

PM Says Bypass at Three Miles Will be Opened Soon

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the new US\$1 million bypass for the Three Miles area in Kingston, is nearing completion and will soon be open to the public.

In an interview with journalists during a tour of the new road, on November 23, the Prime Minister said the bypass is about 90 per cent complete.

"The road is in an isolated area, and when it is opened, we will have to, at the outset, ensure that there is security. The road will be facilitated with street lights. There will be a soft shoulder and there are sidewalks in place. It will be part of the patrol schedule of the Hunts Bay Police, as

public safety is priority. We will have to put in place whatever measures are necessary to ensure that the road is safe and secure," the Prime Minister said.

"We are also conscious that in the era of climate change, whatever infrastructure that we put up must be resilient. It must be able to withstand the unpredictable and variable weather and so even the bypass road that we have almost completed, additional provisions will be made for drainage to protect the road," he added.

The Prime Minister first announced the plan to construct the new two-lane bypass, beginning from Chesterfield Drive in Seaview



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) in discussion with Director, Regional Implementation & Special Projects, National Works Agency, Varden Downer, during a tour of the new bypass for the Three Miles area in Kingston, on November 23.

Gardens linking Spanish Town Road with Marcus Miller Square (Three Miles roundabout), to ease the traffic congestion. This road is being built due to

PIOJ Reports 1.9 Per Cent Growth for July to September Quarter

DIRECTOR GENERAL of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), Dr. Wayne Henry, says the economy grew by an estimated 1.9 per cent during the July to September 2018 quarter.

The growth, he pointed out, was spurred by an estimated 5.2 per cent increase in the goods-producing industry, and 0.8 per cent for the services industry.

Dr. Henry said that the out-turn follows 2.2 per cent growth recorded in the April to June quarter, and is indicative of continued strengthening in the pace of economic growth for the 2018/19 fiscal year, within the 1.5 to 2.5 per cent range.



Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) Director General, Dr. Wayne Henry

quarter largely reflects the positive impact of increased domestic demand, spurred by record levels of employment; increased business and consumer confidence; expansion of the mining and quarrying industry's capacity utilisation; increased construction activities, specifically road network expansion, new hotel rooms and other commercial building developments; and continued macroeconomic stability.

All subsectors in the goods-producing industry grew, except for manufacturing, which contracted by 0.8 per cent.

Dr. Henry said the prospects for October to December are "positive", adding that "we expect the quarter, as also the 2018/19 fiscal year, to grow within the range of 1.5 to 2.5 per



He was speaking during the quarterly media briefing at the PIOJ's New Kingston head office on November 21.

Dr. Henry said the expansion in economic activity for the September

Jamaica Can Attain Full Employment – PM

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says if the economy continues on the current growth trajectory, Jamaica can attain full employment.

Speaking at a Town Hall at Closed Harbour Beach in Montego Bay, St. James on November 22, the Prime Minister said the economy continues to show a positive outlook, with unemployment at an all-time low.

In addition, the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) is reporting growth of 1.9 per cent for the July to September quarter.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd right seated) listens keenly to a question from a student of the Howard Cooke Primary School, at a Town Hall meeting at the Closed Harbour Beach Park in Montego Bay, St. James, on November 22. Looking on from left are: National Security Minister, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang; Attorney General, Marlene Malahoo Forte; and Chairman of the Urban Development Corporation, Senator Ransford Braham.

"If the economy continues on the path that it is now set, Jamaica will be in a position where it will have a job for every single citizen, who is able-bodied and can work," he said.

Mr. Holness said that the growth figures for the quarter ending September shows that the economy "is moving in the right direction."

"Last quarter (April to June), we had real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 2.2 per cent as reported by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN). Maybe we will be above, but such is it with statistics, they go up, they go down, the important thing ... is the trajectory... and what is clear is that the Jamaican economy is moving in the right direction as measured by growth," he noted.

Gov't Working Towards Having 300 Certified Basic Schools by 2019

MINISTER OF Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid, says the Government is working towards having 300 fully certified early childhood institutions by 2019.

He said that the Ministry is working closely with the

Early Childhood Commission (ECC) "to make this a reality".

"We have 12 operating standards. We are taking on infant schools, we are adding infant departments to existing primary schools, and we are asking the private early childhood institutions to ...

sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to become part of the Government's public early childhood system," Minister Reid said.

He was speaking at a ceremony for the presentation of stimulation resources from Japan for the Brain Builders programme at the offices of the ECC in Kingston on November 21.

Minister Reid said the Government recognises that early childhood education "is the nucleus of the entire education system" and is committed to improving standards at this level.

He noted that the work of the ECC has already resulted in the certification of 134 institutions.

Ten early childhood institutions will benefit from the donation of stimulation items, which were provided at the cost of approximately US\$17,000 under the Government of Japan funded Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Technical Cooperation Grant Programme.



Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid (left); and Ambassador of Japan to Jamaica, His Excellency Hiromasa Yamazaki (2nd left), observe as children from the Elim Early Childhood Development Centre, engage with baby Tehila Gordon, who is being held by her mother Salome Bourne-Gordon (second right). Occasion was a ceremony for the presentation of stimulation items for the Brain Builders programme at the Early Childhood Commission in Kingston on November 21. At right is Tehila's father, Talbert Gordon.

The Most Hon. Edward Seaga Honoured for Contribution to Science and Technology



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left) presents former Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Edward Seaga, with a 3D image of himself at the 2018 National Medal for Science and Technology and Innovation awards ceremony held at the Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston on November 21.

Modernised Customs Legislation Will Improve Ease of Doing Business

MINISTER OF Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, says the modernised customs legislation will create an environment that facilitates greater trading opportunities while improving the ease of doing business in the 21st century.

Dr. Clarke was speaking at a stakeholder consultation on the legislative reform for the repeal and replacement of the Customs Bill, at the Shipping Association of Jamaica offices, Newport West, Kingston, on November 19.

"In this world we are entering, we want to be in a

position where goods can easily come in by one modality and leave by another. Our Customs Act, for more reasons than one, needs to be updated to ensure that Jamaica can take full advantage of the opportunities in today's world," he said.

Dr. Clarke said while Jamaica is ranked as the most competitive country in the Caribbean region, according to the World Bank's Doing Business Report, and the sixth most competitive in Latin America, "we are not satisfied with that".

The Minister pointed out that the modernised legislation will build on reforms done a few years ago, which outlined the provisions to support the implementation of the Automated System for Customs Data (ASYCUDA).

The legislative proposals are intended to achieve the

following: promote socio-economic development and assist with the creation of the conditions for economic growth; and aid in protecting local businesses and the international supply chain from unfair international trading practices.



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