

Gov't to Roll Out More ZOSOs

THE GOVERNMENT plans to roll out additional Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs).

This was announced by Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness on April 16, during the sitting of the House of Representatives, at Gordon House in downtown, Kingston where two resolutions were approved, extending the ZOSOs in Mount Salem, St. James, and Denham Town, West Kingston, for another 60 days.

"We have reached a point where we believe that we have perfected the operations of the Zones of Special Operations, and we are now ready to declare in other communities," Mr. Holness said.

He informed that the Government has engaged a



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness

strategy of training, incorporating the Jamaica National Service Corps (JNSC), to rapidly boost the Jamaica

Defence Force (JDF) personnel.

"Some of those members will ultimately find their way through the recruitment process into the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF). So we are using the JNSC as a mechanism to increase the manpower of the Force, so that we can [implement] more of these Zones of Special Operations," Prime Minister Holness stated.

Mr. Holness informed that budgetary allocations to undertake additional ZOSOs have been earmarked, adding that the logistics being worked out is how to deploy members of the security forces without depriving communities of their services.

Record Low Unemployment

DIRECTOR GENERAL of the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), Carol Coy, has announced that in January 2019, Jamaica achieved a new record-low unemployment rate of eight per cent.

"After record-low unemployment rates of 8.4 per cent in July and 8.7 per cent in October 2018, the unemployment in January 2019 declined to a new low of eight per cent. This was a reduction of 1.6 percentage points relative to 9.6 per cent in January 2018," Ms. Coy said.

She was addressing STATIN's press conference for the release of the March 2019 Consumer Price Index and January 2019 Labour Force Survey, at their offices on Cecelio Avenue in St. Andrew, on April 16.

"When disaggregated by sex, the male unemployment rate declined from 7.4 per cent to 6.1 per cent, while female unemployment rate fell from 12.2 per cent to 10.3 per cent. Among the youth, the unemployment rate was 21.8 per cent. For



Director General, Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), Carol Coy

male youth, the unemployment rate was 17.9 per cent and for female youth, it was 26.5 per cent. These showed declines when compared to January 2018," Ms. Coy said.

She noted that the employed labour force for January 2019 was 1,232,700, which was 28,600 (2.4 per cent) more than in January 2018; the increase in employment for females was more than twice that of males and the number of employed males increased by 9,500 to 673,500 and employed females by 19,100 to 559,200.

New Cardiac Ward to be Built at Children's Hospital

MINISTER OF Health, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, has announced that a new cardiac ward will be constructed and equipped on the grounds of the Bustamante Hospital for Children in St. Andrew, at a cost of between \$90 million and \$100 million.

Addressing the opening of a new Paediatric Cardiac Centre at the hospital on April 15, Dr. Tufton said the new cardiac ward will consist of 20 beds to support the pre- and post-care patients' cardiac operations at the hospital.

He also noted that the Government will partner with other stakeholders for the construction of the state-of-the-art facility.



Minister of Health, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, points to an artist's impression of the soon to be constructed cardiac ward at the Bustamante Hospital for Children, during the opening of the Paediatric Cardiac Centre on April 15.

"In the spirit of demonstrating the Government's commitment to this cause, I've asked both the National

Health Fund (NHF) and the Culture, Health, Arts, Sports and Education (CHASE) Fund to contribute a total collectively of \$20 million to that effort," Dr. Tufton said.

"I'm committing that we will deliver this building within a year after approvals are given, which normally takes three to four months," he added.

The cardiac ward will offer support to the new Paediatric Cardiac Centre, as patients will be transferred there for recovery after surgeries.

The Paediatric Cardiac Centre currently offers treatment and surgeries for children living with congenital heart defects. It is the only one of its kind in Jamaica, and is complete with a 10-bed intensive care unit and a state-of-the-art biplane catheterisation lab.

New Police Headquarters to be Built in Downtown Kingston

NATIONAL SECURITY Minister, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, says a new "built-for-purpose" headquarters for the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), will be constructed in downtown Kingston.

He advised that the facility, which will accommodate over 2,500 police officers, is to be built on 40 acres of land (near Rema in South St. Andrew) in an area referred to as 'No Man's Land'.

"It will be home to all the non-geographic formations of the specialised units, such as Narcotics, National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) and Counter-Terrorism and Organised Crime Investigation Branch (C-TOC), among others. This multifaceted headquarters will have customer-friendly reception areas (and) green spaces to ensure a strong community interface. This will represent the transformative approach the Government is taking to build the new Jamaica," Dr. Chang said.

The Minister made the announcement during his presentation in the 2019/20



National Security Minister, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang

Sectoral Debate, which got under way in the House of Representatives in downtown Kingston on April 16.

Dr. Chang said the facility's construction in the heart of downtown Kingston will complement the Government's overall plan to revive and reposition the capital city as a leading business district that is safe and orderly.

The Minister assured that residents will not be dislocated, adding that the National Housing Trust (NHT) will undertake to ensure coverage for all socio-economic groupings in the region.

PM Meets with Members of the Jamaica Prefects' Association



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd row, 2nd right) with the executive of the Jamaica Prefects' Association at the Office of the Prime Minister in St. Andrew on April 16. Prime Minister Holness says he remains committed to their purpose to promote effective student leadership.

Trade Information Portal to Go Live in May

MINISTER OF Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Audley Shaw, says the Jamaica Trade Information Portal is expected to go live in May.

Mr. Shaw made the announcement at the second regional Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) Caribbean Conference of the Small Business Association of Jamaica's (SBAJ), on April 17, at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston.

He said the Jamaica Trade Information Portal will

incrementally make business easier for exporters and importers.

"The portal will bring export and import-related regulatory information and step-by-step guidance on a single platform to allow traders, investors and consumers a smoother interface with the regulatory and procedural steps needed to facilitate their businesses, ultimately driving our collective economic growth," Mr. Shaw added.

The Jamaica Trade Information Portal project

was launched on October 4, 2018. It will provide Jamaican export and import businesses with the commercial responsiveness and agility they need to become more competitive in the global market.

With this portal, Jamaica will have a single authoritative trade information source for businesses to easily access information if and when they need it. It will be managed by the Trade Board Limited (TBL).



Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Audley Shaw (centre), examines a container with pepper sauce made and packaged by Entrepreneur, Mama Sassy's Gourmet Pepper Sauce, Chelle Cartwright (left), at the second regional Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) Caribbean Conference of the Small Business Association of Jamaica (SBAJ) on April 17, at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston. At right is President, SBAJ, Hugh Johnson.



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AGENCY



policyonplasticban@nepa.gov.jm



876-285-8531

Preserve our Land: Support the Plastic Ban

ADVT.