

PM to Meet With Senior Officials on Special Zones

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness is to convene a meeting with all Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Agencies, to ensure that the necessary structures and support are in place for the social intervention and development measures which are key components of the Zones of Special Operations.

The decision follows a meeting of the National Security Council (NSC) held on July 20 at the Office of the Prime Minister.

The NSC received and deliberated extensively on presentations by the Chief of Defence Staff, Major General Rocky Meade and Commissioner of Police, George Quallo, on the preparations for the implementation of the Zones of Special Operations.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) meets with members of the National Security Council at the Office of the Prime Minister on July 20.

The Law Reform (Zones of Special Operations) (Special Community Development Measures) Act has been gazetted and is now law having been passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate and signed by the Governor-General.

Meanwhile, Cabinet has approved a sum of \$2.57 billion for consideration by the Finance and Public Service Minister for allocation to the National Security Ministry. This is an increase over what was initially tabled in the Budget.

The funds will facilitate activities associated with Zones of Special Operations and provide additional resources required by the security forces in the fight against crime. These will include vehicles, CCTV systems and body cameras.

PM Says There is Strong Confidence in Economy

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says there is strong confidence in the economy from the business community and the rest of the country.

He noted that this has been reflected in the latest Business and Consumer Confidence Indices, which show that "business confidence remains firmly entrenched above the crucial 100-point mark."

The Prime Minister was speaking at the recently held Bustamante Industrial Trade Union's Triennial General Assembly, at Wolmer's High School for Boys in Kingston.

Mr. Holness informed that further confidence in the economy has been reflected in the number of loans made to the private sector and other individuals from financial institutions.

"Overall, the loans to the private sector have increased by over 30 per cent at February 2017 versus February 2016. People are borrowing to invest and the banks are lending for investments again. There is a shift happening from consumer to investment lending," he said.

The Prime Minister added that loans to the manufacturing sector increased by 22 per cent, loans to the construction and land development sector increased by 15 per cent, while loans to the tourism sector accelerated by 31 per cent.

He also stated that approximately 22,000 more persons were employed at the end of January 2017 when compared to the end of January 2016.

Tourism Earns US\$1.46 Billion in Six Months

JAMAICA GENERATED US\$1.46 billion in tourism earnings during the first six months of the 2017 calendar year to record an impressive 7.5 per cent increase over the corresponding period in 2016.

Additionally, the country welcomed 2,165,330 visitors up to the end of June this year, which was 3.9 per cent higher than the corresponding period in 2016.

These included 1,186,646 stopover visitors and 978,684 cruise passengers. This was announced by Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, at a post-Cabinet media briefing at



Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, emphasises a point at the post-Cabinet media briefing at Jamaica House on July 19.

Jamaica House on July 19. He also said that a record 104,098 stopover visitors arrived during the first two weeks of July, which represented a "massive" 14.9 per cent increase over the corresponding period last year.

The Minister said these out-turns indicated that the industry was, at the end of June, ahead of the Government's projected growth targets, aimed at increasing visitor arrivals to five million and generating US\$5 billion in five years.

Jamaica welcomed 3.84 million visitors last year, which was four per cent more than 2015. Last year's

arrivals included 2.2 million stopover visitors and 1.66 million cruise passengers.

Diaspora Conference to Engage Young People

ORGANISERS OF the Jamaica 55 Diaspora Conference are placing much emphasis on engaging young people in Jamaica and the Diaspora through a Youth Forum.

The Global Young Leaders of Jamaica Forum is slated for Wednesday, July 26 at the Jamaica Conference Centre in downtown Kingston.

At the forum, discussions will focus on entrepreneurship, mentoring young people and deepening cultural ties and affinity with Jamaica.

Acting Director of the Diaspora Affairs Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Lincoln

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Downer, told **JIS News** that the forum will be led by young Jamaicans from the UK, Canada and the USA.

They will also interact with their local counterparts from the Youth Advisory Council, National Secondary Students' Council, Jamaica Youth Ambassadors Programme and

the Jamaica Union of Tertiary Students.

Mr. Downer said the session will showcase examples of work being done by young Jamaicans and second, third and fourth generation Diaspora members.

The conference began on Sunday, July 23, with an official opening ceremony and Governor-General's Achievement Awards.

Other features include a Marketplace Exposition, Government At Your Service, Diaspora Day of Service and a range of hospitality and cultural activities in Kingston.

The conference is being convened under the theme: 'Partnering for Growth'.

JSIF Provides \$3M for Summer Camps for At-Risk Youth

THE JAMAICA Social Investment Fund (JSIF) is providing \$3 million in grants for the staging of several summer camps targeting 700 at-risk youth.

Under Summer Camp 2017, the JSIF will provide the money for the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) to support five residential summer camps across the 18 communities that fall under its Integrated

Community Development Project (ICDP), which is funded through a loan from the World Bank.

The camps are being established in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information in response to the growing need for targeted social interventions to foster positive youth development.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was

signed by the entities during the launch of the programme on July 17 at JSIF's Oxford Road offices in Kingston.

The two-week residential summer camps are being held between July 9 and August 24.

Camp facilitators and counsellors will be mobilised from the Community Safety and Security Branch, the Corporate Communications Unit (CCU), Mobile Reserve as well as participating schools.

Managing Director of JSIF, Omar Sweeney, said the partnership complements the strategy of the JCF to deliver summer camps which target at-risk youth and support behaviour modification and positive youth development.

"This partnership recognises that improved community safety and crime prevention requires that the police act in partnership with the general public and with other Government, private and voluntary sector organisations to deliver collaborative services that will address crime, fear of crime and other safety issues which concern communities," he said.



Managing Director of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), Omar Sweeney (seated centre), and Deputy Commissioner of Police, Novelette Grant (right), sign a Memorandum of Understanding for the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), implemented Summer Camp 2017 on July 17 at the JSIF Oxford Road offices in Kingston. Signing at left is Chairman of Operation Friendship, Dr. Webster Edwards. Standing (from left) are: Procurement Manager for JSIF, Suzette Livermore East; Social Officer for the Integrated Community Development Project (ICDP), Shunelle Nevers, and JSIF Social Development Manager, Mona Sue-Ho.

Ackee Village Opens in Portmore



Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie (right), celebrates the official opening of Ackee Village in Portmore, St. Catherine, on July 19. Others (from left) are: Councillor for the Gregory Park Division, Joy Brown; Member of Parliament for East Central St. Catherine, Alando Terrelonge, and Mayor of Portmore, Leon Thomas. The village will serve as an outlet for farmers, vendors and shoppers to operate in a safe environment.



JAMAICA 55
DIASPORA 2017
CONFERENCE
PARTNERING FOR GROWTH

JAMAICA CONFERENCE CENTRE
KINGSTON
JULY 23 - 26

DAILY REGISTRATION FOR SESSIONS
7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

For further details visit www.mfapt.gov.jm/conference or email: dca@mfapt.gov.jm.

