

# Government to Transform Labour Force

**PRIME MINISTER** the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the Government will pursue a new paradigm to transform the country's labour force.

Prime Minister Holness, who was speaking on August 3 at the opening of the Kupius Bridge in Clarendon, noted that training and enhancing the skills of local workers on projects with international investors will be a key component going forward.

He said investors prefer to invest in areas where they find disciplined workers to ensure that their investment is profitable.

"It is our productivity and our efficiency that is going to be a critical asset in attracting investments here and a critical factor in whether it is the Chinese, Americans, Germans, French; whoever wants to come and invest in Jamaica they must



**Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (5th left) cuts the ribbon to officially open the Kupius Bridge in Pennants, Clarendon on August 3. He was joined by officials from the Government of Jamaica and China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC).**

choose Jamaican workers because our workers are the most efficient and the most productive," explained Prime Minister Holness.

Mr. Holness emphasised some of the values necessary to bring the country from poverty to prosperity.

"It is not just knowing how to bend the steel, it is not just knowing how to read the plan. Mixing the

mortar is important but we also want to learn how to design, we don't only want to be makers we want to be engineers and designers. So we want to improve the skills but more than that it is the discipline," continued the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister addressed the need for training to boost national productivity.

"When we are looking at the next iteration of our infrastructure partnership we will have to have a component of training Jamaican labourers, training Jamaican craftsmen, training Jamaican workers in not just the skills but in the necessary discipline and action towards work," stated Mr. Holness.

## Gov't Has Laid Foundation for Growth – Lee-Chin

**ECONOMIC GROWTH** Council (EGC) Chairman, Michael Lee-Chin, says a substantially sound macro-economic foundation has been laid that can now propel Jamaica towards generating higher levels of growth.

"The table has been set," he said, while presenting the EGC's third quarter report at the Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston recently.

Among the indicators, he said are a stable currency, historically low inflation, lower energy costs, strong Net International Reserves, heightened business and consumer confidence, and multilateral agency support.

He noted that the Administration is endeavouring to fulfil its role as an enabler and facilitator of an environment that is conducive to growth.



**Economic Growth Council (EGC) Chairman, Michael Lee-Chin, presenting the EGC's third quarterly report at the Spanish Court Hotel recently.**

"Once the Government enables and facilitates, the private sector will deliver growth...that's the partnership we have," the Chairman pointed out.

Mr. Lee-Chin said the EGC members were heartened by the positive feedback from a number of representatives of the over

155 stakeholder groups and organisations with which the Council has had consultations over the last 15 months

"We have set a goal of achieving five per cent growth per annum by 2020 which many have said is ambitious. But we are all agreed that for Jamaica to

achieve its full potential, regionally and internationally, we must all stretch ourselves beyond our own expectations and chart a path to create wealth for Jamaica," Mr. Lee-Chin pointed out.

## FCJ to Build Industrial Park in Portmore

**THE FACTORIES** Corporation of Jamaica (FCJ) is pursuing a joint venture with the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) to use 16 acres of land in Portmore, St. Catherine for the construction of an industrial park.

The lands are adjacent to those earmarked for the Naggo Head Technology Park, where the FCJ is expected to build 750,000 square feet of space to facilitate Business Process Outsourcing (BPO).

Managing Director of the FCJ, Donald Farquharson, said the industrial park and the technology park will lay the foundation for the establishment of an urban centre, similar to that which was recently announced for Morant Bay, St. Thomas.

"We will also add all the amenities and functionalities to support the BPO sector whether it be food services, wellness centre, amongst others. So we do expect that over 20,000 jobs will be created just by the BPO centre itself, not including the industrial and small complexes, which will be added to that," Mr. Farquharson said.

He was speaking in a recent interview on the Jamaica Information Service's (JIS) Issues & Answers television programme.

Mr. Farquharson informed that the Naggo Head Technology Park will offer world-class Information Communication Technology (ICT)/BPO facilities.

The park will also facilitate an appropriate mix of industry and services for optimum functionality.

**So we do expect that over 20,000 jobs will be created just by the BPO centre itself, not including the industrial and small complexes.**

The Naggo Head Technology Park will benefit from excellent roads, utility and modern telecommunications infrastructure, as well as fibre-optic connectivity.

## Seven Schools Receive Additional Support from Education Ministry

**THE MINISTRY** of Education Youth and Information has provided \$226.3 million in funding to seven schools, which is in addition to financial support outside of their monthly subventions.



**Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid**

The funding covers areas such as tuition, furniture supplies, TVET equipment, Information Communication Technology support, the Apprenticeship Programme, Career Advancement Programme, part-time, temporary and non-teaching staff and the PATH Feeding Pro-

gramme in some of the schools.

The schools benefitting include Holy Childhood High which will get \$32.29 million; Immaculate Conception High, \$34.9 million; Meadowbrook High, \$28.06 million; and Mona High, \$29.9 million.

In addition, the St. Andrew High will receive \$38.84 million; The Queen's School, \$26.9 million; and St. Thomas Technical \$35.4 million.

Meanwhile, Portfolio Minister, Senator the Hon Ruel Reid, said the Ministry together with the National Parent Teacher Association of Jamaica, will continue to engage and encourage all parents to make the contribution approved by the boards, Parent Teacher Associations, and the Ministry.

Under the contributory fee policy there should be no mandatory fees charged to parents. In addition registration packages for students should range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 for this school year.

## Cabinet Approves the Creation of 300 Additional Nursing Posts

**CABINET HAS** approved the creation of 300 additional posts for nurses as part of moves to ease the personnel shortage in the public health system.

This was disclosed by Health Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, while speaking at a Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/Ministry of Health forum on Health Sector Reform and Service

Delivery, at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in New Kingston recently.

Dr. Tufton said many of the nurses exiting the public health system or contemplating this, identified challenges with salaries, the availability of housing in locations deemed suitable, and security of tenure, among the factors influencing their decisions.

Earlier this year, he announced that steps were being taken to address the shortage through recruitments from countries such as Cuba and India, among other interventions.

He also advised that a public/private partnership arrangement for the construction of houses was being explored.

Meanwhile, Dr. Tufton said more doctors are also required to assist in reducing the number of hours currently worked in each session by those in the public health system. These sessions, he noted, average approximately 120 hours.

"I think we need to find a way to just change that (120 hours) and have more doctors in the system to reduce the hours that they can work. It may take a long time to implement, but, frankly, that is where we need to move," the Minister emphasised.



**Health Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton emphasises a point during a Pan American Health Organization/Ministry of Health forum on Health Sector Reform and Service Delivery, at the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel recently.**

## Celebrating Jamaica 55 to the World



**Performers in this year's staging of the festival cultural showcase 'Mello-Go-Roun' cap off a glittering performance at the National Arena in Kingston on August 3, with the signature 'To the World' pose, made famous by Olympic legend, Usain Bolt.**