

PM Urges Increased Private Sector Investment

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness is again calling on the private sector to increase its investment in the economy.

The Government is ready to partner with private investors and make the necessary financing and policies available for an investor-friendly economy.

He said the Government is working “very hard to ensure that every single Jamaican entrepreneur who has the industry, the drive, the enterprise, the entrepreneurship can, in the Jamaican environment, take the risk and invest.”

The Prime Minister was speaking at the recent groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the new BMW and MINI showrooms at 38-42 Lady Musgrave Road in St. Andrew.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd right) along with Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Karl Samuda (2nd left), in conversation with from left: Managing Director of the Jamaica Observer, Danville Walker, and Chairman of ATL Automotive Group, Gordon 'Butch' Stewart, at the recent opening of the new BMW and MINI showrooms at 38-42 Lady Musgrave Road in St. Andrew.

The project is part of a US\$50 million investment by Sandals Resort International, ATL Autobahn and Marriot International that will also see the construction of a lifestyle centre – complete with a hotel,

conference centre, restaurant, spa and gym.

Prime Minister Holness commended them for their continued investment in Jamaica.

He said the Government is ready to partner with

private investors and make the necessary financing and policies available for an investor-friendly economy.

This, he said, will allow for increased economic growth and job creation.

Gov't Facilitating Growth of BPO Sector

MINISTER OF Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw, says the Government is paving the way for the growth of the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry, which now employs over 26,000 Jamaicans.

The Minister, who was speaking at the two-day Outsource to the Caribbean Conference held recently at the Iberostar Beach Hotel in Montego Bay, cited passage of the special economic zones (SEZs) law, which has created an incentive regime for investors, including players in the BPO sector.

He said the objective is to facilitate an environment for investors to do business, as they are the main engine of growth in the country.

Minister Shaw said the Government and the private sector are committed to developing BPO, noting that steps will be taken to diversify skills in the local industry through comprehensive training of the labour force.

“We are ramping up the HEART Trust/NTA



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw

programme to train our people. We want to diversify the local industry, move up the value chain by going into areas such as shared services, legal process outsourcing, computer-aided design, and medical process outsourcing,” he informed.

Meanwhile, Minister Shaw said the Government is committed to providing space for the expansion of the sector.

“We are creating another area in Naggio Head where we are building out office space of several hundred thousand square feet,” he pointed out, adding that BPO is part of plans for the development of the old tyre factory in St. Thomas.

NIDS Will Create Foundation for Digital Economy

GENERAL MANAGER, Caribbean Country Department, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Therese Turner-Jones, says the National Identification System (NIDS) will lay the foundation for Jamaica to become a digital economy.

The digital economy is the worldwide network of economic activities, commercial transactions and professional interactions that are enabled by information and communications technology (ICT).

The Government is emphasising the creation of a digital society in order to drive growth, create opportunities for businesses, promote innovation and create jobs.

“Prime Minister Holness actually announced a few



General Manager, Country Department, Caribbean Development Bank (IDB), Therese Turner-Jones

months ago that he would like Jamaica to become a digital economy, but you can't have a digital economy unless there is a digital signature and a lot of our documents can be done

electronically,” she pointed out.

She was speaking at the inaugural Public Sector Corporate Governance Awards Ceremony at the Knutsford Court Hotel on December 13.

The IDB recently approved a US\$68 million loan to the Government for the design and implementation of the National Identification System (NIDS).

The loan will also cover the necessary systems to ensure the safeguarding of personal information.

“I want to say that your international partners have recognised that you have come a long way. There were a lot of comments about Jamaica being a model for reform, not just in the Caribbean but in all

of Latin America in terms of some of the initiatives you are taking,” Mrs. Turner-Jones said.

NIDS, which is scheduled for implementation in 2019, will provide a comprehensive and secure structure to enable the capture and storage of identity information for all Jamaicans.

West Kingston Residents Urged to Claim Funds

JUSTICE MINISTER, Hon. Delroy Chuck, is urging residents of West Kingston, who suffered damage and losses as a result of the 2010 security operations, to come forward to claim their compensation.

The Government has approved payment of approximately \$200 million to aggrieved persons.

Minister Chuck said that about 418 payments have been approved, which are to be deposited to bank accounts once the requisite documentations are completed and the taxpayer registration number and identification are provided.

He said persons should visit the Restorative Justice centres in Tivoli Gardens and Denham Town, which “will be utilised to ensure beneficiaries get their compensation on time.”

“The funds are available. It was approved in the (2017/2018) Supplementary Budget. We hope to make all the payouts in 2017,” he said.

Additionally, he indicated that \$20 million will be made available to the Member of Parliament in order to restore buildings and other property damaged during the operation.

Mr. Chuck was addressing a press conference to provide an update



Justice Minister, Hon. Delroy Chuck (right), and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry, Carol Palmer

on the status of implementation of the Tivoli Recommendations and the Compensation Committee, at his Constant Spring Road Offices in St. Andrew on December 13.

To date, 42 persons have provided the information

necessary to process payments.

The Justice Minister informed that provisions will be made for those persons without bank accounts to open one, and insisted that no cash payments will be made or cheques issued.

Senator Aubyn Hill Appointed Executive Director of Economic Growth Council

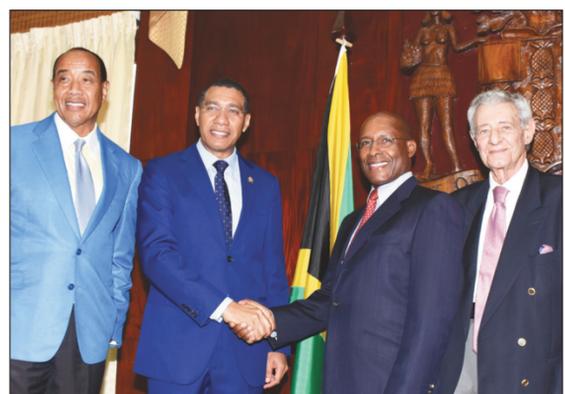
PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness has appointed Special Investment Ambassador to India, Senator Aubyn Hill, as the new Executive Director of the Economic Growth Council (EGC).

Mr. Holness made the announcement during a press briefing held at Jamaica House on December 12.

“I am satisfied and confident Senator Hill will be able to execute the duties of the office very proficiently (and) in a way that... we can all be satisfied that Jamaica is serious about growth and that we will achieve (our growth targets),” he said.

He noted that the new Executive Director, who is well-known in the private sector and has many years of experience in banking, “understands the issue of economic growth very well.”

Mr. Hill replaces Maureen Denton who resigned in August this year. He will be tasked



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd left) congratulates the new Executive Director of the Economic Growth Council (EGC), Senator Aubyn Hill (2nd right), on his appointment. From left are EGC Chairman, Michael Lee-Chin, and Council member, Hugh Hart. The Prime Minister announced Mr. Hill's appointment during a press briefing held at Jamaica House on December 12.

with managing the administrative affairs of the Council, which deals with coordinating projects that help to spur growth.

In response, Mr. Hill thanked the Prime Minister for the appointment, noting that he was pleased to be in a position to be able to work with the EGC, the Government, the private sector and “to make sure those facilitatory activities that we must do to make

growth, happen in a place that is really ripe for growth.”

Launched in April last year, the Council was set up to advise the Government on a framework of proposed initiatives, along with sub-initiatives, that are expected to yield economic growth.

These growth initiatives are expected to enable the Jamaican economy to attain five per cent growth by 2020.



CHEC Donates Gym Equipment to Emancipation Park

Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Minister, Hon. Olivia Grange (2nd left); and President of the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) Board of Supervision, Li Sen (left), try out a double elliptical trainer, which was among US\$5,000 worth of outdoor gym equipment donated to Emancipation Park by the China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) Limited. The items were officially handed over on December 13 during a ceremony at the park. Looking on are Member of Parliament for St. Catherine East Central, Alando Terrelonge (2nd right), and National Women's Physique Champion 2010-2017, Davina Barrett.