

IBEX Global Investment a Vote of Confidence in Ja

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness said the investment of IBEX Global in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector locally, is a demonstration of confidence in Jamaica as a 'right-fit' destination for its operations.

Addressing a ceremony to officially open the company's offices in the Portmore Pines Plaza in St. Catherine on October 27, Mr. Holness said the Government stands ready to assist the company to increase its employment capacity and expand across the island.

He expressed gratitude for the investment in Portmore, one of the country's fastest-growing communities.

IBEX Global launched operations at the location in July and currently has 550 employees, with a plan to increase that cohort



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (2nd left) cuts the ribbon to officially open Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) company, IBEX Global's offices in Portmore Pines, St. Catherine on October 27. He is joined in the ceremony by (from left) Chief Executive Officer of IBEX Global, Robert Dechant; President of Jamaica Promotions Corporation, Diane Edwards; and Country Manager of IBEX Global, Dalglish Joseph.

to 1,000 when the facility is fully built out.

"There is compelling evidence that a new economic era has begun for Jamaica and we firmly believe that the business process outsourcing sector is one of the critical

growth areas for sustainability," Prime Minister said.

"This sector has been given priority by the Government and continuity to develop the sector sends a positive signal to investors that their investment will be supported for the long term," he added.

Prime Minister Holness said Jamaica is steadily building its reputation as not just a tourist destination, but also a top destination for business.

The new Portmore Pines site offers a full complement of BPO services such as customer care, email, chat and back office support.

Cabinet Approves National ID Policy

CABINET HAS approved the formulation of a National Identification System (NIDS) Policy for Jamaica.

This was disclosed by Education, Youth and Information Minister, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid, who indicated that the policy is being developed for tabling as a White Paper in Parliament.

He said Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness would pilot its passage.

The Minister was speaking during Wednesday's (October 26) post-Cabinet media briefing at Jamaica House.

The NIDS project is being implemented by the Office of the Prime Minister through funding from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and was allocated a sum of \$14.98 billion this financial year for its continued development.

The project aims to establish a reliable identification system for Jamaicans and other



Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid nationals resident in the country, with a unique National Identification Number (NIN) as the primary key identifier of a person in the system.

NIDS has been in development since 2009 and will result in improved governance and management of social, economic and security programmes.

NIDS is expected to have a transformative effect on Jamaica, providing a comprehensive and secure structure to capture and store personal identity information for citizens and other persons residing in the island.

JSIF Has Spent \$18.6 Billion on Social Development Projects

THE JAMAICA Social Investment Fund (JSIF) has spent some \$18.6 billion on social development projects in the country over the past 20 years, resulting in some two million persons being impacted.

Chairman of JSIF, Dr. Wayne Henry, said the fund carried out 594 education projects, which include school construction and provision of equipment; constructed 60 community spaces; and built, rehabilitated and equipped 50 health centres.

He was addressing the launch of JSIF's 20th Anniversary and Annual



Chairman of Jamaica Social Investment Fund, Dr. Wayne Henry

General Meeting at the Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston on October 25.

He informed that the entity has also implemented

181 road and drainage projects; 79 water and sanitation projects; 60 agricultural projects; 64 energy and environment projects; 14 community-based tourism projects; and 536 human capacity development projects.

The ceremony, held under the theme '20 Years of Investing for Community Growth and Development', entailed project displays and presentations on the work of JSIF in the areas of Tourism and Agriculture, Environment and Energy, and Youth Workforce Development and Capacity Building.

Minister Chang Tours Kingston Wharves



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (centre), in discussion with Chief Executive Officer, Kingston Wharves Limited, Grantley Stephenson (right) and Director, Kingston Wharves Limited, Charles Johnston, during a tour of the facilities on October 27. During the tour, the Minister got a first-hand view of the expansion and new developments at the port and heard of the initiatives to transform it into a premier transshipment facility.

Gov't Prepares for Flu Season

THE MINISTRY of Health has stocked up on influenza vaccines as part of preventative measures for this year's flu season.

Speaking at a press briefing in New Kingston on October 27, Portfolio Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, said the Ministry has acquired about 500 per cent more doses of the vaccine than in previous years.

"We have taken precaution this year given the severity last year to boost the number of vaccines or doses of vaccines that we have. We've stocked up and it's here in the country. So we've had on average about 23,780 doses of the vaccine in stock," he informed.

Dr. Tufton is encouraging Jamaicans, especially frontline health workers, to get the flu vaccine.

Vaccines are accessible to the public at health centres



Minister of Health, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, speaking at a press conference in New Kingston on October 28.

across the island, as well as at private facilities.

Meanwhile, the United States Centers for Disease Control is providing US\$400,000 in grant funding to Jamaica for one year to mitigate any possible outbreak of the flu virus.

The funding is to be used to build capacity within the surveillance system of Jamaica to

detect, respond to and monitor changes in influenza viruses.

Last year, there were over 1,700 severe cases of the virus, including seven deaths.

Symptoms of the flu virus include fever, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue.

Justice Ministry to Undertake Works to Improve Justice System

THE MINISTRY of Justice will be undertaking works over the next 12 months to improve the operations of the country's courts and reduce the backlog of cases.

Portfolio Minister, Hon. Delroy Chuck, has advised that contracts valued at over \$54 million are to be signed for the upgrading of the Sutton Street Parish Court and to enhance security at the Supreme Court in Kingston.

Mr. Chuck, in a statement on October 25, said the number of courtrooms for criminal case trials at the Supreme Court will also be increased.

"We are hoping that by early next year, three additional criminal courts will be available for jury trials and that by the end of next year, we should have at



Justice Minister, Hon. Delroy Chuck

least 10 courts trying jury cases and two doing Gun Court cases," he informed.

Additionally, the Minister said a modern file folder system would be installed at the Supreme Court Registry.

Other measures include the installation of video-link technology at the

Supreme Court and Half-Way Tree Parish Court to facilitate witnesses who are unable to attend trial.

The Minister advised that work to install the technology in 19 additional courts is expected to commence before the end of the 2016/17 fiscal year.

In addition, three mobile units, which are equipped to facilitate witnesses giving evidence remotely, have been acquired.

He stated that digital audio-recording equipment had been installed in some courtrooms, with 71 additional courtrooms and seven hearing rooms slated to be outfitted.

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