

# Investment Projects Being Fast-Tracked – PM

PRIME MINISTER, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says a number of investment projects are being fast-tracked.

This is in keeping with the Administration's focus on inclusive economic growth, job creation, sustainable debt reduction and improving the general well-being of Jamaicans.

"Already, we have started the process of fast-tracking investment projects that are only being held up by decisions," he said.

The Prime Minister was addressing the swearing-in ceremony for Members of Parliament at Gordon House on March 10.

Mr. Holness said work has also started, with the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), "on our proposed reform to the

tax system to ensure that when they are implemented, they mutually reinforce the twin targets of growth and fiscal balance."

**"Let us put the people first and work together in building this great nation."**

Additionally, he said efforts are underway to treat with the challenges faced in the health care system and the potential threats of epidemics.

Mr. Holness pledged to be an "activist Prime Minister," who will lead by example. "I will lead from the front," he said.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, addresses a swearing-in ceremony for Members of Parliament on March 10 at Gordon House.

He called on members to "endeavour to be sober, respectful, forward-thinking and mature as elected representatives of the people of Jamaica."

"I offer myself to you and extend my hand in partnership to each and every one of you. Let us put the people first and work together in building this great nation," he said.

## Youth Empowerment to Get Key Focus

MINISTER OF Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid, says the Ministry will be placing focus on empowering the country's young people through various projects and programmes.

He was speaking to JIS News on March 8, shortly after settling into his office at National Heroes Circle in Kingston. Senator Reid informed that State Minister, Hon. Floyd Green, will have special responsibility for the youth portfolio.

"We are going to be looking at some of the programmes we have to deal with youth – unattached youth, the need to empower



Education, Youth and Information Minister, Senator, the Hon. Ruel Reid (right) addresses staff at the Ministry of Education, after he arrived for his first working day at the Ministry's National Heroes Circle offices, on March 8. At left is State Minister in the Ministry, Hon. Floyd Green.

our youth. The HEART Trust/NTA has programmes as well, so we need to bring all those programmes together as a whole," he said.

Meanwhile, Senator Reid committed to ensuring that the Ministry is as efficient and productive as possible.

"We want to be the best performing Ministry. We want to contribute to the growth agenda and to make sure Jamaica has a workforce that is well trained, well positioned to take the opportunities in employment, both locally and internationally. We want to be the flagship Ministry," he said.

## Gov't Targets Caymanas Project in Job Creation Thrust

THE GOVERNMENT will be placing focus on the build-out of the Caymanas enterprise zone as it looks to boost job creation.

"We will work very closely with the Office of the Prime Minister on the development of the

Caymanas enterprise zone where we are hoping to have a combination of local investment and foreign investment in that facility," said new Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Karl Samuda.

He informed that the objective is to expand and create opportunities for the Business Processing Outsourcing (BPO) sector and for the employment of the mass population that exists in Southern St. Catherine and the Southern side of Kingston and St. Andrew.

"That's a job expansion, growth potential area that we are going to focus on," he said.

Minister Samuda was speaking to JIS News, shortly after taking the Oath of Office, during a ceremony for the swearing-in of Ministers at King's House on March 7.

He said he welcomed the merger of the Industry and Commerce portfolios with Agriculture as it "opens the doors for a lot of opportunities for growth and for expansion in industry and agriculture."



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw

with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Mr. Byles concurred and reiterated that the EPOC framework has been important in building investor confidence.

In this context, Mr. Shaw welcomed the continuation of the work of EPOC under the co-chairmanship of Mr. Byles and Mr. Wynter.

## Members of Parliament and Senators Sworn In

SIXTY ONE of the 63 Members of Parliament (MPs), who won their seats in the February 25 General Election, were sworn in on March 10 at the opening of the new Parliament at Gordon House.

"We can be forceful without being disruptive, we can be insightful without being insulting," he said.

The Prime Minister also said he is a "humble servant of the people and faithful steward of their affairs."

For her part, Leader of the Opposition, the Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller, noted that MPs have a duty to conduct themselves in a manner that will encourage more Jamaicans to participate in the electoral process.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness takes his Oath of Office during a swearing-in ceremony for Members of Parliament on March 10 at Gordon House. Clerk of the Houses of Parliament, Mrs. Heather Cooke, observes the proceedings.

## Gov't Committed to Continued Implementation of Economic Programme

MINISTER OF Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw, has stressed the commitment of the Government of Jamaica to transparency, accountability and stakeholders' participation in the continued implementation of the economic programme.

He made the comment during a meeting on March 9 with Minister of State in the Finance Ministry, Hon. Fayval Williams, along with co-chairs of the Economic Programme Oversight Committee (EPOC), Richard Byles and Brian Wynter.

In the meeting, held at the Ministry's Heroes Circle offices, the Finance Minister also expressed appreciation for the contribution of EPOC through its oversight of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF)



Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister, Hon. Karl Samuda (3rd left), goes over his notes with Permanent Secretary in the Agriculture division of the Ministry, Donovan Stanberry (left), and Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry, Hon. J.C. Hutchinson (2nd left). Looking on is Permanent Secretary in the Industry and Commerce division, Dr. Vivian Brown. Occasion was the welcome reception of Minister Samuda and the Minister without Portfolio J.C. Hutchinson at the Agriculture division at Hope Gardens in Kingston on March 9.

## Tourism Minister Meets with Officials from the Sector



Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett (centre), addresses Executive Members of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) and Ministry officials when he met with members of the JHTA at the Ministry's New Kingston offices on March 10. During the meeting, the Minister discussed plans to develop the tourism industry.

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