

Over \$64 Billion Invested in Tourism

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller says that over \$64 billion has been invested in tourism over the past four years, giving Jamaica a competitive edge and making it a prime get-away spot for tourists.

Addressing tourism interests and stakeholders at the opening of the Moon Palace Jamaica Grande Resort in Ocho Rios on December 2, the Prime Minister noted that over 2,000 new rooms have either been added or are currently under construction. A further 8,000 will be added in the near future.

"The Administration has created the kind of environment where foreign investors have been looking at Jamaica as a great place to do business, and this Moon Palace investment is a testament to that fact," she pointed out.

Mrs. Simpson Miller said tourism represents an area of real economic sta-



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller (3rd right) participates in the cutting of the ribbon to open the Moon Palace Jamaica Grande in Ocho Rios on December 2. Others (from left) are: Industry, Investment and Commerce Minister, Hon. Anthony Hylton; Minister of Tourism and Entertainment, Hon. Dr. Wykeham McNeill; President of Palace Resorts, the parent company for Moon Palace, Jose Chapur; Executive Vice President of Palace Resorts, Gibran Chapur; and Mexico's Ambassador to Jamaica, Cecilia Jaber.

bility and growth, employing over 180,000 persons and contributing more than US\$2 billion in earnings annually.

"This commitment by Moon Palace goes to show that tourism continues to be on the rise and that Jamaica continues to attract direct

foreign investment," she added.

The 700-room property, formerly Sunset Jamaica Grande, was acquired by the Mexico-based hotel chain, Palace Resorts, in 2014.

The property, which was extensively renovated, now boasts refurbished guest rooms, meeting spaces, upgraded and redesigned common areas, making it an architectural showpiece.

District Constables to Become Pensionable by April 1, 2016

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller has announced that District Constables will become pensionable at the start of the new financial year on April 1, 2016.

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Prime Minister the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller

able to benefit from the Government's Pensioners' Only Administration Health Insurance Scheme.

Speaking on the matter of performance increments to District Constables in keeping with the 2012 to 2015 Heads of Agreement, the Prime Minister also disclosed that pay instructions have been issued to the Ministry of National Security for implementation.

The Prime Minister also saluted the District Constables noting that "your work is one of the earliest examples of community policing, which is now a major feature of policing strategy in Jamaica today."

The Prime Minister made the announcement during her keynote address at the 24th Annual General Conference of the United District Constables Association at the Cardiff Hotel & Spa, Runaway Bay, St. Ann, on December 2.

Mrs. Simpson Miller told the gathering that instructions have been given to the Chief Parliamentary Counsel to start amending the legislative framework to reflect this decision.

Additionally, District Constables will now be

Customs Reports Revenue of \$119 Billion

THE JAMAICA Customs Agency says it has surpassed its revenue target for the period April 1 to November 30.

Commissioner of Customs, Major Richard Reese, said collections amounted to \$119.26 billion for the period, surpassing the \$105.2 billion target set by the Ministry of Finance and Planning by \$14.07 billion or 13 per cent.

He was speaking at a press conference on December 3, at the agency's Newport East location.

The year-on-year revenue collection recorded growth of \$17.554 billion or 17 per cent from \$101.708 billion in 2014.

Petroleum products, motor vehicles and cigarettes are the products which contributed to the agency's increased revenue performance.



Commissioner of Customs, Major Richard Reese (right), addresses the media at a press conference held in Kingston on December 3. Chief Information Officer at the Agency, Andre Williams, looks on.

Major Reese attributed the increase in revenue and collections to a realignment of the agency's strategies.

"We have started on the realignment of our organisational structure

and we have sensitised our staff to this. We have intelligence alerts, a risk management plan and matrix, and a more robust information technology system. All of that gives rise to output," he said.

Ground Broken for \$100M Expansion of Linstead Hospital

MINISTER OF Health, Hon. Horace Dalley, recently broke ground for the renovation and expansion of the Accident and Emergency Department of the Linstead Hospital in St. Catherine.

The project is to be undertaken at a cost of over \$100 million, with the majority of the funds, amounting to \$76.4 million, to be spent on refurbishing works and addition of space to improve service offerings.

The remainder of the funds will go towards equipping and installing heating, ventilation and

air conditioning in the department.

The scope of work will include the addition of waiting and parking areas, a nebulisation station, examination bays and a triage area.

Also included is the realignment of the ambulance bay; work on the roof, ceilings, walls and floors; installation of doors and windows; plumbing, air conditioning, and electrical installation; public address system; fittings; landscaping; fencing; and drainage installation.

Minister Dalley, in his address, said that while

the Government remains committed to improving the infrastructure of health facilities, "that by itself cannot deliver quality health care. We must have compassion, empathy and love and care for our people."

The Linstead Hospital is a major referral centre for Spanish Town, Kingston Public, National Chest hospitals and the Bustamante Hospital for Children.

The renovation of the department is being undertaken by Chin's Construction Limited, through funding by the National Health Fund.

700 Tablets to be Distributed to Schools in East Kingston and Port Royal



Minister of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining (STEM), Hon. Phillip Paulwell (left), and Minister of Education, the Hon. Rev. Ronald Thwaites, show students of Windward Road Primary and Junior High features of the tablet computers that were donated to the institution by STEM on December 2.



Minister of Health, Hon. Horace Dalley (left); and Minister of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change, Hon. Robert Pickersgill (2nd left), participate in the breaking of ground for the renovation and expansion of the Accident and Emergency Department of the Linstead Hospital recently. Others assisting (from 3rd right) are: Board Chairman of the South East Regional Health Authority, Dr. Andrei Cooke; Project Manager at the National Health Fund, Orette Clarke (partly hidden); and Acting Senior Medical Officer at the Linstead Hospital, Dr. Tanesha Burke Grant.



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