

Housing Sector a Catalyst for Wealth Creation – PM

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the housing sector functions as a catalyst that spurs many of the society's other desirable social and economic outcomes.

Noting that owning a home is one of the biggest accomplishments which anyone can achieve, Mr. Holness contends that "it is an avenue to greater wealth generation", adding that "it promotes job creation, enhances the sense of security and stimulates investment."

He was delivering the keynote address at the 2017 Regional Housing Conference, held at the Iberostar Rose Hall Suites in St. James on October 18.

The Prime Minister argued that owning real

estate assets and transferring them from generation to generation is something "we can readily accept", noting that it creates "intergenerational wealth... and the likelihood that the next generation will enjoy a better standard of living".

"All households being able to access affordable, appropriate and legal housing options in livable, vibrant, inclusive and aesthetically pleasing communities is, therefore, critical to the socio-economic fabric of any nation. If we fail to provide this for our citizens, we are essentially undermining any other growth strategies we pursue," he said.

Mr. Holness emphasised that the housing sector must be reorganised to



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness addresses the Regional Conference on Housing at the Iberostar Hotel in St. James on October 18.

reflect the provision of housing units for the regular open market and the provision of housing for those who cannot afford housing units in this category.

The Prime Minister said that by understanding this, prospective homeowners would now have an opportunity to own a home.

Denham Town Residents Welcome ZOSO

RESIDENTS OF Denham Town in Western Kingston are welcoming the presence of the security forces in their community, which was declared the second Zone of Special Operations (ZOSO) by Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness on October 17.

One resident, who spoke to **JIS News** from her shop on Albert Street, said she hopes that the operations will restore peace and unity in the community.

"If a 60 days or 60 years dem deh here, it nuh really matter; mi only want fi see the community come back together where everybody unite as one... and eat out a one pot again," she said.



Residents of Denham Town in Western Kingston stop at a security checkpoint in the community on Wednesday, October 18.

The small business owner said the security personnel who have been deployed in the area are respectful during interactions with citizens.

"They are very nice; they talk to us nice. We

don't have any problems on this side," she noted. A male resident said he, too, has no problem with the presence of the security forces, as he is a law-abiding citizen.

Another resident said he hopes the operations will be able to transform the community and urged persons to give the process a chance.

Denham Town was declared a ZOSO under the Law Reform (Zones of Special Operations) (Special Security and Community Development Measures) Act. The law seeks to contain crime while safeguarding the human rights of residents and promoting community development through social intervention initiatives in communities where a Zone operates.

The security operation in Denham Town will last for 60 days.

Gov't to Stimulate Small Businesses Establishment in Blue and John Crow Mountains

THE GOVERNMENT is providing grant funding of \$1 million to youth, to establish small businesses in the Blue and John Crow Mountains.

Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Minister, Hon. Olivia Grange, says the provision, which will target young people aged 18 to 35 years, aims to stimulate their empowerment.

"We are insisting that the businesses demonstrate the use of Jamaican cultural practices and traditions in the creation of goods and services," she said while addressing an economic opportunities workshop at Morant Villas in St. Thomas on October 18.

Ms. Grange said the Government recognises

that there is "glorious possibility" in the Blue and John Crow Mountains, which have been designated as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), adding that "we are determined to make it a reality".

She told the forum that while efforts to get UNESCO's approval for the area covering parts of St. Andrew, St. Thomas, and Portland, had support from successive administrations, the role of the Jamaica Conservation & Development Trust (JCDDT) was of paramount importance.

The Minister underscored that significant opportunities exist in



Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange (right), converses with Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) Extension Officer, Tadj Barclay (centre), while RADA Livestock Officer, Peta-Gaye Watson, looks on. The occasion was an economic opportunities workshop held on October 18, in St. Thomas.

maintaining the site for all, especially Jamaicans, where persons from across the globe can be taken on tours, to "expose

them to the biodiversity (and) to immerse them into the culture of the Windward Maroons".

Jamaica to Benefit From US\$7.52M Grant Funding

JAMAICA IS set to benefit from an initial US\$7.52 million in grant funding under the ninth cycle of the Caribbean Development Bank's (CDB) Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF 9).

The money will go towards the areas of education, transportation, enterprise development, and water and sanitation, through projects implemented by the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF).

The allocation is part of a provision of US\$40.8 million being made available to nine Caribbean borrowing member countries of the CDB, under the BNTF.

The BNTF is the flagship poverty reduction programme of the CDB, aimed at contributing to improvement in the living conditions of poor and vulnerable communities in participating countries.

Speaking at the official launch of the project on October 17 at the

Courtyard Marriott hotel in New Kingston, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw, said the initiative will assist in empowering the lives of beneficiaries.

"We are quick to get these funds in the hands of the JSIF, because we know that when it comes to the JSIF, we get every bang for the buck; we get good performance. They have projects done on time (and) within budget, and we are really proud of the JSIF as one of the outstanding public sector agencies in Jamaica," he said.

The Minister lauded the CDB for implementing the programme, adding that poverty reduction is a crucial component for economic growth and development.

He said the BNTF will assist in improving the lives of the country's most vulnerable, particularly in the areas of education and human development.



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw (left), is greeted by Managing Director, Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), Omar Sweeney (right), on his arrival at the Courtyard Marriott hotel on October 17. At centre is Board Chairman, JSIF, Dr. Wayne Henry.

Mrs. Holness and Students Observe International Chefs' Day



Member of Parliament for East Rural St. Andrew, the Most Hon. Juliet Holness (left), picks strawberries with students from St. Jude's and Seaview Gardens Primary Schools, at the Fitzroy Mais Farm in Mavis Bank, St. Andrew, recently. The activity, to mark International Chefs' Day on October 20, also included a brunch with the students.

Cannabis Licensing Authority Issues First Two Licences

HISTORY WAS created on Wednesday, October 18 with the issuing of the first two licences by the Cannabis Licensing Authority of Jamaica (CLA) for local entities to legally operate in the cannabis industry.

Everything Oily Labs was presented with a processing licence, while Epican received a licence for cultivation, during a press conference held at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries in New Kingston.



Chairman, Cannabis Licensing Authority of Jamaica, Hyacinth Lightbourne (left), presents Director and Secretary, Evertying Oily Labs, Claudine Liu, with a licence, at a press conference on October 18, at the offices of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries in New Kingston.

Portfolio Minister, Hon. Karl Samuda, said he was pleased to be part of the historic occasion.

He commended the CLA for being diligent "in adhering to the rules and regulations laid down under the Dangerous Drugs (Amendment) Act that gave rise to this organisation".

CLA Chairman, Hyacinth Lightbourne, said the occasion represents the start of what will be a thriving

medicinal ganja industry in Jamaica.

"Although it has taken some time to get to this historic occasion, we have remained committed to getting it right and to ensure that Jamaica's stake in the global medicinal cannabis industry is never compromised and remains sustainable," she said.

Ms. Lightbourne also informed that another three applicants have been granted licences and are

completing their requirements for issue.

In addition, 57 are at the conditional approval stage, and another 209 applications are being processed.

The CLA was created in 2015 under the Dangerous Drug (Amendment) Act, to establish and regulate Jamaica's legal marijuana and hemp industry.