

# People and Culture Give Jamaica Edge in Global Tourism

**P**RIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says that the warmth and hospitality of the Jamaican people, coupled with the iconic culture, are what set the country apart and give it a competitive advantage in the global tourism market.

Noting that the industry "is now seeing arrival figures that were once unthinkable", he said that the uniqueness of the people "is why it is so easy to sell Jamaica to an international audience".

"The truth is that tourism is about sun, sea and sand. However, above all of that, it is about people, and that is what we are selling. Tourists choose to come to Jamaica obviously because of the value (that is) added by our people.



**Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness addressing business interests and tourism stakeholders at a luncheon held at the Sandals Montego Bay Hotel in St. James on December 18.**

That value-added is wrapped up in our culture," he said.

The Prime Minister was addressing business inter-

ests and tourism stakeholders at a luncheon held at the Sandals Montego Bay Hotel, St. James, on December 18.

In the meantime, Mr. Holness said the Government has an important role to play in ensuring that the destination remains "safe, secure and seamless", adding that "we are not just about building roads and greater infrastructure".

He noted that the Government is also about introducing social policy. "This has to be done to improve our culture... to improve our civility as a people. I can tell you, though, that as a Government, we have been doing that. We recognise our own role in making the country safe for our citizens and our visitors," he said.

## JAMPRO Secures US\$166.7M in FDI's up to June

THE GOVERNMENT'S investment promotion agency, JAMPRO continues to secure investments for the country across various sectors.

"Up to June of this year, we have booked foreign direct investments (FDI) at US\$166.7 million, while export sales stood at US\$407.3 million, and the work doesn't stop there," said JAMPRO Chairman, Senator Don Wehby.

He was making his contribution to the State of the Nation Debate in the Senate recently.

Senator Wehby highlighted the investments and growth in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, which had employment of 32,500 persons as at September 2018.

"This industry is growing so fast that we have to ensure that we have the people that are properly trained to meet the demand, because we are projecting at JAMPRO, 11,000 new jobs a year in the BPO industry," he said.



**Senator Don Wehby**

He told the Upper House that the National Investment Policy (NIP) will be coming on stream in the first quarter of next year.

It aims to establish a comprehensive framework that will guide the development, administration and monitoring of the investment community.

"This is to ensure cohesion among all related initiatives, programmes, incentives regime and stakeholder contributions," Senator Wehby said. JAMPRO serves as the Technical Secretariat for the NIP.

## Jamaica Prepares for Record Winter Tourist Season

AS PART of preparations for what is expected to be a record winter tourist season, Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, unveiled 20 new automated kiosks at the Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay.

The automated kiosks, which were donated by the Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency, were handed over during a ceremony held recently.

Minister Bartlett said the initiative would ensure better facilitation and seamlessness for the hundreds of thousands of visitors expected for the period and beyond.

"This is the start of the traditional high season which we expect to be a record-breaking winter season. One of the reasons for this projected record growth

comes from the fact that we have 120,000 new seats from destinations around the world, 89,000 of which are from our main source market, the United States.

The United States provides 65 per cent of Jamaica's stopover arrivals and, with cruise arrivals, the total is approximately 80 per cent of arrivals to the island.

"So if we grow phenomenally from our main source market, growth will be secured, so this winter season will grow and we are expecting growth in the region of five per cent and we are excited about that," Minister Bartlett added.

Preliminary data shows that the country will welcome well over 4.3 million visitors and earn US\$3.3 billion by the end of the year.



**Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett (left), guides first-time Canadian visitor, Heather Condon, through one of the new automated immigration kiosks at the Sangster International Airport. Occasion was the official handover of new automated kiosks recently. The kiosks were donated by the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency.**

## PM Christmas Treat at OPM



**Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness presents a gift to a child during a Christmas treat held on December 16 at the Office of the Prime Minister. In the background is the wife of the Prime Minister and Member of Parliament for East Rural St. Andrew, the Most Hon. Juliet Holness.**

## Jamaica and Cuba Sign Agreement to Extend Eye Care Programme

JAMAICANS WILL continue to benefit from eye care services provided by Cuban health professionals for another six months.

This is being facilitated under an extended technical cooperation agreement between the Governments of Jamaica and Cuba.

**The bilateral agreement, first signed in 2009, provided for the establishment of an Ophthalmology Centre to treat Jamaicans and other Caribbean nationals with eye conditions.**

Minister of Health, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, and Cuba's Ambassador to Jamaica, Her Excellency Inés Fors Fernández, on December 20, signed the documents during a ceremony at the Ministry's New Kingston offices.

The bilateral agreement, first signed in 2009, provided for the establishment of an Ophthalmology Centre to



**Minister of Health, Dr. the Hon Christopher Tufton (left), along with Cuban Ambassador to Jamaica, Her Excellency Inés Fors Fernández, affix their signatures to copies of an extended technical cooperation agreement, during a signing ceremony at the Ministry's New Kingston offices on December 20. Overseeing the proceedings is Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Dunstan Bryan.**

treat Jamaicans and other Caribbean nationals with eye conditions and for the implementation of the Jamaica/Cuba Eye Care Programme in 2010.

On December 2015, an agreement was signed by both Governments to continue Cuba's support to Jamaica for a further three years, extending the programme through December this year.

Mr. Tufton said the additional six months provides

the opportunity to ensure continuity in the provision of care as provided for under the Programme "even as we assess current needs and determine the best course for a successor agreement".

"Operated from three principal locations - Kingston School of Nursing, National Chest Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital, patients are provided with care prior to and subsequent to surgery, along with treatment of diabetic retinopathy and

anterior segment laser, in addition to cataract and pterygium," he said.

Some 2,695 surgeries have been performed in this year alone.

## Ward Theatre Renovations Slated for Completion in 2019

RENOVATION OF the 106-year-old Ward Theatre in downtown Kingston, is now under way and slated for completion in 2019.

This was announced by Chairman of the Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation (KSAMC), which is jointly spearheading the project with the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, His Worship the Mayor Senator Councillor Delroy Williams.

He indicated that the work, which is about 80 per cent complete, is expected to be concluded in September 2019, adding that "I believe we will all be proud of the building [when] we have done the renovations".



**Kingston's Mayor, Senator Councillor Delroy Williams.**

He was speaking during the recent launch of the Alpha Mercy Historical Centre project, located on the Alpha Campus at 26 South Camp Road, Kingston.

Senator Williams said work carried out on the Theatre, to date, includes

the installation of waterproof membrane on the roof; the fitting of countertops and basins in one restroom and four changing rooms; installation of drywall ceiling, sanitary fixtures; and wall repairs.

He contended that the historic building, which is a prominent feature in the downtown Kingston redevelopment plan, is a potential tourist attraction that can aid in transforming the nation's capital into a "destination city" for visitors.

The Ward Theatre was presented as a gift to the city in 1912 by then Custos Rotulorum of Kingston, Colonel Charles Ward.



**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AGENCY**



[policyonplasticban@nepa.gov.jm](mailto:policyonplasticban@nepa.gov.jm)



876-285-8531

**Preserve our Land: Support the Plastic Ban**

ADVT.