

Gov't to Provide More Assistance to Vulnerable Jamaicans

THE GOVERNMENT is moving to provide more assistance to Jamaicans, to help cushion the effects of the rising cost of living.

"In the coming weeks, we will be announcing even further cash transfers to the most vulnerable and the poorest, to ensure that they can survive this difficult time until matters in the geopolitical arena are resolved and some stability can return to our global energy and food markets," Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness said.

The Prime Minister was speaking at the official launch of Isratech Superstore and Logistics Centre in Manchester, on June 29.

He pointed out that the entire world is convulsed in great difficulties as it relates to volatility in energy prices and the increased cost of food.

The Prime Minister argued that present circumstances provide an opportunity for



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (third left) and Chief Executive Officer, Isratech Jamaica, Benjie Hodara (centre), cut the ribbon to officially open the company's new superstore in Manchester, on June 29. Looking on are Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Floyd Green (third right), and other officials.

persons to take advantage of the "frustrated masses", but he urged Jamaicans "to reflect carefully on our current situation and to acknowledge that this is not the making of the Government".

"The approach of the Government is one that seeks to ensure that our economy can withstand the shocks and, so far, the Jamaican economy... has withstood several shocks and has withstood them very

well. I understand the mood of the country... I understand how people feel when they see their electricity bill and how upset they must be. But this, too, will pass," the Prime Minister added.

8.2 Per Cent Growth for Fiscal Year 2021/22

THE STATISTICAL Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) is reporting that the economy grew by 8.2 per cent for fiscal year 2021/22, compared to 2020/21.

This was aided by a 6.4 per cent out-turn between January and March 2022, compared to the same period last year.

In a statement on June 30, STATIN indicated that the March quarter out-turn was driven by 8.9 and 0.4 per cent growth in the services and goods producing industries, respectively.

The Institute advised that economic activity was positively impacted by the easing of COVID-19 containment measures, including withdrawal of the Disaster Risk Management Order during the period.

According to STATIN, all services industry subsectors grew, led by 'Hotels and Restaurants', which recorded a 107.1 per cent out-turn.

The performance of that subsector resulted from growth in hotels and other short-stay accommodations, restaurants, bars and canteens.

It was also positively impacted by a 230.1 per

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cent increase in foreign national arrivals.

The out-turns for the other subsectors saw 'Wholesale and Retail Trade, Repairs, Installation of Machinery and Equipment' and 'Transport, Storage and Communication' growing by 8.8 per cent each; 'Other Services', up 12.4 per cent; 'Electricity and Water Supply', up 1.4 per cent; and 'Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities', up 1.1 per cent.

Reopened Nuclear Medicine Division Boasts State-of-the Art Diagnostic Equipment

THE RE-ESTABLISHED Nuclear Medicine Division at the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI) has been retrofitted with state-of-the-art single-photon emission computed tomography – SPECT-computed tomography (CT). The equipment will provide critical and advanced diagnostic capabilities for a range of disorders.

SPECT-CT scan provides true 3-D information to analyse the functions of internal organs for early diagnosis and treatment of conditions such as cardiac problems and cancer.

It can diagnose and track the progression of cancer that has spread to the bones and other affected areas of the body.

The facility was established through the collaborative efforts of the UHWI, Ministry of Health and Wellness, Planning Institute of Jamaica, and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, who addressed the opening ceremony on June 30, said



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (second left) along with other stakeholders listen as Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, International Atomic Energy Agency, Hua Liu (left), highlights the benefits of the single-photon emission computed tomography (SPECT) – computed tomography (CT) scan. They were on a tour of the re-established Nuclear Medicine Division at the University Hospital of the West Indies, on June 30.

that the Nuclear Medicine Division will play an important role in the provision of modern health services for Jamaicans.

"This facility has been equipped to provide SPECT-CT studies of the most frequent nuclear medicine investigations and specifi-

cally aims to support oncological and cardiological studies to look at frequent pathologies in Jamaica," Mr. Holness pointed out.

He added that this service will now be available locally within the public healthcare system. This means that patients will be able to get

this up-to-date modern service at a fraction of the cost when compared to that offered overseas," he said.

51 Schools Receive Water Tanks from US Southern Humanitarian Command



Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams (centre), views one of the 1,000 gallon water tanks, donated by the United States Southern Humanitarian Command Program (USSHCP). The 100 tanks will benefit 51 primary and infant schools across the island. The tanks were handed over during a ceremony on June 28, at Jamaica College. Looking on (from left) are: Senior Defense Attaché to the United States (US) Embassy, Lieutenant Robert Ramsey Jr., and US Ambassador to Jamaica, His Excellency, Nick Perry.

Needs Assessment to Ensure Targeted Support to ZOSO Areas

THE GOVERNMENT is now better positioned to provide targeted support to meet the needs of residents in vulnerable communities in the Corporate Area and St. James as part of the crime-prevention strategy.

This follows the release of a 'Needs Assessment for Case Management and Psychosocial Services' report under the Citizen Security Plan (CSP) at the Office of the Commissioner of Police, on June 29.

CSP is designed to reduce widespread criminal violence and provide opportunities for the development of vulnerable communities.

The needs assessment, conducted through support from the European Union, focused on evaluating the psychosocial support and case

management needs of children, youth, and victims of gender-based violence, who will benefit from the main interventions of the CSP.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (left), converses with Consultant, Jennifer Jones, following a ceremony outlining the findings of a 'Needs Assessment for Case Management and Psychosocial Services', held on June 29 at the Office of the Commissioner of Police.

It covers the parishes of the five 2021 Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs) in Kingston, St. Andrew, and St. James, and considers the support from 10 public agencies.

In his remarks, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, said the report provides the necessary baseline assessment that will inform the development of meaningful and transformative social programmes within the targeted parishes.

"Of note, the report highlights that case management and psychosocial services must be provided alongside education, training and other programmes to be most effective among high-risk beneficiaries," Dr. Chang said.

School Board Platform Launched

THE GOVERNANCE of public educational institutions is expected to be vastly improved with the launch of the online School Board Platform.

The portal, which can be found on the National Council on Education's (NCE) website at <https://www.nce.org.jm/>, was officially launched by Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams, during the final sitting of the current NCE, at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston, on June 29.

Mrs. Williams noted that the platform's establishment forms part of a comprehensive strategy to transform the governance of Jamaica's public educational institutions.

She said it aims to provide support for school boards to conduct their important functions in a more timely and ef-



Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams speaks at the final sitting of the current National Council on Education, at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, on June 29.

fusion of technology and innovative practices that can assist them in adding value to the schools placed in their charge," Mrs. Williams said.

The Minister noted that the work of school boards is "extremely complex" and cited the need for ready and available support to equip them with information and resources to resolve issues promptly.

"The platform is a vehicle for providing vital information for supporting school boards.

It will also aid in resolving governance issues and support the Ministry and the NCE in adopting a more targeted approach in assisting the Boards of Management," she added.

efficient manner, recognising that "effective boards lead effective schools and create rewarding experiences for our students".

"It is also about empowering the boards through the in-

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