

Government to Implement New Performance Management System

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says a clear and transparent system that measures performance within the public service, is to be implemented.

"We are working on that. Our timeline is in the next two years we should be able to settle that system of performance evaluation, so that if you want increases in your pay, then it should not be that the increases are only pegged to inflation. The increases should also be pegged to what you have achieved in your job, based upon targets set," Mr. Holness said.

He was addressing the audience at the Labour Day tree-planting exercise in Hartlands, St. Catherine on May 23.

The Prime Minister explained that the accountability system will focus on the entire Public Service, noting that all these inputs are important for spurring growth in the country.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness addresses the audience at the Labour Day tree-planting exercise in Hartlands, St. Catherine on May 23. Seated 2nd left is Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange.

"The compensation review is not only about pay. We went with the pay element first because it was important to show a commitment to workers and to show workers that we understand the challenges

that they face," he indicated. The Prime Minister advised that the pay element "is not yet totally resolved", citing existing anomalies.

Consequently, he informed that "we have established

within the Ministry of Finance and the Transformation Implementation Unit an entire procedure to treat with the anomalies that exist, and those anomalies will be resolved".

Prime Minister Makes Changes to Cabinet

TWO NEWLY created Ministries are among the Cabinet changes that have been made by Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness.

The two Ministries are Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining, headed by Hon. Floyd Green, with Minister of State, Hon. Franklin Witter; and the Ministry of Science, Energy, Telecommunications and Transport, led by Hon. Daryl Vaz, with Minister of State, Hon. JC Hutchinson.

The new Minister of Labour and Social Security is Hon. Parnell Charles Jr., following the resignation of Hon. Karl Samuda.

Minister Charles Jr. will be supported by Dr. the Hon.

Norman Dunn, who assumes the role of Minister of State.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness provided the details during a press conference on May 22.

Additionally, Senator Dr. Dana Morris Dixon will assume the role of Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister and will have direct oversight for Skills and Digital Transformation.

"We need to pay attention to making sure that we're training people to be job-ready, not just for the skills of the past but more so the skills of the future that will drive growth in the economy," Mr. Holness said.

Other changes include the appointment of Hon. Marsha



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness

Smith as Minister of State in the Ministry of Education and Youth; Hon. Alando Terrelonge is the new Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade; Hon.

Zavia Mayne, State Minister in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service; and Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn, State Minister in the Ministry of National Security.

Dr. Dana Morris Dixon Sworn in as Cabinet Minister

SENATOR DR. the Hon. Dana Morris Dixon was sworn in as Cabinet Minister during a ceremony at King's House on May 25.

She will serve as Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, with direct oversight for Skills and Digital Transformation as well as the National Identification System (NIDS) and the Registrar General's Department (RGD).

The new Minister comes to the position with several years of experience working in the private and banking sectors and serving as Commissioner of the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission (JETC) in 2020.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness in welcoming the new Minister, said she will play a vital role in implementing the recommendations of the JETC draft report on vocational training in Jamaica, as well as the HEART/NSTA Trust.

He further informed that Senator Morris Dixon will be tasked with executing a programme that targets the approximately 700,000 Jamaicans who are not formally counted in the labour force.



New Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Senator Dr. the Hon. Dana Morris Dixon (left), takes the Oath of Office and Oath of Allegiance during a swearing-in ceremony held at King's House on May 25. Looking on is Governor-General, His Excellency the Most Hon. Sir Patrick Allen.

It is expected that in reaching these individuals, they will be exposed to adequate training and certification

that are aligned with the needs of the private sector, the evolution of technology and economic growth.

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"Having achieved the lowest unemployment rate in our independent history, the major barrier to growth is no longer capital; the major barrier to growth is the availability of skilled labour," the Prime Minister said.

In response, Minister Morris Dixon committed to "working really hard", in achieving the targets outlined.

Accountability Measures for Political Directorate

THE GOVERNMENT is to implement several accountability measures for the political directorate.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness informed that written job descriptions for Members of Parliament (MPs) and Ministers are already in place and will be tabled in Parliament shortly.

"Those were done in 2021... we will table those so the public can see what the job entails," Mr. Holness said, during a press conference held on May 22 at the Office of the Prime Minister.

He further stated that a code of ethics to govern the conduct and duties of MPs has been developed.

The Prime Minister also informed that financial penalties are to be instituted for unexcused absences from sittings of Parliament and committee meetings.

He also noted that, while MPs use the State of the Constituency debate to outline work undertaken in constituencies, "what we will do is set up a more

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systematic approach to it, and they will actually table their reports and it will be reviewed by... a committee of Parliament, and the public obviously can review that".

In addition, special courses of training will be designed for MPs and Senators.

Ministers will also begin to publish, at the beginning of each financial year starting 2024, the policy, administrative and legislative priorities, along with targets and performance indicators that they intend to achieve during the fiscal year.

This will be in the form of a ministry paper, after approval by the Prime Minister.

690 Schools Projected to Have Internet Access

WORK TO establish Internet access in 690 schools via the islandwide broadband network is projected for completion by the end of fiscal year 2023/24.

This is according to Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams, who was speaking during the opening ceremony for a two-day Technology in Education Conference, hosted by e-Learning Jamaica at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston on May 24. Mrs. Williams informed that all primary and secondary school teachers will also receive individual laptops.

This is being done in collaboration with the Ministry of Science, Energy, Telecommunications and Transport, and the National Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Advisory Council.

Minister Williams emphasised that the Government is looking to outfit each school on the network, to help bridge the digital divide and assist students in gaining "mastery of reading and writing".



Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams

"That is the one big, enormous thing that we need right now in education," she pointed out.

Against this backdrop, the Minister said initiatives such as the recently launched Literacy Education Acceleration Programme (LEAP), which utilises ICT as a tool, continue to show that technology can improve student literacy.

She informed that during the initiative's pilot phase, students were found reading three grades above the level at which they started, after a few months under the programme.

Tree Planting at Woodhall Primary School



Minister with responsibility for Information and Member of Parliament for Clarendon North Central, Hon. Robert Morgan (left), and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Senator the Hon. Kamina Johnson Smith (3rd right), join students of grades five and six at Woodhall Primary School in planting trees along the border of the institution's playfield during Labour Day activities on May 23.

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