

# Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago Committed to CSME

**T**HE GOVERNMENT of Jamaica and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago have reiterated their commitment to regional cooperation, especially within the context of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness signed a communiqué with Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. the Hon. Keith Rowley at the Office of the Prime Minister on July 21.

The document outlines the issues discussed during Dr. Rowley's official visit, from July 17-21, with a view to strengthening political dialogue and renewing bilateral cooperation.

Mr. Holness said that the two governments spoke about the responsibility of CARICOM member states to guarantee hassle-free travel; to apply the agreed categories of skilled labour, as well as have even acceptance of the CSME skills certificates throughout the region.

"In this regard, Trinidad and Tobago undertook the continuation of the process of reviewing its legislation to address the additional



**Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) and Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. the Hon. Keith Rowley, sign a joint communiqué ahead of a press conference at the Office of the Prime Minister on July 21.**

categories for movement," he added.

**"The responsibility of CARICOM member states is to guarantee hassle-free travel, to apply the agreed categories of skilled labour, as well as have even acceptance of the CSME skills certificates throughout the region."**

Both Prime Ministers acknowledged the need for improvements in trade relations. This included getting rid of impediments to the free movement of goods and services between the countries.

Mutual initiatives were also explored to strengthen cooperation in the areas of energy, tourism, air and sea transportation. Technical and cultural exchanges, as well as cooperation in sports, film, fashion and the creative industries were also discussed.

The Trinidadian Prime Minister, meanwhile, expressed thanks to the Jamaican Government officials, for hosting him and giving him and his delegation the opportunity to meet with several sectors of the society.

"It is good news to report that Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica have agreed to work together to provide the kind of leadership that the population of the region expects, as we seek to convert our dream and our vision of CARICOM into realities for the people who live within our borders," Dr. Rowley said.

## Capacity of Virology Lab Being Increased for ZikV Testing

THE MINISTRY of Health is increasing the capacity of the virology lab at the University Hospital of the West Indies (UHWI) to facilitate Zika virus (Zik V) testing.

Portfolio Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, said an additional PCR machine dedicated to Zik V testing has been ordered for the lab.

"Additional staff has been deployed and others are being recruited to assist at the UHWI Virology Lab. Discussions of a shift system for increased Zik V testing are ongoing," Dr. Tufton said.

In a statement to the House of Representatives on July 19, the Minister also announced that working with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Ministry has trained staff and established the capacity to do ELISA testing.



**Minister of Health, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton**

"This will allow us to tell whether pregnant women ever had the Zika virus or whether they are having Zika. This will eliminate the three- to five-day window allowing us more flexibility to diagnose Zika infection," Dr. Tufton said.

He added that the Ministry is in discussion with PAHO on the possibility of introducing the ELISA test, as the cost to test 40,000 pregnant women at the current price of US\$20 per test

## US\$100 Million to Boost Investment

THE GOVERNMENT has received a US\$100-million loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to increase access to financing for firms and individuals, as well as improving the regulation and supervision of the country's financial system.

Dubbed the 'Financial

System Reform Support Programme', the initiative seeks to promote private investment and reduce the cost of, and the perceived level of difficulty in doing business in Jamaica.

Speaking at the official signing ceremony at the Finance Ministry in Kingston on July 21,

Minister of State, Hon. Fayval Williams, said the Government anticipates a positive impact on the country's gross domestic product and economic growth that will be spurred by the reform measures that are being undertaken.

"The Government appreciates the contribution of the IDB to financial sector reform in Jamaica and looks forward to continued collaboration with the Bank in support of the Government's overall objectives as outlined in the Vision 2030 National Development Plan," she said.

Meanwhile, General Manager, Country Department, Caribbean Group, Inter-American Development Bank, Therese Turner-Jones, said the initiative will "shoreup" the environment for a more robust financial sector and access to financing.

The programme consists of four components, including macroeconomic stability; strengthening financial sector stability; enhancing financial inclusion of firms and individuals; and improving the financial legal framework.



**Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Fayval Williams (left), and General Manager, Country Department, Caribbean Group, Inter-American Development Bank, Therese Turner-Jones, shake hands after signing and exchanging the loan contract for the US\$100 million Financial System Reform Support Programme, during a ceremony at the Ministry's Heroes Circle offices in Kingston, on July 21.**

## T&T to Implement Significant Changes

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says he is satisfied that the Trinidad and Tobago Government is taking the necessary steps to address the immigration challenges faced by some Jamaicans travelling to that country.

He said the Trinidad and Tobago Government, led by Dr. the Hon. Keith Rowley, will implement undertakings agreed upon between the Foreign

Affairs Ministers of both countries.

Mr. Holness said he is encouraged that the designated facility at the Piarco International Airport in Trinidad and Tobago to accommodate persons awaiting a return flight overnight is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

Some 100 immigration officers are currently involved in a training work-

shop, and the programme is expected to be done on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Holness indicated that there has also been marked improvement in the processing of detainees.

The Prime Minister was addressing a press conference at his office in Kingston on July 21, to close out the four-day official visit of the Trinidadian Prime Minister.

## Kingston Freeport Terminal Limited Aims to Bring in More Ships



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (left); President of the Port Authority of Jamaica, Professor Gordon Shirley; and Chief Executive Officer of Kingston Freeport Terminal Limited (KFTL), Olivier Tretout, take a ride on a container-handling gantry crane during a tour of the Port of Kingston on July 20. The KFTL is in talks to bring additional shipping services to the Port of Kingston. The major shipping lines involved in the discussions include Danish shipping company, Maersk; China Ocean Shipping (Group) Company (COSCO); German-Chilean line, Hapag-Lloyd; and Evergreen from Taiwan.

**PREVENT MOSQUITO BREEDING**

*It's Everybody's Responsibility*

**DISPOSE OF GARBAGE PROPERLY**

**COVER ALL CONTAINERS**

**PUNCH HOLES IN TINS**