the remaining six lots on the Pinnacle lands in Sligoville, St. Catherine, to declare the area a heritage site for the Rastafarian community.

- The Creative Production Training Centre (CPTC) re-launched its JamVision cable channel, formerly C-TV, in May as a means to promote Jamaica's cultural content regionally and globally. The CPTC also recorded and customised literary arts content to support the learning outcomes of the CXC English B syllabus. This content will be made available to the Ministry of Education for use as a teaching tool in all high schools

- Sound and light equipment was procured for the auditoriums at St. Andrew High, Manchester High, Guys Hill High and Jamaica College.

Athletes Development and Well-being

- 1,300 athletes signed on to the Jamaica Athletes Insurance Plan, which is being funded by the Sport Development Foundation, Culture Health Arts Science and Education (CHASE) Fund, National Health Fund (NHF), and the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF). Guardian Life Insurance Company is providing Group Health



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre), presents an award to World and Olympic sprint champion, Usain Bolt (left), at a ceremony to honour the 2016 Rio Olympic athletes, at the National Indoor Sports Centre in Kingston on October 15. Sharing the moment is Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Minister, Hon. Olivia Grange.

Insurance and Allied Insurance Brokers/ Sagicor is providing Personal Accident and Life Insurance.

- The Special Incentive Plan was introduced under the JAAA Athletes Development Fund to provide assistance to athletes preparing for the 2016 Olympics.

Rewarding Outstanding Performances

- Athletes who participated in the 2016 Olympics and Paralympics were honoured by the Ministry during three days of celebrations titled: "Salute to our Rio Ambassadors." They were lauded for their achievements and presented with cash awards for their outstanding representation of the country

Sport for Economic Development

- Work started on the development of a National Sport Museum. The Ministry has hired a consultant to develop a strategic business plan and the land has been approved by Cabinet and the National Land Agency for the construction of the facility.
- The Ministry funded the staging of two major track meets – Jamaica International in May and Racer's Grand Prix in June, to expose top athletes to international competition.

- Work commenced on the renovation of sport infrastructure across the island. Refurbishing has started on the Trelawny Stadium and the National Arena with assistance from the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF), Social Development Foundation (SDF) and central Government.

- A power protection system valued at over \$1 million was installed at the National Indoors Sports Centre.
- Two refresher courses were facilitated with 76 doping control personnel on doping procedures.

- The first ever symposium on the Heritage of Sport, highlighting the significance of safeguarding Jamaica's rich sport heritage and the relevance of sport in national development was held in April. The event was held in collaboration with the University of Technology (UTech).



Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange (centre), assists in unveiling a World Heritage gateway sign in Papine, St Andrew, leading to Jamaica's first World Heritage site, the Blue and John Crow Mountains Heritage Site.

Advancing Justice Reform

The Ministry of Justice made significant strides in improving the justice system through the rehabilitation of court houses, the provision of equipment, training of critical stakeholders, and amending crucial pieces of legislation.

Infrastructure Development

- Contracts valued at \$36.4 million were signed for the supply and installation of louvres at the Supreme Court and for the repair of the car park, which serves the Civil Division of the Kingston and St. Andrew Parish Court.
- Partial refurbishing work was done at the Half-Way-Tree Criminal Court at a cost of \$17.34 million.
- A sum of \$6.28 million was allocated to facilitate repairs to the St James

Parish Court in Montego Bay

- Electrical works were undertaken at the Half-Way-Tree Parish Court at a cost of \$3.6 million.
- Remedial works were undertaken at the Court of Appeal, Public Building West at a cost of \$3.2 million.
- Painting and minor repairs were carried out at the Family Court, St. Andrew at a cost of \$3.1 million.
- Roof repairs and painting were done at the Ramble Parish Court in Hanover at a cost of \$2.5 million.

Technological Improvements

- Video link technology was installed at the Half-Way-Tree and Supreme Courts to facilitate witnesses



Minister of Justice, Hon. Delroy Chuck (right), in discussion with from left: Pastor, Roger Shaw, Reverend Ian Muirhead, and Principal, Windward Road Primary, Norman Malcolm at the Restorative Justice meeting for School Administrators held at the Ministry's offices on Constant Spring Road on October 7.

who cannot be physically present in the court rooms. The technology

will also be installed in 19 additional courts.

- Three mobile units equipped to facilitate witnesses giving evidence remotely were acquired, and digital audio recordings have been installed in some court rooms.
- Eighty-five computers were procured for the parish courts, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution (DDP), Office of Attorney General, and the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel.
- Photocopiers were procured and installed at all parish courts to facilitate committal proceedings; and preparatory work was advanced for a new case management system, which will digitise the courts.
- The Attorney General's Department was provided with 25 new desktop and laptop computers under the Government of Canada-funded Justice Undertaking for Social Transformation (JUST) Programme. The computers, along with backup storage devices and a projector, form part of the programme's CDN\$19.8

million business process reform and technical assistance provision, being facilitated through Canada's Global Affairs Initiative.

- Also under the JUST programme, 15 desktop computers were provided to improve the jury management system at the Supreme Court. Also provided were a high-density server, data backup and storage and firewall protection devices.
- Service delivery by the Administrator General's Department (AGD) was improved as a result of a US\$696,300 software upgrade. The new system has the capacity to process all aspects of estate administration, from trust administration to financial and investment-related activities.

Capacity Building

- The European Union (EU) provided a \$3.3 billion (€22 million) grant under the Justice System Reform Project. The allocation is the single largest by the EU to the programme. Some \$3 billion, to be managed by the Government, has been earmarked for budgetary support, while the EU will administer the remaining \$275.4 million.
- Some 2,000 community leaders across the island were sensitised on issues of justice, including restorative justice, mediation, drug court and drug abuse, human trafficking, child diversion and legal aid.
- More than 200 Justices of the Peace (JPs) received mandatory training in areas such as roles and function, identification parade procedures, and monitoring of police lock ups.
- Judges and court staff were trained in human rights and managing



Justice Minister, Hon. Delroy Chuck (right), and Attorney General, Hon. Marlene Malahoo Forte (left), peruse the specifications on boxes containing 25 computers which have been provided for the Attorney General's Department under the Government of Canada-funded Justice Undertaking for Social Transformation (JUST) Programme. The computers, along with backup storage devices and a projector, were handed over by Canadian High Commissioner to Jamaica, His Excellency Sylvain Fabi (centre), during a ceremony at the Office of the Attorney General in New Kingston on November 8.

Advancing Justice... cont'd from page 31

- complex cases such as those involving cyber-crimes and fraud.
 - The number of judges in the Court of Appeal was expanded from seven to 12. Some 10 additional judicial clerks were employed to assist with legal research for Appeal Court judges.
 - Approval was given for the Chief Justice to employ four Masters to strengthen the technical capacity of her office.
 - The Ministry's Case Inventory Management Backlog Reduction Strategy continued during the calendar year.
 - Committal proceedings rules were prepared, resulting in matters being expedited from parish courts to higher levels of the court system. Preliminary enquiries were abolished for serious offences such as murders, rapes and arson.
 - The statistical and data capture project was extended to 13 parishes to track the movement of cases in parish courts. Monthly reports capture data such as number of new cases, cases disposed of, types of offences, etc.
 - Cabinet approved the establishment of a Judicial Education Institute under the Office of the Chief Justice.
 - The Ministry hosted a workshop and a conference on human trafficking, while the 4th North American and Caribbean International Association of Prosecutors (IAP) Conference was held at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, St. James.
 - The Counter Terrorism and Organised Crime Investigation Branch (C-TOC) launched a new strategy, dubbed 'Operation Uplift', aimed at strengthening the fight against Trafficking in Persons (TIP).
 - The Office of the DPP's Prosecutor's Manual for Jamaica was officially launched under the JUST programme.
 - The Ministry commenced the sensitisation of school leaders, guidance counsellors and board members to introduce restorative justice in 1,000 schools island-wide as a way of reducing violence and resolving conflicts within the school environment.
- ### Legislation Passed in Parliament
- The Restorative Justice Act which makes provision for the implementation of restorative justice procedures in the formal justice system.
 - Jury (Amendment) Act
 - Interpretation (Amendment) Act
 - Restorative Justice Act
 - Children (Guardianship and Custody) (Amendment) Act
 - Judicature (Resident Magistrate's) (Amendment and Change of Name) Act
- ### Legislation Tabled in Parliament
- Integrity Commission Bill
 - Arbitration Bill
- ### Judges Sworn into Higher Office
- 11 judges were sworn into office during the year.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness greets 33-year veteran educator, Geraldine Allen, while congratulating recipients of the Prime Minister's Medal of Appreciation for Service to Education at Jamaica House on June 23.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre) shares a moment with students of Wolmer's Girls' School, who all scored grade ones in their Caribbean Secondary Examination Council (CSEC) mathematics test in 2016. The 33 girls accompanied by Principal, Colleen Montague (right) called on the Prime Minister at Jamaica House in October.