

PM Targets Diaspora Investments

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness has announced that a new entity, Global Connect Jamaica (GloJam), is being established to strengthen the country's engagements with members of the diaspora.

Mr. Holness said GloJam, which will result from a reshaping of the Jamaica Diaspora Foundation and Jamaica Diaspora Institute, is geared towards encouraging more persons to invest in the country through public-private partnership arrangements.

He emphasised that the new entity is consistent with the Government's firm commitment to development



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (3rd right), and Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith (3rd left), share a photo opportunity with representatives of the Jamaica Diaspora Conference's Legacy Partners, during the launch of the biennial event at Jamaica House on April 4. From left are Jamaica National Group Deputy General Manager, Leon Mitchell; GraceKennedy Chief Executive Officer, Senator Don Wehby; Victoria Mutual Building Society President and Chief Executive Officer, Courtney Campbell; and J. Wray and Nephew Limited Production Director, Dwight Dalley.

strategies which will facilitate a greater involvement of the diaspora in the economic and social growth of Jamaica.

Mr. Holness was speaking on April 4 at the launch of the Jamaica 55 Diaspora Conference at the Office of the Prime Minister.

He said GloJam's other objectives include forging and facilitating partnerships involving leading executives, entrepreneurs and professionals in the diaspora with local counterparts, with a view to expanding business oppor-

tunities and promoting brand Jamaica globally.

The Prime Minister noted that with approximately three million Jamaicans residing overseas, "our gross domestic product could easily double overnight if we found seamless ways of integrating the economic power of the diaspora into our local economy."

"So Global Connect Jamaica will lead to stronger connectivity and partnership between our diasporans and Jamaicans locally... and this, we know, will facilitate greater economic growth," he added.

Gov't Announces 'Jamaica 55' Legacy Projects

JAMAICA'S ELITE athletes will soon no longer need to travel outside of the country to receive the best treatment for injuries and other ailments.

This, as the Government plans to set up a Caribbean Sports Medicine Centre on the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI). To be established in collaboration with UWI and sprinting sensation Usain Bolt and his team, the centre is one of the legacy projects being undertaken as part of the year-long 'Jamaica 55' Independence celebrations.

The projects and other commemorative activities were unveiled during the media launch of Jamaica 55 on the lawns of Jamaica House on April 5.

Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, in his address, said the Legacy Projects programme is a key component of Jamaica 55, "which signifies that we are committed to leaving a legacy, building a stronger nation."

He noted that the "ambitious projects" identified include significant improvements of infrastructure in sports, entertainment and culture, education, gender relations and public administration.

"The value to be gained from them will last for many generations. The chosen projects are strategically aligned to our areas of national priority," he said.

Other legacy projects include a virtual sports museum, which will trace and showcase Jamaica's performance in sports, is expected to be completed during the period.

Additionally, a plan is to be developed for the establishment of a national shelter for women in the corporate area, and three satellite shelters in rural Jamaica. One shelter is expected to be established during the Jamaica 55 period.

Jamaica 55 activities are being held under the theme 'Celebrating Jamaicans at Home and Abroad'.

Japan Provides \$1.6B Grant to Boost Disaster Communication

JAMAICA'S COMMUNICATION capability before, during and after disasters is being significantly boosted through a J\$1.6 billion (¥1.39 billion) grant from the Government of Japan.

The provision, to be disbursed over four years, will be used to purchase and procure equipment and other inputs to implement the Improvement of Emergency Communication System Project.

It was facilitated through negotiations between the Government and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

To be executed by the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), the project will provide the platform for communications among critical Government agencies, first responders and major stakeholders.



Finance and Public Service Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw (left), and Japan's Ambassador to Jamaica, His Excellency Masanori Nakano, sign a grant agreement for the provision of \$1.6 billion to fund the Improvement of Emergency Communication System Project. The signing took place at the Ministry's National Heroes Circle offices on April 6. In the background is the Ministry's Senior Director for Negotiations, Nadine James.

Finance and the Public Service Minister, Hon. Audley Shaw, and Japan's Ambassador to Jamaica, His Excellency Masanori Nakano, signed the grant agreement at the Ministry's National Heroes Circle offices on April 6.

Mr. Shaw, in welcoming the grant support, said the project will significantly strengthen ODPEM's preparedness to respond in the event of natural disasters.

The project's major components, Mr Shaw outlined, include integration

of the National Works Agency's (NWA) microwave network for data communication; installation of communication systems that will serve an additional 24 repeater locations, up from the nine stations currently operated by ODPEM; and early-warning sirens at 15 locations in three communities.

Additionally, the project will facilitate the provision of radio equipment, transmission and reception devices to key response entities, and placement at two of the island's key offshore locations – Morant and Pedro Cays.

"The project is critical for the improvement of public security and safety - the Local Emergency Operations Centre - and for the improvement of communities and areas prone to flooding, storm surges, landslides and other hazards," the Minister underscored.

Several Sewerage Projects Completed

WORK HAS been completed on several sewerage projects to address the discharge of effluent from waste-water treatment plants into the environment and reduce the risks to public health.

This was disclosed by Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, during his contribution to the 2017/18 Sectoral Debate in the

House of Representatives on April 5.

He said K-Factor funds were used to finance the Portmore Sewerage Reconfiguration Project, which has brought relief from the adverse impact of underperforming wastewater treatment facilities to residents in communities such as Bridgeport, Independence City, Hamilton Gardens and Caymanas Gardens.

"The flows to these plants are now being diverted to the Soapberry waste-water treatment plant, where adequate treatment is being provided," Dr. Chang informed.

Major sewerage improvement works were also undertaken in Majesty Gardens, Seaview Gardens and Riverton Meadows. The land reclaimed will be used for economic community development, Dr. Chang said.



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation Hon. Dr. Horace Chang

Meanwhile the Government has embarked on

a programme to rehabilitate several irrigation canals that have deteriorated over many years.

"We are also seeking to expand irrigation on the southern plains, stretching from St. Elizabeth through to sections of South Manchester, South Clarendon, Central St. Catherine all the way to Eastern St. Thomas.

He noted that the first major project under this initiative, the Essex Valley Agricultural Development

Project in St. Elizabeth, should commence later this year.

The project will be funded through a grant from the United Kingdom Caribbean Infrastructure Fund. Implementation of the project will be managed through the National Irrigation Commission, along with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries and the Agro-Investment Corporation.

NSWMA Receives Six New Garbage Trucks



Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie, tries out the controls of one of the six new garbage trucks acquired for the National Solid Waste Management Authority's (NSWMA) regional offices. Occasion was the handover ceremony at the NSWMA's head office in Kingston on April 3. Looking on are Managing Director of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund, Omar Sweeney (left) and Executive Director of the NSWMA, Audley Gordon.

1,000 Additional Hotel Rooms Being Built this Year

TOURISM MINISTER, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, says Jamaica's hotel room capacity will increase by more than 1,000 during the 2017 calendar year.

"Over 3,000 rooms are currently (available) or are being made available, which we never had the winter before. Of that amount, close to 2,000 have already been added or will be coming on stream in the next few weeks and months," he said.

The Minister was making his Sectoral Debate presentation in the House of Representatives on April 4, under the theme 'Sustainable Tourism – A Catalyst for Job Creation and Inclusive Growth'.



Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett

Mr. Bartlett said the total investments in the rooms are well in excess of US\$1 billion.

Among the hotels that will provide new rooms are the Azul Beach Resort in Negril with 150 rooms; Hideaway at Royalton and Royalton Negril Resort

and Spa – 600 rooms; and Sandals Royal Caribbean "Over the Water Villas" in Montego Bay – 12 rooms.

Additionally, the Spanish Court II in Montego Bay, with 124 rooms; Breathless Resort and Spa, Montego Bay, with 150 rooms; and the R Hotel in Kingston, with 58 rooms, will also be added.

Mr. Bartlett stated that over the next year, construction and renovation of several hotels will also be undertaken.

Among these are the Wyndham and Oceana Hotels in Kingston, Oyster Bay in Trelawny and Dragon Bay Hotel in Port Antonio.