

Water System Improvements Will Continue - PM

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the Government will continue to improve water systems island-wide to ensure residents' access to the amenity.

He emphasised that this is imperative, as water is pivotal to Jamaica's attainment of significant economic growth and development.

Mr. Holness was speaking at the official launch of the Essex Valley Agriculture Project, at the Lititz Primary School in St. Elizabeth, on January 16.

The project is one of the largest undertaken in Jamaica, and will impact the livelihoods of over 700 farmers by providing them with adequate water to irrigate 718 hectares of land under cultivation.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Holness advised that repairs have been completed on one of two damaged National Water Commission (NWC) pipelines beneath Mandela Highway.

The project is one of the largest undertaken in Jamaica, and will impact the livelihoods of over 700 farmers.

This, he said, is expected to greatly alleviate challenges experienced by residents of Kingston and St. Andrew with their water supply.

He further indicated that it will take another three months for the NWC to replace the other broken 18-inch pipeline, which runs 35-feet beneath Mandela Highway.

"We have assessed the issues [and] we will have to abandon that and run new lines. But when that is done, Kingston will be adequately and sustainably served," Mr. Holness said



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness at the controls of a well drilling machine during breaking of ground for the well site for the Essex Valley Agriculture Development Project in Lititz, St. Elizabeth, on January 16.

Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre to be Launched

COME JANUARY 30, the official launch of the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre will take place at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, with a host of local and international government leaders and officials, including Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, participating in the proceedings.

First announced during the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Global Conference on Sustainable Tourism in St. James in November 2017, the centre, which is the first of its kind, will be tasked with creating, producing and generating toolkits, guidelines and policies to handle the recovery process following a disaster.

The centre will also assist with preparedness, management and recovery from disruptions and/or crises that impact tourism and threaten economies and livelihoods.

Addressing a recent **JIS 'Think Tank'**, Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, explained that the centre is to provide a repository of



Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett

knowledge, information and expertise to assist global communities in responding to, tracking and managing global disruptions.

"These disruptions are growing fast and furious, so there is the need for resilience, the need to build capacity to respond to them, and to be able to manage, grow and thrive after they have happened," the Minister said.

Major partners in the centre include UNWTO; World Travel and Tourism Council; Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association; Caribbean Tourism Organisation; and the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association.

Collaborative Approach Needed to Improve Micro-Economic Standing

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness has called for a collaborative approach to improve the country's micro-economic standing, in order to attain economic growth above two per cent.

According to the Prime Minister, while macro-economic indicators continue to have a positive outlook, the country's micro-economic progress remains static.

"We've been doing everything correctly. We have gotten high scores by all markers on the macro-fiscal issues and how we have handled debt; how we have handled foreign exchange; how we have handled public expenditure and how we have handled our taxation. Where we still have challenges would be at the



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness speaks at the launch of the Essex Valley Agriculture Project, at the Lititz Primary School, in St. Elizabeth, on January 16.

micro-economic level," the Prime Minister noted.

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Project, held at the Lititz Primary School, in St. Elizabeth, on January 16.

The Prime Minister noted for the last quarter, the

outturn was 1.8 per cent; the quarter before that it was 2.2 per cent, and that for the past three years the country has not been able to get over the two per cent hump.

He added that a culture shift is needed to further expand the economy on the micro-economic front, adding that the Government continues to put strategies in place to promote growth.

"Where we still have challenges would be at the level of the firm, the level of the farmer, the level of the technocrats and bureaucrats in the regulatory environment in the Ministries, Agencies and Departments. A large part of that requires a culture shift," the Prime Minister said.

Bridge Opens in Taylor Land, St. Andrew

MORE THAN 6,000 residents in the Taylor Land community of East Rural St. Andrew now have easier access to their homes, following the opening of a bridge in the area on January 14.

Speaking at the official opening, Member of Parliament for the area and wife of the Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Juliet Holness, said the new infrastructure has brought relief to users of

the roadway as, previously, they had to travel longer to enter the community.

Mrs. Holness noted that without the bridge, it is very hard to secure the community, as the added distance meant that the police could not respond timely to situations.

The Member of Parliament also lauded the community members for their co-operation during the construction, and for ensuring that there was no undue delay or additional cost.

Meanwhile, Director of Technical Services at the National Works Agency (NWA), Roger Smith, told the gathering that the new bridge replaced the previous one that had served the area for more than 45 years.

He said the bridge was the first of several that the NWA bought from China recently, and that they are being deployed

at "designated sites" across the island to be installed at a cost of \$100 million.

Bridges will also be erected at Chesterfield and Barracks in St. Mary, and Southwood in Clarendon.



Member of Parliament for East Rural St. Andrew and wife of the Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Juliet Holness (centre), cuts the ribbon to officially open the new bridge in the Taylor Land community on January 14. Others (from left) are Director of Technical Services at the National Works Agency (NWA), Roger Smith; Councillor of the Dallas Division, Celia James; Head of Chin's Construction, Alex Chin, and Project Manager at the company, Donald Pearson.

Cabinet Holds Three Days of Consultations

MEMBERS OF the Cabinet led by Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness held three days of intense consultations and planning sessions from January 17-19.

The consultations come, as the end of the Parliamentary year approaches. The Cabinet reviewed the country's performance over the past year in several

sectors, while looking to finalise the priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

This is the first such session to be held in 2019. In the last quarter of 2018, the Cabinet also reviewed its performance and that of the country, and set targets for continued growth and development.



Prime Minister the Most Hon Andrew Holness addresses members of the Cabinet at a Retreat held from January 17-19.

Education Ministry Launches New eLibrary Project



Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid (left), and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Dean-Roy Bernard (right), display an eLibrary package from La Sierra University in the United States, during the launch on January 15, at the Knutsford Court Hotel in New Kingston. At centre is representative from La Sierra University, Patrina Johnson.



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