

# US\$274.5M Contract Signed for Montego Bay Bypass

**A** US\$274.5-MILLION contract was signed on November 24 for the Montego Bay Perimeter Road Project, which will see construction of a 14.9-kilometre bypass of the city.

This is expected to create a safe and reliable alternative route for motorists travelling. It will also assist in reducing traffic congestion.

Scope of work includes the construction of the Montego Bay bypass road, rehabilitation of Barnett Street and West Green Avenue, as well as the construction of the Long Hill bypass (10.5 kilometres).

A drainage study of the Montego Bay bypass area is also to be conducted under the project.

The Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation entered into the contractual agreement with the China Harbour Engineering Company Limited (CHEC) for the entity to carry out the works.

In his address at the ceremony held at Jamaica House, Prime Minister the



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (second left, seated) signs the contract for the Montego Bay Perimeter Road Project on November 24 in a ceremony held at Jamaica House. Other signatories from left (seated) are Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Audrey Sewell; General Manager, China Harbour Engineering Company Limited (CHEC), America's Division, Yun Peng Lu; and Country Manager, CHEC Jamaica, Dangran Bi. Among those observing are National Security Minister, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (standing, second left); and Minister Without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Everaldo Warmington (standing, third left).

Most Hon. Andrew Holness said, as part of the contractual agreement, Jamaicans will be recruited for the jobs that are to be generated under the project.

He further informed that the contractor, in partnership with

the Human Employment and Resource Training/National Service Training Agency (HEART/NSTA) Trust, is required to develop and implement a training programme for the transfer of knowledge and technology to Jamaican workers

as on-the-job-trainees under the Knowledge and Technology Transfer Programme.

"We have taken great care to ensure that the contract represents a win-win for the contractor and for Jamaica," he said.

## PIOJ Reports Strong Economic Growth for July to September

JAMAICA CONTINUES to show positive signs of recovering from the economic fallout caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, after recording an estimated 6.3 per cent growth for the July to September quarter, relative to the corresponding period last year.

Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), Dr. Wayne Henry, said the services industry is estimated to have increased by 7.3 per cent, and the goods producing industry by about 2.8 per cent.

He was speaking during the PIOJ's digital quarterly media briefing on November 24.

Dr. Henry said the estimated out-turn for the review period largely reflected the impact of the relaxation of COVID-19 containment measures globally, which facilitated increased domestic and external demand, resulting in a general uptick in economic activities and increased operating hours for businesses, which enabled greater production output.

The relaxation also triggered higher levels of employment, as firms



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

resumed or ramped up operations, and increased business confidence associated with the prospects for strengthened economic out-turn in the short to medium term.

Dr. Henry advised that all service industry sub-industries grew, led by 'hotels and restaurants', which increased by an estimated 114.7 per cent.

He also told journalists that the 'transport, storage and communication' subsector grew an estimated nine per cent, mainly due to higher levels of activities.

## Affordable Housing Solutions a Priority for Government

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the thrust to provide innovative and affordable housing solutions for Jamaicans continues to be a priority for the Government.

"The Government has a role to stimulate the emergence of a community of thought around building and design in Jamaica," Mr. Holness said.

The Prime Minister was addressing the Low-Cost

Housing Design competition virtual awards ceremony on November 23.

Emphasising the importance of the collaboration of stakeholders in the construction industry in the development of innovative, cost-effective and affordable housing solutions for Jamaicans, Mr. Holness noted that the initiative is intended to stimulate discussions on innovative building design technologies with a view to

incorporating these in future developments.

"We are hoping that with these designs, we could use them to influence persons when they are making their construction decisions... When Government is going to build, we will have these designs as templates that we can use," he informed.

Winners as well as second and third placed runners-up were awarded cash prizes of \$1 million; \$500,000 and

\$250,000, respectively, for each of the competition's four design categories: one-bedroom, two-bedroom, three-bedroom and multi-family unit.

The winners for each category are Richard Gazader for the one-bedroom design; Zane Finnikin for the two-bedroom design; Fitzroy McIntosh for the three-bedroom; and Matandara Clarke Architects for the multi-family unit.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre) in conversation with winners in the Low-Cost Housing Design competition, at the virtual awards ceremony held on November 23. They are from left: Fitzroy McIntosh; Roni-Kaye McLaren and Suzette Adams-Rickards representing Matandara Clarke Architects; and Zane Finnikin.

## New Custos for St Catherine Installed



Governor-General His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen (right), presents newly installed Custos of St. Catherine, the Hon. Icylin M. Golding, with the Grand Commission, at an installation ceremony held on November 23, at the National Police College of Jamaica, in Twickenham Park, in the parish.

## Ja Receives 200,000 Doses of Sinopharm Vaccines from China

TWO HUNDRED thousand doses of the Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine have arrived from the People's Republic of China.

Of this number, 100,000 doses have been donated by the Government of China, while the remainder was purchased by the Jamaican Government.

The official handover ceremony was held on November 24, at Jamaica House.

In his address, Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness thanked the Government of China for lending its assistance to Jamaica's COVID-19 containment efforts.

"These greatly appreciated Sinopharm vaccines demonstrate the value of the evolving relationship which Jamaica shares with China and is in keeping with the collective efforts to respond

to an ever-changing environment as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

He urged unvaccinated persons to take advantage of the opportunity to become inoculated against the virus.

"The Sinopharm vaccines that we are receiving will add yet another brand to the suite of vaccine options available to the Jamaican public. I encourage everyone to make the most of the opportunity

and to ensure that they protect themselves and others, as we adjust to living with the virus," the Prime Minister added.

Meanwhile, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Jamaica, His Excellency Tian Qi, said the gesture represents the goodwill of the Chinese Government and people to support Jamaica's response to the pandemic.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith (left), applaud as Health and Wellness Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (second left), and Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Jamaica, His Excellency Tian Qi, display documents for the handover of 200,000 doses of the Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine from China, at a ceremony held on November 24 at Jamaica House.

## TPDCo Launches Free, Mobile Tourism App

LOCALS AND VISITORS to the island now have access to a mobile application (app) that provides information on various licensed and COVID-19-compliant tourist entities within the six resort areas.

The app, called 'Xplore Jamaica', was launched by the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo) on November 24, during a virtual ceremony.

It includes features such as a travel guide with cost estimator and a complete travel blog to capture user reactions and comments, the ability to view restaurants and shops near the visitor's place of stay, and the availability of the information in nine languages.

The app can be downloaded free from the Google Play Store and will soon be available for IOS users.

Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, in a video message noted that with the pandemic, access to information has become even more important.

"I applaud TPDCo for its efforts to tap into this technological era and revolution, where Gen-Z, in particular, is keen on working smart and not hard, and expect to find all they need at the click of a button and with all the necessary features available," he said.

**It includes features such as a travel guide with cost estimator and a complete travel blog to capture user reactions...**

He noted that the app will also provide a technological solution to limit interactions at all ports of entry and aid TPDCo's information officers in providing quick and accurate information to visitors.

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