

Jamaica's Status as a Nation to be Addressed - PM

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says questions regarding Jamaica's status as a nation, which has generated significant interest, will be addressed.

"[There is] one thing that I am reflecting on and that is the nation is as the nation does. There are some people who want to speak prosperity into being, speak sovereignty and independence into being.

My philosophy is that we must do these things into being. We must make them happen. It must not be empty symbolism. It must be genuine, it must be borne of action that what we say, we are; it is what we are in our actions and in our achievements and in what we have done," Mr. Holness said.

"So, I am building towards the aspiration... I spend my time not arguing over these things, I spend my time doing; because the greatest frustration is a



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness addresses a ceremony for the official opening of the 444-suite, all-inclusive Ocean Eden Bay Hotel by H10 in Trelawny on December 9.

dream not achieved," the Prime Minister added.

He was speaking at the official opening of the 444-suite, all-inclusive Ocean Eden Bay Hotel by H10 in Trelawny on December 9.

Mr. Holness was responding to calls for Jamaica to sever the colonial ties with Britain and transition to a republic.

The Prime Minister added that he was "building

towards the collective aspiration, and my goal is that we embody the spirit of true independence so that when we say we are that it is evident that we are indeed."

New COVID-19 Measures in Effect until January 14

THE NEW COVID-19 measures announced by Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness are now in effect and will end on January 14, 2022.

Speaking in the House of Representatives, Mr. Holness said that the curfew hours will now be from 10:00 p.m. nightly until 5:00 a.m. the following morning.

"Except for Christmas Eve night, December 24, the curfew will commence past midnight and start at 1:00 a.m., early Christmas morning and for New Year's Eve night, December 31, the curfew will commence after midnight at 1:00 a.m., early on New Year's Day," Mr. Holness said.

The other measures are as follows:

- The public gathering limit remains at 10 persons.
- The mandatory work from home order will come to an end on December 31, 2021.
- The limit on the number of persons in attendance at places of worship remains at 100 persons.
- The number of persons permitted to physically attend a wedding remains at 100 and the limit on persons physically attending annual or extraordinary general meetings remains at 100.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness

- Physical attendance at events hosted by public entities will continue to be limited to 50 person.
- The limit on the number of persons present at a burial remains at 20. Burials are permitted Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- The requirement for all travellers to present a negative COVID-19 test conducted within three days of travel remains in place, as does the requirement to self-quarantine for 14 days after arrival for persons who are not fully vaccinated.
- Fully vaccinated persons who obtain a PCR test as their pre-test prior to travel, will not be required to conduct another PCR test after arrival to be released from quarantine.

Jamaica Remains Favourable for Foreign Direct Investment

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon Andrew Holness says the island remains favourable for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), despite the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Speaking at the official opening of the 444-suite Ocean Eden Bay Hotel in Trelawny on December 9, Mr. Holness said the Government continues to create a positive and resilient fiscal environment, which has been reaffirmed by international rating agencies.

"It is not just the environmental assets that attract you [to the island], Jamaica is a very stable democracy. In addition to that, Jamaica has a very resilient economy with all that has happened around the world. We see debt

increasing, particularly in small island developing states (SIDS), especially within the Caribbean, and we see other signs of economic instability creeping in, but Jamaica's economic performance has been very stable," the Prime Minister said. "While others have been revised and downgraded, Jamaica's rating has been reaffirmed and that is also another reason why investors are looking to Jamaica," he added.

Prime Minister Holness noted that the Government is working to significantly improve ease of doing business and the efficiency of the public bureaucracy, which will create an environment that facilitates greater investment opportunities.



Prime Minister the Most Hon Andrew Holness (centre) is joined by Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett (second right); and Director, International Division, H10 Hotels, Antonio Hernandez (second left), in cutting the ribbon to officially open the Ocean Eden Bay Hotel in Trelawny on December 9. Sharing the moment (from left) are Custos of Trelawny, the Honourable Hugh Gentles and Mayor of Falmouth, His Worship Colin Gager.

Meanwhile, Mr. Holness said that the opening of the adult-only all-inclusive Ocean Eden Bay Hotel represents

an expression of confidence in the country and its good governance.

Gov't Investing \$31.2 Billion to Build Out Public Health Infrastructure

MINISTER OF Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, says the Government has committed up to \$31.2 billion to build out the public health infrastructure over the next three years.

Speaking at an 'Open House and Exhibition for the Rehabilitation of Jamaica's Public Health Facilities', at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston on December 8, the Minister said that the level of investment is the most significant for hospital upgrading since Independence in 1962.

He said that the existing structures, built decades ago, cannot meet present demands, noting that the current environment demands a modern and technologically advanced infrastructure as well



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton (right), converses with Attaché to the European Union (EU) delegation in Jamaica, Gabrio Marinozzi (centre), and State Minister in the Ministry, Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn. Occasion was the Ministry's 'Open House and Exhibition for the Rehabilitation of Jamaica's Public Health Facilities', held at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston on December 8.

as the appropriate human and technical resources.

"This will ensure that the Jamaican healthcare system

communicable diseases (NCDs)," the Minister said, noting that NCDs are responsible for over 70 per cent of all deaths in Jamaica.

The plan includes construction and rehabilitation of 13 facilities, comprising 10 health centres and three hospitals under the Health Systems Strengthening Programme.

The hospitals are Spanish Town in St. Catherine; St. Ann's Bay, St. Ann; and May Pen in Clarendon.

The works will be undertaken through funding arrangements with local and international partners such as the National Health Fund (NHF), the European Union (EU), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).



Driving Simulator Installed at Swallowfield Examination Depot

Minister of Transport and Mining, Hon. Robert Montague (seated), tries out the new driving simulator at the Swallowfield Examination Depot in St. Andrew. Looking on are Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Mining, Hon. J.C. Hutchinson (standing, right), and Managing Director of the Transport Authority, Willard Hylton.

IDB President Commends Government's Fiscal Management



Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) President, Mauricio Claver-Carone

THE INTER-AMERICAN Development Bank (IDB) is commending the Government of Jamaica for its fiscal management of the country.

In an interview with **JIS News**, IDB President, Mauricio Claver-Carone, said that the handling of the economy prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has put Jamaica in a great position to rebound.

"This is a Government that has done all the right things fiscally. You've seen this consolidation fiscally and therefore... thanks to the fiscal buffers that were created by the Government, [Jamaica] has not had some of the challenges that some of the other governments in the region have had," he pointed out.

Mr. Claver-Carone said that with the Government's

leadership, the IDB is interested in helping Jamaica accelerate its path to growing out of debt and the pandemic and is particularly interested in forging new public-private partnerships (PPPs).

"We are working with the Government to find new PPPs and projects that we can work on to also help the logistics of Jamaica. The more we can work on improving the logistics in terms of transportation, including energy, and the skills of the nation, it will become more attractive to investors," he stated.

The IDB President and Chief Strategy Officer, Jessica Bedoya, led a high-level mission to Jamaica from December 8-10.

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