

Gov't Allocates Additional \$125M to Alleviate Dry Spell

THE GOVERNMENT has allocated an additional \$125 million for the trucking of water and distribution of tanks to parishes affected by the current dry spell.

These parishes include Kingston, St. Andrew, St. Thomas, Portland, St. Mary St. Elizabeth, Manchester and Clarendon.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness made the announcement during the sitting of the House of Representatives in downtown Kingston on May 21.

He said the National Water Commission (NWC) spent \$205 million for the trucking of water for the last financial year up to March 31.

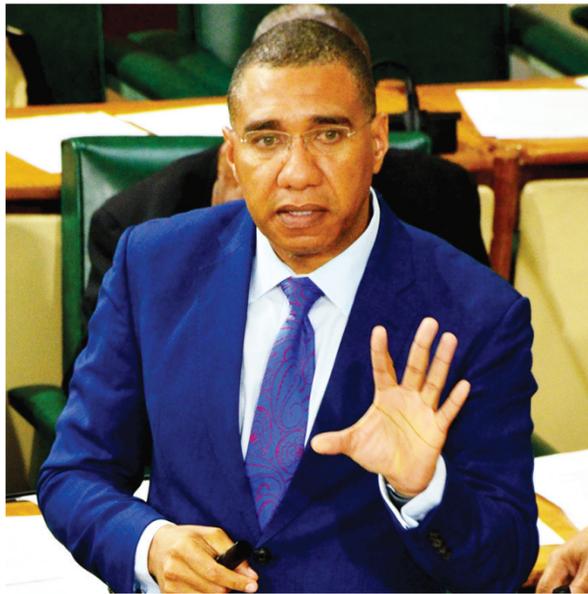
"The NWC will continue to spend on trucking of water and [provide] water tanks to

the most affected parishes," Mr. Holness said.

Prime Minister Holness further informed that the Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Parnell Charles Jr., is to meet with the Members of Parliament and Councillors of the affected parishes to work out trucking schedules for communities, with emphasis on critical services such as hospitals, health centres and schools.

Meanwhile, Mr. Holness said the NWC has issued a Prohibition Notice against water wasting.

"The effect of this restriction is that persons should not be using piped water for watering gardens, lawns, for



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness

refilling supply tanks, ponds, and swimming pools and for washing vehicles. It has legal implications and people can be fined and prosecuted," he warned.

Gov't to Draft New NIDS Bill

THE GOVERNMENT has issued drafting instructions for a new National Identification Registration Bill following a ruling by the Constitutional Court striking down the parent Act.

In April, the Court declared the 2017 National Identification and Registration (NIR) Act null and void after citing that sections of the proposed law were in violation of the Constitution.

The Government has since declared that it will not be appealing the ruling but will be revising the National Identification System (NIDS) policy so that a new NIR Bill can be drafted and presented to Parliament.

Upon completion and once approved by Cabinet, a series of island-wide consultation and sensitisation

A revision of the National Identification System (NIDS) policy is underway, so that a new NIR Bill can be drafted.

sessions will be held to facilitate public participation and understanding.

NIDS is intended to provide a comprehensive and secure structure to enable the capture and storage of identity information for all Jamaicans, where each citizen will be provided with a randomised nine-digit National Identification Number (NIN), which they will have for life.



PM Participates in Labour Day Activity

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) paints a column at the Papine High School in St. Andrew on Labour Day (May 23). Others participating in the painting activity (from left) are Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Peter Phillips; Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Hon. Fayval Williams; General Manager, JN Foundation, Onyka Barrett; and Deputy Representative, United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Jamaica, Vicente Teran.

PIOJ Reports 1.5 Per Cent Growth for January to March

THE PLANNING Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) is reporting that the economy grew by an estimated 1.5 per cent during the January to March 2019 quarter, with projections for up to two per cent growth for April to June.

increased employment, and business and consumer confidence.

Dr. Henry said the increased demand for goods and services was facilitated by the expansion in hotel room stock, air seat capacity and flight frequency, which spurred growth in stopover arrivals.

He added that there was higher capacity utilisation, particularly in mining and quarrying; an uptick in loans and advances to the private sector; and major infrastructure works, including road rehabilitation and expansion projects, construction and renovation of hotels and residential and commercial buildings.

"The preliminary data presented on the performance for the January to March 2019 quarter indicate that the economy has continued to strengthen, recording the 17th consecutive quarter of growth. This outturn, if it materialises, would bring the growth rate for fiscal year 2018/19 to 1.9 per cent, the strongest fiscal year growth since 2006/07," he noted.

Dr. Henry was speaking at the PIOJ's quarterly media briefing at the institute's head office in New Kingston on May 22.



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

Director General, Dr. Wayne Henry, said that the strengthening of the economy in the first quarter of the calendar year resulted from an estimated 1.8 per cent increase in the goods producing industry, and 1.5 per cent growth in services.

He said there was greater demand from Jamaica's main external trading partners for some goods and services, particularly tourism and alumina; and heightened domestic demand spurred by

Occupational Safety and Health Bill Passage Expected by Year End

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the Occupational Safety and Health Bill (2017) is expected to be passed in Parliament by December 2019.

"The Bill is now before a Joint Select Committee... and we intend to pass it in this [2019/20] fiscal year," he advised.

Mr. Holness made the announcement at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's awards banquet at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston on May 22 to mark the centenary of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) formation and promulgation of the Trade Union Act in Jamaica.

The OSH Bill is intended to repeal the Factories Act (1943), which is limited in scope and excludes vital sectors and groups such as finance, shops and offices, agriculture and the public sector.

The proposed legislation's introduction is expected to usher in a new paradigm in workplace safety and health across Jamaica.

Mr. Holness said the Bill will set and improve standards for safety and security in the workplace for employees and employers.

He also assured that the Government remains committed to reviewing Jamaica's labour legislation.

"We're going to be directing attention to the



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left) presents a commemorative award to former Labour Minister, Hon. Parnell Charles Sr., during the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's awards banquet at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston on May 22.

scope of our laws and regulations to clarify responsibilities among the social partners and ensure effective protection of workers," he said.

\$1.3B Spent to Construct, Rehabilitate and Refurbish 42 Justice Institutions

THE MINISTRY of Justice spent \$1.3 billion to construct, rehabilitate and refurbish 43 justice institutions, including several of the island's courts, during the 2018/19 Fiscal Year.

This was disclosed by portfolio Minister, Hon. Delroy Chuck, as he made his contribution to the 2019/20 Sectoral Debate in the House of Representatives on May 21.



Minister of Justice, Hon. Delroy Chuck

Major infrastructural works undertaken during the period included expansion and upgrading of the Court of Appeal, valued at \$846 million. There was also the addition of three courtrooms and 14 judges' chambers, as well as upgraded meeting facilities and offices.

"This expansion is critical to the reduction of the backlog in cases as,

already, the expansion has allowed for an increase in the number of judges at the Court of Appeal and by extension, an increase in the number of cases being tried, and subsequent disposal of these cases from the court system," Mr. Chuck said.

Other works included the expansion and upgrading of the Supreme Court building in downtown

Kingston, which included the addition of two new courtrooms and the commissioning of two new elevators.

In addition, bathroom refurbishing works were undertaken in eight major courthouses valued at almost \$19 million.



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