

Gov't Allocates \$308M to Alleviate Drought Conditions

A SPECIAL ALLOCATION of \$308 million has been made by the Government to implement measures to alleviate prevailing drought conditions across the island.

Minister without portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Daryl Vaz, in a statement in the House of Representatives on July 14, said that the provision will ensure adequate access to water supply by vulnerable communities in order to assist in the fight against the coronavirus (COVID-19).

He informed that of the sum allocated, \$70 million will go to Rural Water Supply Limited (RWSL) to facilitate the installation of approximately 130 wayside tanks and construction of some 39 loading bays islandwide.

He said that contact has already been made with the



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Daryl Vaz, highlights a point while making a statement in the House of Representatives on July 14.

various municipal corporations, which advised of suitable locations for the installation of the wayside tanks and loading bays in order to reach

residents in the most vulnerable, water-deficient areas.

"The benefits to be derived from the installation of wayside tanks at strategic

locations include easy access to potable water by residents in areas devoid of adequate water supply [and] ease of delivery of water by trucking when compared with house-to-house delivery," he pointed out.

Mr. Vaz said the loading bays will enhance the trucking of water and reduce the cost of delivery, thereby making it more efficient and cost-effective.

The special allocation also includes \$100 million to the National Water Commission (NWC) to truck water and \$63 million to be shared equally among the 63 Members of Parliament to provide water tanks and for trucking of water.

In addition, the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development will be allocated \$75 million to provide more water shops and truck water.

\$40M Support Package for Creatives and Athletes

MINISTER OF Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange, says \$40 million has been approved by the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service for a special support package for creative and athletic practitioners who have been adversely affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

"This is good news for our sectors. The greatest assistance that we can provide to our athletic and creative practitioners is to ensure that they can return to doing what they love to do in a way that secures public health," she said.

The Minister was making her contribution to the 2020/21 Sectoral Debate in the House of Representatives on July 14.

She noted that creative practitioners are already benefiting from \$10.6 million in support under the Government's COVID Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) Programme.

She pointed out that persons who have or who will receive funding under the CARE Programme, will not be eligible for assis-



Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange

tance under the special support package.

Ms. Grange told the House that the Ministry has been in discussion with the relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health and Wellness and Ministry of Local Government and Community Development, for a phased reopening of entertainment and athletic activities.

Small outdoor concerts, parties, round robins, launches, religious celebrations and festivals, will be allowed to resume temporarily starting July 21.

State-Of-The-Art High-Dependency Unit Opens at Bustamante Hospital

A STATE-of-the-art High-Dependency Unit (HDU) for neonatal and maternal care has been opened at the Bustamante Hospital for Children.

The 4,359 square-foot facility, established at a cost of \$315 million, provides specialised bed spaces for critically ill neonates.

It comprises 10 beds (including two isolation rooms), a nurses' station, one sluice room, a breastfeeding area and a restroom.

It is the final of four HDUs to be successfully completed and opened across the country under the Programme for the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality (PROMAC), which is being funded by the European Union (EU).

The others are at the Victoria Jubilee Hospital, the St. Ann's Bay Regional Hospital and the Spanish Town Hospital.

At the official opening ceremony on July 14, Minister of Health and

Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, said that the HDU will build capacity at the Bustamante Hospital to provide critical services for the nation's children.

"It represents significant capacity addition. It is giving mother and child care in our country a significant boost. Indeed, it is filling a gap that had existed," he noted.

Dr. Tufton said the establishment of the new facility is one of several measures

being undertaken to improve paediatric and maternal care in the country.

Head of the EU Delegation to Jamaica, Ambassador Malgorzata Wasilewska, said the EU is pleased to assist in strengthening the Jamaican public healthcare system to protect the country's youngest citizens.



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (centre), and Head of the European Union (EU) Delegation to Jamaica, Ambassador Malgorzata Wasilewska (right), tour a room in the High Dependency Unit (HDU) at the Bustamante Hospital for Children, at the official opening of the facility on July 14. At left, Senior Medical Officer (SMO) at the hospital, Dr. Michelle-Ann Richards Dawson, provides details about the specialised equipment in the unit.

Small Outdoor Events, Amusement Parks, Water Attractions Resume for 2-Week Trial

MINISTER OF Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie, has announced the temporary resumption of small outdoor events, amusement parks and water attractions, starting, July 21.

For outdoor events, the allowable functions include small concerts, parties, round robins, launches, religious celebrations (such as baptisms and tent meetings) and festivals.

The Minister, in the statement in the House of Representatives on July 14, said that the conditional reopening will be allowed for a two-week period up to July 31.

Minister McKenzie said that all the events to be held must comply with the Order,



Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie

and that no staging will be allowed without the requisite amusement licence or permit granted by the respective Municipal Corporation.

Applications for permits must have the correct address, approximate size, and a recent picture of the

proposed venue and layout of the event.

Mr. McKenzie said that no more than 280 people can gather for an event. This means a maximum 250 patrons and no more than 30 additional production personnel, including performers and staff.

Turning to amusement parks and water attractions, Mr. McKenzie informed that these establishments will now be allowed to operate between 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., starting July 21.

These facilities include gaming arcades for children and young adults, and are not to be confused with gaming lounges where various forms of gambling are permitted. No gambling is allowed in gaming arcades.

South Coast Reopens to Visitors

VISITORS TO Jamaica now have authorised access to the southern end of the island, as the Government has implemented the second phase of the coronavirus (COVID-19) Resilient Corridor, in keeping with the phased reopening of the tourism sector.

Dubbed the 'South Coast Resilient Corridor', this new segment became effective on July 15, spanning Milk River in Clarendon to Negril in Westmoreland, along the South Coast.

Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, who made the announcement in a statement to the House of Representatives on July 14, said the COVID-19 Resilient Corridor has proven to be an effective tool in managing visitor movement within the designated area.

The first phase saw the restriction of visitor movement to the northern end of the island within that corridor, which was established



Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, makes a statement in the House of Representatives on July 14.

along the main road from Negril to Port Antonio and facilitated visits to accommodations such as hotels, villas, guesthouses and other establishments within that space.

The boundary for the South Coast Corridor starts at Farquhar's Beach, going north along Milk River main road and ends at the roundabout at the intersection with Norman Manley Boulevard in Negril, which intersects

with the northern Tourism Resilient Corridor. The boundary only takes into consideration all the main roads leading to the seashore.

Mr. Bartlett explained that this represents part 1, Section A of the Southern Corridor, and that the other section, which runs from Milk River into St. Thomas, will be opened as Phase 2B at the next review that is done.

August Town Primary Teachers Get Tablets



Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Hon. Fayval Williams (2nd left), participates in the handover of a tablet to Principal of the August Town Primary School, Jennifer Solomon (2nd right) during a ceremony held on July 15 at the school in St. Andrew. Others (from left) are Chief Executive Officer of e-Learning Jamaica, Keith Smith, and school Board Chairman, Andrew Warwar.