

PM Calls for Stakeholders' Support for PEP

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness is calling on teachers and other critical stakeholders in the education system to come together to enable the success of the Primary Exit Profile (PEP).

He made the appeal as he addressed the 2018 Prime Minister's Medal of Appreciation for Service to Education awards ceremony at Jamaica House on June 27.

PEP, which students will sit for the first time next year, replaces the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) as the national secondary-school placement examination. It is intended to provide an improved and more complete profile of students' academic and critical-thinking capabilities at the end of primary-level education.

The Prime Minister said that the exam aims to prepare Jamaica's students for the 21st century "(by) moving from rote learning to developing their critical-thinking skills and abilities."



Governor-General, His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen (7th right, front row), Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre, front row) and Education, Youth and Information Minister, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid (7th left), with recipients of the 2018 Prime Minister's Medal of Appreciation for Service to Education, at the award ceremony held at Jamaica House on June 27.

Coupled with this, Mr. Holness noted, is recognition of the need to deepen support for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) without diluting the importance of the liberal arts and humanities.

"As educators, you have long been adept at making the connection between and among various subjects. This we must do to a greater degree to address realities," he said.

The Prime Minister further noted that the National Stan-

dards Curriculum is moving the education system in the "right direction" and invited the teachers' support, adding that "through this curriculum, we must be intentional in encouraging our students to make the connections."

200 Foreign Officials for CARICOM Meeting

JAMAICA IS gearing up to welcome 200 foreign officials as the country hosts the 39th Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) from July 4 to 6.

The meeting, scheduled to take place in Montego Bay, St. James, will be hosted by Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness who assumes Chairmanship of the Conference on July 1.

The foreign officials expected include Heads of State and Government of the Community and their respective delegations, officials from other regional hemispheric and international bodies and institutions as well as members of the diplomatic corps. Minister of Foreign Affairs and



Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith

Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, said Jamaica welcomes the opportunity to host the conference, which is expected to address a number of critical issues that impact the economic and social advancement of the countries of the region.

"It gives us the great chance to play a major role in the development of the implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and, of course, the general integration movement in line with our development objectives and those of

CARICOM Member States," she said.

Mrs. Johnson Smith was addressing a press conference held at her Dominica Drive offices in New Kingston on June 28.

The Foreign Affairs Minister further noted that two special guests will attend the conference – President of the Republic of Chile, Sebastián Piñera, and President of Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel.

In addition, United States Deputy Secretary of State, John Sullivan, will be hosting a breakfast for foreign affairs ministers on July 6.

Among the key agenda items are crime and violence, disaster management and climate change, and the CSME.

Transport Authority Gets Buses for Staff



Transport and Mining Minister, Hon. Robert Montague (2nd left), observes as Managing Director of the Transport Authority, Cecil Morgan (left), presents a key to Supervisor at the entity, Hugh Grant (right), at a ceremony to hand over three buses to employees, at the Transport Authority's offices in Kingston, recently. At second right is Route Inspector, Deborah Wallace.

JAMPRO Taking Steps to Improve Investment Facilitation

THE JAMAICA Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) has been coordinating various initiatives to improve efficiency and effectiveness in facilitating investment projects and activities.

Addressing a JIS Think Tank on June 26, President of JAMPRO, Diane Edwards, said the entity has reviewed its three-year development plan and established new

strategies to build global partnerships and transform the business environment.

"We are in the process of transforming the business environment and getting to top 10 in the Doing Business Report, and this will mean that persons will be able to transact all their business online with the Government as a result of the improvements that will take place,"

Ms. Edwards said.

She explained that the transformation will enable persons to pay taxes and start a business online, apply for all their business approvals, and apply for and track their applications for building permits through the Application Management and Data Automation (AMANDA) system.



Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) President, Diane Edwards

\$8.4 Billion for PATH This Fiscal Year

A SUM of \$8.4 billion has been budgeted in the 2018/19 fiscal year to be spent on the Programme for Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH).

"The Programme continues to target 360,000 Jamaicans who are poor and in need of assistance."



Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Shahine Robinson

Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Shahine Robinson, made the disclosure during her contribution to the 2018/19 Sectoral Debate in the House of Representatives on June 26.

She informed that the Programme continues to target 360,000 Jamaicans who are poor and in need of assistance.

"In June 2017, there was a 30 per cent increase in the level of benefits paid to all categories of beneficiaries, which include children, pregnant and lactating mothers, the elderly and persons with disabilities," Mrs. Robinson said.

The Minister noted that after 15 years of implementation of PATH, there is the need to reassess families to determine their progress and the need for continued participation in the Programme.

Mrs. Robinson stated that the reassessment began in September of 2017 for some 11,000 PATH families who have been beneficiaries since 2002 and 2003.

She added that the Ministry is working to empower new families entering the programme to become independent of State assistance.

"We will achieve this through the Steps to Work Programme and more active case management," Mrs. Robinson said.

US\$6 Billion JGIP Development to Start Year-End

JIUQUAN IRON and Steel Company (JISCO) is streamlining the development of the Jamaica-Gansu Industrial Park (JGIP) in Nain, St. Elizabeth, which is projected to involve approximately US\$6 billion in overall investments.

Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Mike Henry, made the announcement while providing an update on the project to the House of Representatives on June 27.

He said that ground is to be broken for the project in December 2018, with phased development slated to get under way in January 2019 and roll out over the next two to eight years.

Mr. Henry indicated that the development's timing is to be confirmed at the launch of the International Investment Conference and Expo in Dunhuang, China in September.

A Framework Agreement for the JGIP was signed in February, and approval was granted by China's Central Government and the Gansu Provincial Government in March.



Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Mike Henry

The JGIP will integrate six main functions, namely: Processing and Manufacturing (primarily export processing); Modern Logistics (mainly port logistics); International Trade; Research and Development (promoting technological innovation); Professional Services (mainly services facilitating producers); and Urban Support (promoting community development).

AMANDA aims to improve the ease of doing business with municipal corporations and key government agencies.

"Business interests will also be able to look at an investment map of Jamaica and see where the investment opportunities are... [and] the specific public-sector facilities that they need to

be close to," Ms. Edwards noted further.

Another major thrust to improve operations is the establishment of a national investment policy, which will serve as a pivotal blueprint through which the Government will attract and facilitate investments.

