

PM Updates UN Secretary-General on Climate Initiative

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness on Thursday July 4 held bilateral talks with United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Antonio Guterres.

The meeting was held in the margins of the 40th Regular meeting of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community, CARICOM in Gros Islet, St. Lucia.

Prime Minister Holness updated the UN Secretary-General on the plans to deal with the Secretary-General's Climate Action Initiative.

Jamaica is co-chair of the initiative along with France and Qatar.

Mr. Holness reaffirmed his commitment to the task to strategically raise awareness on climate resilience and funding.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) greets United Nations Secretary General, His Excellency Antonio Guterres, ahead of bilateral talks in Gros Islet, St. Lucia on July 4.

The leaders of the three nations have been assigned to help raise \$100 billion to help support Global Climate Action.

In that regard, Prime Minister Holness underscored the importance of replenishing the Green Climate Fund

(GCF), noting the necessity for developed countries and the private sector to donate more to climate change initiatives.

He pointed out that progress is being made on the Climate Finance and Carbon Pricing work stream, on which Jamaica is co-lead.

Prime Minister Holness said he is working to leverage support for the floating of climate resilience bonds which would attract the private sector.

He also informed the UN Secretary-General that he will further raise awareness during his international engagements.

The UN Secretary-General acknowledged the work being done by Prime Minister Holness and thanked him for being a part of the initiative.

Jamaica Seeing Record Level of Economic Activity – Dr. Clarke

MINISTER OF Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, says the country is experiencing an unprecedented level of economic activity, with 17 consecutive quarters of growth, and unemployment now at the lowest in the nation's history.

"We have never had unemployment this low where more people are employed today than those who are unemployed," the Minister pointed out.

"The economic activity all around is staggering in its volume. When you go around Jamaica there is evidence of things taking place... everywhere you go something new is happening. If you haven't visited an area in three months and you are only just going back there, expect to see something you hadn't seen in your previous visit," he said.

Dr. Clarke was delivering the main address at the fundraising dinner of the East Central St. James Education Fund held recently at the



Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, Minister of Finance and the Public Service

Jewel Grande Montego Bay Resort & Spa in Rose Hall, St. James.

He noted that the lowering of the central bank policy interest rate, which is now less than one per cent, has helped to spur economic activity by making borrowing more attractive.

"When you look at where interest rates are... they have been reduced for the 10th consecutive time. What this means is that businesses can borrow at lower and lower rates and where they are comfortable in knowing that the terms are friendly," he said.

MSMEs to Access Loans at Very Low Interest Rate

OWNERS OF micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) will soon be able to access loans for their businesses with help from the Government, at 4.75 per cent, one of the lowest interest rates that will be available on the market.

This was announced by Minister of State in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Floyd Green, at a workshop dubbed: 'Time for Growth: Unlocking the Power of the SME', at the Terra Nova All-Suite Hotel in St. Andrew, on July 3.

"The Government is now unveiling a new facility. We're seeking to go to \$600 million [in funds to lend entrepre-

neurs]. We're going to start with \$400 million that will be given to the EXIM Bank to lend in the micro, medium and small enterprise sector, largely focusing on our manufacturers," he said.

Mr. Green said local manufacturers have complained that the current interest rates are high, and this is a major reason the Government has explored offering these loans at special interest rates.

"We're doing that mostly to send a signal that it can be done, but we will never have enough money as a government to lend to the sector, so the banks now have to come on board," he added.



Minister of State in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Floyd Green (right), signs a Declaration of Interest to assist micro, small and medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), during a workshop, held on July 3, at the Terra Nova All-Suite Hotel in Kingston. Observing (from left) are Chief Executive Officer, Jamaica Business Development Corporation, Valerie Veira; and Chairman, Jamaica Association for Micro-Financing, Dr. Blossom O'Meally-Nelson.

Domestic Flights to Resume July 8

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS are set to resume on Monday July 8, with the introduction of daily service by local aviation company, Jam Airlink Express.

Flights will be scheduled out of the Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay where Jam Airlink is based; Negril; Ian Fleming International Airport in Boscobel, St. Mary; and the Tinson Pen Aerodrome in Kingston, between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.



A Jam Airlink Express aeroplane receives the water salute, as part of the launch of domestic flight services, which resume on July 8.

tiations between the Ministry and Jam Airlink.

Mr. Montague, in his remarks, said the undertaking will provide numerous stakeholder opportunities, including jobs, and the engagement of businesses to provide goods and services.

Jam Airlink, he said, "has broken new ground, and I encourage everybody to give the service a try".

For his part, Mr. Levy said the service will significantly reduce travel time, between Kingston and Montego Bay.

The service will significantly reduce travel time, particularly between Kingston and Montego Bay.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company, John Levy, made the announcement during the launch at the Ian Fleming Airport on July 3.

Transport and Mining Minister, Hon. Robert Montague, who has portfolio responsibility for the aviation industry, headed the officials and other guests in attendance.

Reintroduction of the service is the result of nego-

Accident & Emergency Department at Princess Margaret Hospital Opens

Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (2nd right), lies on one of the new beds at the Accident and Emergency Department of the Princess Margaret Hospital following the official opening on July 4. Observing (from left) Chief Executive Officer, National Health Fund, Everton Anderson; Regional Director, South East Regional Health Authority (SEHRA), Maureen Golding and Member of Parliament, Eastern St. Thomas, Dr. Fenton Ferguson.



Security Ministry to Acquire Software for DNA Database

THE MINISTRY of National Security is to procure software and associated equipment for a DNA database, at a cost of US\$450,000, this financial year.



Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang

This was announced by Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, during a tour of the Institute of Forensic Science & Legal Medicine (IFSLM) in Kingston, on July 3.

Dr. Chang said the various upgrades, such as acquisition of the DNA database, are in keeping with the Government's

commitment to use forensic technology in its crime-fighting efforts.

"The IFSLM is currently in the process of improving its capacity and capabilities for greater efficiency and effectiveness. This modernisation will enable the IFSLM to increase its use of DNA and other biological evidence to solve crimes, by prosecuting offenders and exonerating the innocent," he explained.

Dr. Chang noted that as of June 2019, a total of 461 DNA samples had been submitted to the institute for forensic investigations.

"Additionally, the JCF (Jamaica Constabulary Force) and DCS (Department of Correctional Services) detention officers submitted 476 DNA samples to populate the DNA Registry. For the first half of 2019, IFSLM conducted DNA analysis on 313 cases involving 460 exhibits and found matches in 47 per cent of the cases," he pointed out.



WE HAVE MOVED

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