

Highway to be Renamed in Honour of Edward Seaga

THE NORTH-South Highway is to be renamed the Edward Seaga Highway in honour of Jamaica’s fifth Prime Minister.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness made the announcement at the re-dedication of the Bustamante Museum on Tucker Avenue, St. Andrew, on March 22.

Mr. Holness, who officially opened the North-South Highway in 2016, said Cabinet gave approval on March 19 to make the renaming possible, which is being done for good reasons.

“Edward Seaga was responsible for the development of downtown Kingston. He also initiated the development and expansion of Ocho Rios as a tourism destination. The North-South Highway creates that link, so it is only fitting,” he said. For his part, former Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Edward Seaga, expressed gratitude to the Government



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd left) looks at a story board following the re-dedication of the Bustamante Museum on Tucker Avenue, in St. Andrew, on March 22. Also examining the board are (from left): wife of the Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Juliet Holness; Custos of St. Andrew, the Hon. Patricia Dunwell; State Minister in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Fayval Williams and former Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Edward Seaga.

for the decision taken to name the North-South Highway in his honour.

He told **JIS News** that he is very thrilled because “it joins together two of my most important and biggest developments (and it only seems) logical.”

“I am (also) thrilled because it is a highway so beautifully done and I congratulate the builders (for its construction) and the Prime Minister for the renaming,” he said.

The North-South Highway extends from the

Mandela Highway near Caymanas in St. Catherine to Mammee Bay in St. Ann.

The 67 kilometre stretch was constructed at a cost of some US\$600 million over three years and it strategically links the northern and southern sections of the island.

Every Student to be Placed in Full Five-Year High School

ALL STUDENTS who have sat the 2018 Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) will be placed in a full five-year secondary-level institution.

Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid, said that for the first time in the country’s history, there will be no need to place students who take GSAT in a junior high school’s grade-seven class.

He said that given the reduction in Jamaica’s birth rate in recent years, coupled with expanded capacity at the secondary level, more space has been created for students to be placed directly in a high school.



Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid, addresses a press conference at the Ministry in Kingston on March 20. Seated beside him is State Minister, Hon. Floyd Green.

“The total number of students who have been registered this year is 39,093. There is still a trend in a lower and lower number of students sitting the

GSAT over the last couple of years, because the birth rate has been falling,” Mr. Reid said.

He was addressing a press conference on March 20 at

JCF Gets Additional Vehicles

MINISTER OF National Security, Hon. Robert Montague, has handed over 42 motorcycles and 19 motor cars valued at \$104 million to the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) to boost the mobility of the Force.

The presentation was made at the Transport Management and Maintenance Division of the JCF located on Old Hope

Road in St. Andrew on March 20.

The motorcycles, valued at \$44 million will be assigned to the JCF’s Traffic Division and are expected to improve mobility in heavy traffic, while the 19 motorcars, which cost approximately \$60 million, will be handed over to the Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB).

Minister Montague said the acquisition underlines the Ministry’s thrust to provide the necessary policy support and resources to the JCF.

“The Ministry will continue to invest in the resources whether it is infrastructure, equipment or manpower, because all of us have to come together as Jamaicans and get the job done,” he said.

He encouraged the members of the Force to use the resources provided to benefit all Jamaicans.

In expressing gratitude for the vehicles, Police Commissioner, Major General Antony Anderson, said they will boost the capacity of the JCF, particularly during periods of increased traffic in urban spaces.

The Commissioner assured that the vehicles will be used with care. “My commitment as the new Commissioner is that we’ll account for them, we’ll take care of them and we will deliver a better service through having them,” he said.



Minister of National Security, Hon. Robert Montague (centre); Commissioner of Police, Major General Antony Anderson (right); and Assistant Commissioner of Police, Warren Clarke, try out new motorcycles that were presented to the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) by the Minister, during a ceremony at the Traffic Management and Maintenance Division on Old Hope Road, on March 20.

ADVT.

NHT to Build 22,000 Housing Starts in Four Years

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the National Housing Trust (NHT) is executing plans to build up to 22,000 housing starts for the four-year period to 2020.

“This is action that will transform the lives of poor people. These 22,000 housing starts will be spread across Jamaica, and we are innovating to achieve these higher levels of housing output,” he said.

The Prime Minister was making his contribution to the 2018/19 Budget Debate in the House of Representatives on March 20.

Mr. Holness said while the private sector participates in the middle, upper-middle and upper ends of the housing market, they have largely been absent from the affordable housing market.

“We have, therefore, instituted a ‘developers programme’ at the NHT whereby the private sector is invited, through a competitive process, to bid on producing affordable housing on lands owned by the NHT, according to specifications provided by the NHT,” he explained.

“Once the developers are competitively selected and confirmed, they will be responsible for all



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness

stages of the process from planning and approvals, through to construction and completion, according to criteria laid out by the NHT,” Mr. Holness added.

The Prime Minister said the developers will bear the financing, construction and completion risks, and to induce their participation in this end of the market, the NHT will assume the market risk, provided that the established criteria are satisfied.

The programme will allow the NHT to bring to market more than 4,000 affordable housing solutions in the first instance, which it would otherwise be unable to do on its own.

5,000 Solar Lamps to be Distributed to Energy-Poor Households

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says an initial 5,000 solar lamps will be made available under a programme being developed to assist energy-poor households.

This is in light of house fires, since the start of the year, caused mainly by lit candles or lamps which have claimed the lives of eight adults and five children.

“A system of identifying and distributing these solar lighting solutions to needy households is being developed,” Mr. Holness said, during his contribution to the

Budget Debate in the House on March 20.

He pointed out that using solar solutions to replace open flame light sources is an established policy response to address energy poverty, noting that there are many such programmes successfully implemented all over the world.

“With simple and inexpensive actions, the Government can make a difference in the lives of energy-poor households, and particularly and significantly reduce or virtually eliminate the risk of these tragic fires,” he said.

The Prime Minister has directed the Housing, Opportunity, Production and Employment (HOPE) programme to develop a National Service Corps to support all elements of this solar lighting programme and to work with existing social entrepreneurs in this area.

These, he said, would include members of the Jamaican diaspora, such as Nathaniel Peat of Genex (Solar), which is a renewable energy company providing a similar service in countries in Africa.

\$6 Million Donated Towards Rebuilding Walker’s Place of Safety



Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA), Rosalee Gage-Grey (right), receives a cheque valued at \$100,000 from President of the St. Catherine High School Peer Counsellor Group, Jaunel Johnson (second right), towards the rebuilding of the Walker’s Place of Safety in Kingston. The handover took place at the CPFSA’s downtown Kingston offices on March 19. The CPFSA has so far received approximately \$6 million towards the rebuilding of the facility.