

US and Jamaica to Focus on Security

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says that Jamaica and the United States (US) will be strengthening cooperation on security matters.

He said that the main focus will be on bolstering Jamaica's capacity to counter transnational organised crime, secure its borders and ports, and interrupt the flow of illicit weapons into the country.

"I cannot overstate the urgency with which we need to address these security matters... and I have also emphasised their importance in my discussions with [US] Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo," he said.

Mr. Holness was addressing a joint press conference held at the Office of the Prime Minister on January 22 following bilateral discussions with Secretary Pompeo, who was on a two-day working visit to the island.

The Prime Minister, who noted that the talks went well, shared that he and Secretary Pompeo engaged



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) greets United States (US) Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, following a joint press conference, held at the Office of the Prime Minister on January 22.

in discussions on critical issues of mutual interest to both countries.

He added that at the wider level, securing Jamaica also requires sustained intervention on the economic and social fronts.

"We are determined to position Jamaica to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself to grow the economy, so that large and small businesses, as well as our communities and citizens, can reap the benefits," he said.

For his part, Secretary Pompeo stated that the discussions with Prime Minister Holness served to strengthen the friendship between the countries and set the table for greater engagement.

Gov't Considering Performance-Based Pay for Ministers

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the Government is considering performance-based pay for ministers as part of measures to transform the public sector.

The Prime Minister made the disclosure while addressing the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation's general staff meeting on January 23, at the Jamaica Conference Centre, downtown Kingston.

He commended the country's permanent secretaries for agreeing to a performance-based pay system, which they did last December.

"We recognise that we have to have a mass implementation of performance-based systems in order to get the public sector to move much quicker in achieving the objectives of policy, and we intend to start this by introducing performance-based pay for permanent secretaries. We are contemplating how... we do this for ministers as well," he said.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (standing right) addressing the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation's general staff meeting on January 23, at the Jamaica Conference Centre, downtown Kingston.

The Prime Minister said that implementation of the system across the public service will be undertaken gradually, so that persons can see that it is working and buy into the concept.

He noted that the system has to be well planned and structured, noting that

job descriptions will have to be formulated for workers whose duties, roles and responsibilities are not officially outlined.

"All these things are in train; they will happen. If we want to achieve growth Government has to make some serious decisions," he noted.

Six Police Stations to be Rehabilitated at a Cost of \$235 Million

THE EUROPEAN Union (EU)-funded Poverty Reduction Programme (PRP) will be carrying out rehabilitation works at six police stations across the island, at a cost of approximately \$235 million.

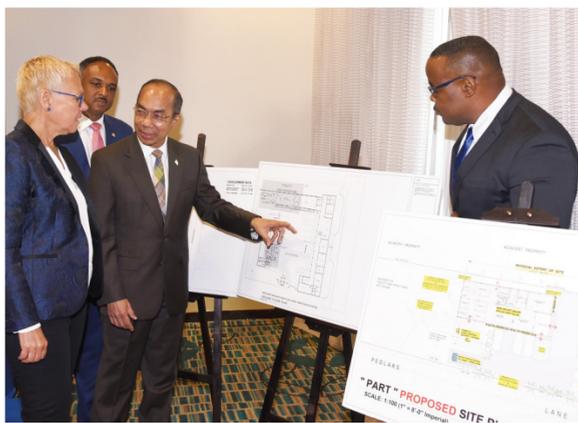
They include Denham Town (Kingston) at a cost of \$36.81 million; Franklyn Town (Kingston), \$42.48 million; Lionel Town (Clarendon), \$36.87 million; Mount Salem (St. James), \$42.53 million; Four Paths (Clarendon), \$37.86 million; and Adelphi (St. James), \$38.44 million.

Details were provided at the launch of the PRP police station rehabilitation project, at the Courtyard by Marriott hotel in New Kingston on January 23.

The project will be implemented by the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), which undertakes activities of the PRP, and will take place during the next four months.

Work will be carried out on bathroom facilities, training rooms, kitchens, lunch areas, cell blocks, fences and driveways of some of the stations.

Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace



Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (3rd left), points to an architectural drawing of works to be carried out at a police station under the European Union (EU)-funded Poverty Reduction Programme (PRP), on January 23, at the Courtyard by Marriott hotel. Sharing the moment (from left) are Head of Delegation of the European Union in Jamaica, Ambassador Malgorzata Wasilewska; Managing Director, Jamaica Social Investment Fund, Omar Sweeney and Commanding Officer of the Property Management and Maintenance Division, Jamaica Constabulary Force, Garfield Taylor.

Chang, said two of the projects will be undertaken at police stations located in the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs) – Denham Town and Mount Salem – and should significantly contribute to the development of these areas.

He emphasised that one major objective of these rehabilitation activities is to strengthen the police force, which is the primary law-enforcement agency, and guarantee citizen safety in those communities.

Cruise Ship Call to Port Royal a Success

MINISTER OF Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange, is hailing the inaugural call of the cruise ship, Marella Discovery II, to the historic town of Port Royal on January 20 as a success.

She said the feedback from the visitors indicate that they were pleased with the day's activities, which included a tour of various sites in the Corporate Area and nearby parishes.

"Port Royal is now open for business. [It] has a rich heritage, and all our guests who arrived were in awe. Port Royal is a gateway for the city of Kingston. There were tours outside of [the area] and those tours went very well," she added.

Ms. Grange was speaking to journalists at a reception

for the cruise-ship passengers at the new Port Royal Naval Dockyard, which culminated their day's experience in Kingston.

She noted that with more cruise ships expected to call at Port Royal, this will create opportunities for artisans, performers, fishermen and others living and working in the area.

President and Chief Executive Officer of Port Authority of Jamaica, Professor Gordon Shirley, agreed that the day was a success.

"The culture of Jamaica was on show and our guests felt it was wonderful," he said.

Approximately 1,900 passengers were on board the Marella Discovery II.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (4th left) presents the first two passengers disembarking the Marella Discovery 2 cruise ship, Cislyn Hamilton (left) and Addan Hamilton (3rd left), with a welcoming gift at the new Port Royal Naval Dockyard on January 20. Others from 2nd left are: Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett; President, Port Authority of Jamaica, Professor Gordon Shirley; and and Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister, Audrey Sewell.

Company to Invest US\$280M in Bamboo Farm

MINISTER OF State in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Floyd Green, says a company is set to invest US\$280 million in the development of a bamboo farm in Trelawny.

Mr. Green made the disclosure at the official launch of the 65th staging of the Hague Agricultural and Industrial Show, on January 22, at the Hague Showground in Trelawny.

The State Minister pointed out that the bamboo farm will be located on about 2,000 acres of land.

"A brand new Jamaican company is coming that will



Minister of State in the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Floyd Green

help us, especially in relation to our environmentally-friendly

initiatives, to reduce the use of plastics and styrofoam and will help in the creation of employment," Mr. Green said.

He said that the demand for biodegradable options augurs well for the island, as it has the land and expertise needed to meet that demand.

The Hague Agricultural and Industrial Show is to be held on February 26 at the showground in the parish. The annual show is organised by the Trelawny Association of Branch Societies, and will be held under the theme 'Agricultural Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Change'.

Victoria Jubilee Hospital Gets Equipment and Supplies

President of the Jamaica United Relief Association (JURA), Bruce Palmer (right), Chief Executive Officer of Kingston Public Hospital and Victoria Jubilee Hospital (VJH), Kathleen Cooper-Brown (centre), and Director of Nursing Services at VJH, Elise Fairweather Blackwood, test the DVT (deep vein thrombosis) pump during a handover ceremony at the VJH in downtown Kingston, on January 20. In the background (from left) are Senior Medical Officer at VJH, Dr. Garth McDonald, and Consultant, Neonatal Care Unit, VJH, Dr. Yanique Brown.

