

Labour and Social Security Minister, Hon. Parnell Charles Jr. (left), and Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) meet with residents of Rocky Point in Clarendon, at the Rocky Point Community Centre.

Gov't Provides \$1B towards Hurricane Recovery

THE GOVERNMENT has rolled out a suite of programmes to assist Jamaicans affected by the passage of Hurricane Beryl on July 3.

The category four hurricane ravaged southern parishes resulting in \$4.7 billion in losses to the agricultural sector and left in its trail hundreds of battered and destroyed homes, 212 damaged schools as well as disruption in electricity and water supply.

Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, on July 9, announced the Relief Emergency Assistance and

Community Help (REACH) Programme, aimed at providing immediate assistance to Jamaicans.

The major elements of the programme include the distribution of food and essential supplies; water, electricity and telecommunications restoration; housing reconstruction and support and economic recovery and restoration of livelihood.

To date, 9,005 food packages containing canned foods, flour, rice, cooking oil and other items; 1,910 tarpaulins, 676 mattresses, 1,243 hygiene kits and 415 cases of water have been

provided to affected households.

Based on damage assessments received, an allocation of \$1 billion has been made towards providing grants and assistance for the restoration, reconstruction and relocation of homes.

Mr. Holness said all potential beneficiaries must be assessed and a standard grant assigned to the classification of damage, which will be properly documented in a central database.

Furthermore, under the Rehabilitation Grants Programme, 2,000 micro busi-

ness operators will be targeted to receive grants of \$100,000 each, estimated at a total cost of \$200 million.

"This is not going to be a general grant that everybody can apply for. You would have had to suffer losses [which] must be assessed and then, based upon the assessment, a grant will be approved," Mr. Holness explained.

He added that Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Parnell Charles Jr., will provide further details on the programme.

Provisions for the Vulnerable and Agricultural Sector

THE MINISTRY of Labour and Social Security has increased targeting and identification of beneficiaries for its programmes to include Social Pension, Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens.

In addition, the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) life certificate requirement for the August payment will be waived. The National Housing Trust (NHT) has also outlined a multi-pronged response to support immediate recovery efforts and to bolster the long-term disaster resilience of communities.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness said this includes peril insurance for NHT mortgagors, moratorium for NHT mortgagors of three to six months, special home grant for vulnerable NHT contributors who sustained damage, special home improvement loan for roof and home repair.

The NHT will also provide \$200 million for the national restoration effort.

Meanwhile, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining, Hon. Floyd Green, announced a \$700-million allocation to assist farmers and fishers to rebuild

their operations and conduct infrastructure repairs.

The funds will be disbursed by the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), Agro-Invest Corporation (AIC), Jamaica Agricultural Society (JAS) and Members of Parliament (MPs).

"The allocation includes \$210 million which will focus on crop recovery - \$90 million for our vegetable lines, \$40 million towards our banana and plantain farmers and \$80 million towards other crops," Mr. Green said.

The remainder of the funds will be distributed as follows:

- Livestock and small poultry farmers-\$60 million
- Rebuilding of livestock infrastructure-\$26 million
- Fertiliser-\$30 million
- Infrastructure support-\$55 million
- Farm road rehabilitation-\$70m
- Funds for distribution by Members of Parliament-\$150 million
- Fisheries sector-\$29 million
- Land preparation-\$50 million
- Irrigation-\$20 million

Gov't to Undertake Clean-up Activities Post Hurricane Beryl

THE NATIONAL Works Agency (NWA) and National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) have been allocated \$1.3 billion under the National Clean-Up Programme forming part of the Government's Hurricane Beryl Relief and Recovery initiatives.

Of the sum, \$800 million will go to the NWA, with the remaining \$500 million programmed for the NSWMA.

The funds will be used by the NSWMA for the removal of extensive bulky waste and residential waste, clean-up of thoroughfares and urban centres and removal of overgrown vegetation, overgrown and fallen trees.

In addition, \$300 million has been allocated to dengue mitigation, as the passage of Hurricane Beryl has the potential to significantly increase the dengue vector, the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito which breeds mainly in containers.

Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness has



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left) listens to the concerns of a resident of Rocky Point Clarendon, during a visit to the area recently. Persons from the community suffered devastation and losses with the passage of Hurricane Beryl on July 3.

appealed to Jamaicans to properly store water in covered containers and destroy mosquito breeding sites around their homes.

He pointed out that the NSWMA is to announce a schedule for the removal of bulky waste from homes and also indicated that the NWA

will be actively cleaning various gullies.

In addition, the Ministry of Health and Wellness is to engage an additional 400 vector control workers to bring the current number of temporary workers to 1000.

"They will be assigned to high-risk communities to iden-

tify and treat breeding sites. In addition, they will assist with the fogging activity, the larvicidal activity that takes place," Portfolio Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton informed.

He said 600 of these workers are already engaged by the Ministry.



Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining, Hon. Floyd Green (left), engages in conversation with farmer Delroy Green (right), during a post-Hurricane Beryl farm tour in Clarendon on July 17.



Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Parnell Charles Jr. (right), greets resident of Salmon Town in Manchester, Ann Kay Dixon and daughter (centre), during a tour of the area. Ann Kay's house and business were damaged as a result of the passage of Hurricane Beryl. Looking on is the Minister of State in the Ministry, Dr. Hon. Norman Dunn.



Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie (left), in discussion with Ann Kay Dixon (second left), during a tour of the Salmond Town community in Manchester on July 12. Others present (from second right) are Member of Parliament for Manchester Southern, Robert Chin, and Councillor for the Grove Town Division, Iceval Brown.

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