

Tourism Sector Increases Earnings by US\$500M in 2019

MINISTER OF Tourism, Hon. Edmond Bartlett, says preliminary report from the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) is showing that in 2019, the sector earned between US\$3.7 billion and US\$3.8 billion, some US\$500 million more than in 2018.

Speaking at a press conference, held on January 15 at the JTB offices in New Kingston, Mr. Bartlett said stopover arrivals for the year grew by eight per cent.

The Minister described the industry's performance as "spectacular and exciting".

"The measure of tourism is both arrivals and earnings, but the most powerful part of it is the earnings, which have increased by US\$1.8 billion in just over three years," the Minister said.

Mr. Bartlett argued that the continued growth in tourism results from the setting of targets, which he did



Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmond Bartlett (right), displays the 2019 Tourism Sector Performance report at a press conference held on January 15, at the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) offices in New Kingston. With the Minister is Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Jennifer Griffith.

after assuming office in 2016.

He reported that the country has already outperformed, by 2,000, the projection to have 127,000 persons employed in the sector by

2021, and that all the other targets are almost reached.

"The best part of our success is in the retention increase that we have had in the dollar," Mr. Bartlett said,

explaining that in 2016, Jamaica was retaining 30 cents in every dollar earned in the industry, but it is now at 40.8 cents, a 30 per cent increase.

US Secretary of State to Make Working Visit to Jamaica

UNITED STATES Secretary of State, Michael R. Pompeo is to visit Jamaica for a two-day working visit from January 21 -22.

The Secretary of State and his delegation will be met by his counterpart, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith, on his arrival at the Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston, on January 21.

"We welcome the visit of Secretary Pompeo as a demonstration of the commitment of the United States of America to once more strengthen its engagement with Jamaica and the wider Caribbean. We truly look forward to this opportunity to engage and reinforce our longstanding ties," Senator Johnson Smith said.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness and senior Cabinet Ministers will



Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson

hold bilateral talks with Secretary Pompeo on Wednesday, January 22.

Secretary Pompeo is expected to give a policy speech on the Caribbean region's critical importance to the United States, and the country's renewed commitment to closer ties, based on shared values, interests and economic prosperity.

Leaders Participate in National Prayer Breakfast



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd left) with (from left) Member, National Leadership Prayer Breakfast (NLPB), Rev. Dr. Peter Garth; Custos Rotulorum for St. James and Pastor, Faith Temple Assemblies of God, Bishop the Hon. Conrad Pitkin; Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Peter Phillips; and Chairman, NLPB, Right Rev. Stanley Clarke, pray for the nation at the NLPB held at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston on January 16.

National Dengue Clean-Up Drive Set for January 24-26

GENDER, ENTERTAINMENT and Sport Minister, Hon. Olivia Grange, has outlined plans for the National Dengue Clean-up drive, to be undertaken islandwide from January 24 to 26.

Addressing a post-Cabinet press briefing on January 15 at Jamaica House, Minister Grange said that in keeping with the thrust of joined-up Government, the National Labour Day Secretariat had been activated at the request of the Minister of Health and Wellness to facilitate a strategic execution of the exercise.

She informed that the Ministry has identified 158

communities across the country that are in need of urgent action to destroy mosquitoes and their breeding sites, and that national agencies, local authorities, members of parliament, councillors and volunteers have been engaged to conduct clean-up operations in those communities.

She further noted that of the communities identified, 36 are considered to be critical for immediate intervention and that two have been chosen as national projects.

"Grants Pen and Rae Town have been selected as national projects, to be led by the Prime Minister, and

the Leader of the Opposition will be invited to join him in this effort," she said.

The work teams are expected to remove bulky waste, cut down overgrown vegetation and fill out depressed areas where mosquitoes are likely to breed.

The staging of the national projects will be led by the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF), the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) and the National Works Agency (NWA).

Clean-up activities will begin on January 24 with the removal of mosquito breeding sites at schools, churches and business places. The NSWMA will also commence

the removal of bulky waste in Grants Pen and Rae Town.

On January 25, three gully cleaning teams will commence clearing of major gullies at Barbican, Grants Pen and Acadia and NSWMA will continue the removal of bulky waste using 10 teams.

Beach clean-up and gully cleaning exercises will take place in Rae Town, and both national sites are to be visited by the Prime Minister on day two.

On January 26, the clean-up effort will continue with the removal of bulky waste.

New National Project Launched Under NIDS

A NEW National Public Key Infrastructure (NPKI) project has been launched by the Government under the National Identification System (NIDS) programme.



Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Hon. Fayval Williams

The launch took place on January 15 at the Terra Nova All-Suite Hotel, in Kingston.

The NPKI project will be rolled out during the next seven months, with the objective of making Jamaica a more digital society in which there is ubiquitous use of information and information and communications technology (ICT) in all spheres, such as home, work, school and recreation.

This project will enable trusted electronic identities

for people, services and things, and make it possible to implement strong authentication, data encryption and digital signatures, based on a certifying authority.

Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Hon. Fayval Williams, said the NPKI project will have numerous benefits to Jamaicans, based on the Government's legislative plans for a digital society.

She noted that the new system will ensure that Jamaicans authenticate themselves online, which will reduce time and travel and guarantee that messages coming from an individual, or documents sent electronically, are really coming from whom he or she claims to be.

"That is where increased productivity will come in, because instead of taking two days to go to the United States of America and back to sign one document, you can sign it here and do other things that you need to do," she said.

The NPKI project will be rolled out in association with the various Government agencies, such as the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) and eGov Jamaica Limited.

Cabinet Approves Contract to Purchase 20 Garbage Compactor Trucks

CABINET HAS given approval for the award of a US\$1.89-million contract to Tank-Weld Metals Limited for the supply of 20 garbage compactor trucks.

This was stated by Minister with oversight for Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Karl Samuda, at the post-Cabinet press briefing at Jamaica House on January 15.

The trucks will boost the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) fleet to improve its garbage collection.

"This is a welcome decision, as there is great need for additional garbage units. This is just a drop in the bucket because we are in the process of looking into the acquisition of 100 garbage trucks. This has to be done over a period, but it must be done on a timely basis," he said.

The NSWMA provides solid waste management services across the island, in order to safeguard public health, while helping to create an environment that is healthy and aesthetically pleasing for both residents and visitors to enjoy.



Minister with oversight for Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Karl Samuda



Government Ministers in animated conversation at a post-Cabinet press briefing at Jamaica House, on January 15. From left are Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange, Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, and Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie. The Ministers gave details of the multi-agency approach to tackle the dengue outbreak.