

# Gov't to Incorporate More Sources of Renewable Energy – PM

**PRIME MINISTER** the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the Administration is working to incorporate more sources of renewable energy into the country's supply as it seeks to ensure greater energy security.

"We are now at approximately 18 per cent of our electricity needs being generated by renewables. We are on track to being able to supply 30 per cent of our electricity needs using renewables, and that would ensure that Jamaica has real energy security," he said.

Mr. Holness was speaking on February 22 at a ceremony

to officially name Petrojam Limited's corporate office building on Marcus Garvey Drive in Kingston as The Edward Seaga Building.

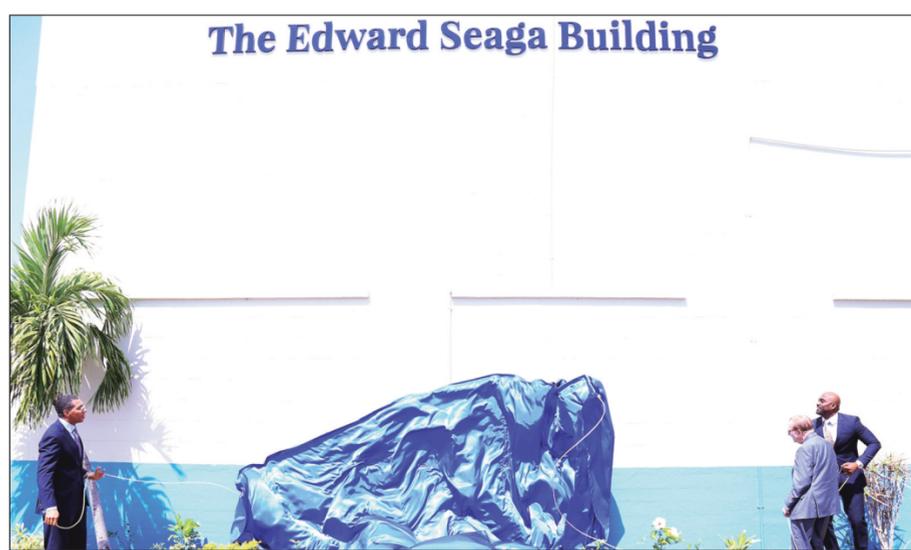
The Prime Minister noted that the Government has taken a deliberate approach to diversifying Jamaica's energy source, and is working assiduously to ensure that renewables, particularly wind and solar, play a greater part in Jamaica's energy mix.

Mr. Holness said the Government is also looking at increasing the usage of biofuels, noting that he has given a directive to the Minister of Science, Energy

and Technology, Dr. the Hon. Andrew Wheatley, to "pay more attention to developing the biofuels sector".

Regarding the status of the country's oil refinery, the Prime Minister assured that the Government is working to upgrade the facility and has made financial commitments towards achieving this objective.

"I want to assure the country that the Government is doing everything possible to ensure that our refinery is upgraded to be one of the most modern refineries in the region, to supply not just our energy needs but that of the region," he said.



**Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (left); former Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Edward Seaga (centre); and Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Dr. the Hon. Andrew Wheatley, unveil 'The Edward Seaga Building' sign at the corporate office of Petrojam Limited, located on Marcus Garvey Drive in Kingston on February 22.**

## Low Inflation Projected for 12 Months

**BANK OF JAMAICA** (BOJ) Governor, Brian Wynter, says the rate of inflation is projected to remain within the range of four to six per cent over the next 12 months.

This comes in the wake of data from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), which show the out-turn falling from 5.2 per cent in December 2017 to 4.8 per cent in January.

"The trajectory reflects the rise and then the fall in agricultural food prices as the impact of flood rains in the year started to dissipate and agricultural supplies improved. Over the course of the year, the Bank expects inflation to continue to track around the lower half of the four to six per cent target before rising to around five per cent," the Governor said.

Mr. Wynter said the projection took into con-



**Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) Governor, Brian Wynter**

sideration factors such as adverse weather "that is beyond anybody's control".

He was speaking at the BOJ's quarterly media briefing at the Bank's auditorium in downtown Kingston on February 21. Noting that the Jamaican economy's recovery has been "sluggish", Mr. Wynter said the BOJ anticipates that growth will "remain below the economy's capacity in the near term".

## Jamaica Improves in CPI Ranking

**JAMAICA HAS** made significant strides in tackling corruption, moving up by 15 places in the latest Corruption Perception Index (CPI) Report of the Transparency International

organisation which was released on February 21.

In the 2017 report, Jamaica was placed 68th out of 180 countries, up from the 2016 ranking of 83 out of 176 nations.

The CPI also showed improved scores for the country, with Jamaica moving from 39 to 44 which is the country's best ever ranking on the Index. This is based on a scale of 0-100. Based on

the CPI rankings, zero is seen as highly corrupt and 100 as very clean.

Jamaica's 2017 score is now on par with the Americas and marginally above the global average.

## US\$110 Million Oyster Bay Hotel to Open June 1

**THE EXCELLENCE** Group Luxury Hotels & Resorts will on June 1 become the newest member of the country's growing fleet of luxury brands with the

opening of its US\$110 million hotel in Oyster Bay, Trelawny.

Ground was broken for the 315-room property last March.

With the opening, Excellence Group will join Royalton Resorts, owners of Royalton White Sands and Blue Waters, and Melia Hotels International,

which operates the Melia Braco, as the three main internationally recognised brands to set up operations in Trelawny.

Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, told **JIS NEWS** that the opening of the world-class hotel brand will further raise the country's stock as a premier destination for luxury travel.

"This is yet another testament to Jamaica's ever increasing status as the top Caribbean destination for high-end travel. Attracting a luxury brand like Excellence is nothing to scoff at," he said.

Mr. Bartlett also pointed out that the country can take pride in knowing that it is being viewed as a safe and stable destination to do business, adding that "the best is yet to come".

Built on a private peninsula and located just 35 minutes from the Sangster International Airport, Excellence Oyster Bay will offer nightly entertainment, daily activities, eight world-class restaurants, nine bars, state-of-the-art fitness facilities, two beachfront swimming pools, a chill-out lounge with rooftop pool, the exclusive Excellence Club, and the brand's famous Miilé Spa.



**An aerial view of the Excellence Oyster Bay 315-room hotel under construction in Trelawny. It is expected to be opened on June 1, 2018.**

## Framework Being Created for Kingston to Operate as Musical Economic Zone

**THE MINISTRY** of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport is working on building a framework for Kingston to fully operate as a musical economic zone.

This was disclosed by Portfolio Minister, Hon. Olivia Grange, during a Reggae Month reception on the lawns of Jamaica House on February 20.

"Having received the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) designation, we must now translate that



**Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre) exchanges pleasantries with Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange (left); and record producer, Winston 'Niney' Holness, during a Reggae Month reception on the lawns of Jamaica House on February 20.**

into greater tangibles for our people," she said.

Kingston was one of 47 new locales added to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in December 2015.

Ms. Grange argued that reggae is the strongest component of brand Jamaica. "Reggae is a hot commodity and the world has embraced it, but we are proud to declare that we still own it... (and) the celebration of Reggae Month is a symbolic mark of respect for the eight genres we have given to the world," she noted.

Ms. Grange said that the importance of reggae music to Jamaica should never be undervalued, adding that "it is the lifeblood".

"When we look at the role that reggae music has played... the anthropological role in the development of Jamaica as a nation, its role in the struggle for human rights and freedoms in places like Zimbabwe and South Africa, we must hail and respect our music and the sounds of Jamaica," she said.

## Denham Town Primary Celebrates Jamaica Day



**Education, Youth and Information Minister, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid (centre), interacts with children during the Jamaica Day celebrations at the Denham Town Primary School on February 23. The day was observed under the theme 'Celebrating Jamaica: Nurturing our Natural and Cultural Heritage'.**

## JCF to Receive More Vehicles in 2018/19

**THE JAMAICA** Constabulary Force is slated to receive more motor vehicles and motorcycles in the 2018/19 fiscal year.

To facilitate this, a sum of \$1.1 billion has been set aside in the 2018/19 Estimates of Expenditure, now before the House of Representatives.

The project aims to improve the mobility of the Jamaica Constabulary Force, and falls under the Ministry of National Security. It is being financed from the Consolidated Fund.

In addition, \$8.4 billion has been budgeted to bolster the capabilities of the Jamaica Defence Force (JDF).

This includes \$1.77 billion for cybersecurity initiatives by the JDF; \$1.36 billion to increase the mobility of the JDF; \$2.45 billion to purchase helicopters to assist in search and rescue, casualty evaluation, medical evaluation and training; \$1.32 billion to strengthen the capability of the JDF within Jamaica's maritime zone; and \$1.5 billion for

the construction of new integrated training, accommodation, office and storage facilities.



**Sport Utility Vehicles officially handed over to the Jamaica Constabulary Force in December at the Office of the Commissioner of Police.**