



Sectoral Debate

2014-2015

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Minister without Portfolio (Sport)

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

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**Sport Policy made Sport Reality –
Capitalising on our Sporting Successes**

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Salutations and Thanks:

Mr. Speaker, governments exist for a purpose of good and form part of the Divine order. It was God Himself who established this divine institution of governance for the maintenance of order and for improving the quality of life. Allow me to quote from the Scripture, Romans 13, which reads “For there is no authority except from God and those which exist are established by God.”

Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a humbling reminder of the importance of our role as public servants and I am profoundly grateful to God for the opportunity to serve. It is He who has empowered, enabled and led me these past 17 years as an elected representative of His people.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Prime Minister, the Most Honourable Portia Simpson Miller for her continued belief in me and for her unflinching support and mentoring over the years. I thank you, Prime Minister, for your continued confidence in my capacity to undertake the responsibilities in a portfolio so close your heart. Your selfless leadership is inspiring and is an example of true commitment to the public interest.

Thank you, my parliamentary colleagues. Each of you has contributed to my growth in some way. Accept my appreciation for being so generous to me with your time, input, wisdom and encouragement as I tackle the tasks entrusted to me.

I thank my colleagues, in and out of politics, on both sides of the aisle for their support and guidance. I am strengthened by your solidarity and inspired by the consensus which we have and can achieve for the good of the nation.

Mr. Speaker, I extend a special thanks to my constituency staff whose commitment to the cause has remained steadfast, regardless of the challenges. You fight for what you believe in and I am the beneficiary of your efforts. You have my back and often face the ire of constituents when I am not there on the ground. You have a vision for your family and for Jamaica and you have opted to participate actively in the process; that is responsible citizenship.

I express heartfelt appreciation to the Councillors of North Central St. Catherine, for the support, cooperation and team spirit that has characterised our working relationship. I look forward to accomplishing bigger and better things together as we work in the interest of the people who chose us to represent them.

To my supportive Executive Members, Cluster Managers, Heads of CBOs, Church and School families, many of whom are here today in support, I say thank you.

Today, because of the sacred trust placed in me by the people of North Central St. Catherine, I stand here as a proud parliamentarian. I do not take this for granted. I am acutely aware of the many challenges that families face in my constituency and I wake up each day searching for ways to help to make your lives better. I am grateful to you, the people of Bog Walk, Sligoville, Above Rocks, and Angels Divisions, for choosing me to work on your behalf and for the patience you have shown while I also manage my ministerial responsibilities. I will continue to tackle the issues that are important to you and seek, as much as possible, to implement solutions that improve your quality of life.

I thank my family for their support, guidance and understanding and for making the sacrifices which my public service demands of our family life. My daughters Sidney and Morgan and my mother who flew in today to offer support, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, sport is a significant component of Brand Jamaica. There are countries with far larger budgets, much better facilities and equipment that marvel at the results which Jamaica has been able to produce at international competitions. This does not happen by chance. Therefore, I take this opportunity to recognise and thank the thousands of volunteers in small rural districts and in urban centres who have brought glory to our country by working tirelessly to inspire and prepare young Jamaican athletes to perform with excellence. I know that when fundraising drives fall short of their target, that when there are no sponsors or additional financial assistance from the Government, many volunteers use their own resources to assist athletes. Amidst the negativity, Jamaicans should know that there are heroes like you among us who represent our highest ideals.

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Mr. Speaker, the importance of the private sector in national development cannot be overstated. In sport, we recognise that the Government will never be able to provide all the support needed to advance sport development. For this reason, the sponsorships and endorsements that are provided directly and indirectly by the private sector are such an important part of what has helped to make us achieve the kind of success we continue to enjoy. I thank all the members of the private sector who give time, money, technical support, innovation and ideas to sport development. Many of you serve on our Boards of Directors and bring your wisdom and insight to the process and for this we are eternally grateful.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I did not take time out to thank members of the Diaspora and Friends of Jamaica who quietly assist our athletes with gear, equipment, meals, scholarships and other in-kind and financial support to promote their development and that of sport. Many of these individuals are unsung heroes and heroines who share what they have because they believe in the good and the potential of our people. On behalf of a grateful nation, we thank you wholeheartedly.

Mr. Speaker, I am also grateful to those who serve in the public sector across our various Ministries, Departments and Agencies on whom we rely to do the work of the Government.



I wish to thank my Permanent Secretary and her staff as well as the members of the Sport Unit, members of staff in my Support Unit and all the staff of the Office of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Office who collectively allow the work of this Administration to progress. In a time of many uncertainties and economic difficulties, we are blessed to have a workforce that work for the public good.

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MOVING FORWARD – REPRESENTING THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CENTRAL ST. CATHERINE

Mr. Speaker, the diverse constituency of North Central St. Catherine continues to face many challenges and I am working assiduously to create solutions and promote development in that bountiful and beautiful area of Jamaica, where my heart resides.

During the past financial year, our focus in the constituency was on:

- Infrastructural development
- Social services
- Jobs and small business creation
- Health
- Land development and housing
- Agriculture
- Culture
- Education, and
- Sport

Infrastructural Development

Mr Speaker, historically, infrastructure deficiencies have been a major part of the challenges that rural residents face. Access to potable water, good roads, and electricity are quality-of-life issues that impact our lives in very profound ways. The complaints of constituents in this regard are justified and I wish that we had the resources to do more. Despite the constraints, I am pleased to report that we have started, continued and concluded several infrastructural projects in my constituency.

Water

Mr. Speaker, we continue to tackle water issues in the constituency. In the Cedar Valley area a community tank was repaired at a cost of \$2 million and the West Prospect Water System is now functional. The Dam Head tank and pump were repaired, while a pipe-laying project is ongoing.

Mr. Speaker, after 20 years without adequate access to the precious commodity, the Richard Hall Water Supply system rehabilitation and upgrade project has been approved and a Request For Proposals has been tendered. This project will benefit the communities of Five Mile, Mount Moreland, Richard Hall and Mount Dawson. One major benefit will be that there will no longer be a need to truck water to the Mount Moreland Primary and Junior High Schools.

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Roads

Mr. Speaker, one of the things we complain about in Jamaica is the state of our roads. In fact, we all had mixed feelings when Tessanne Chin joked on international television that we in Jamaica have the worst roads.

Mr. Speaker, this Administration is trying to make a difference and I commend my colleague Ministers in the Ministry of Transport and Works for the significant work they have been doing across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I promised my constituents that I would advocate on their behalf for Better Roads! There is a lot of work left to be done but much has been accomplished and so many lives affected have been enhanced.

Fourteen urban and rural roads in the constituency have undergone rehabilitative work with much of the work completed and other projects ongoing.

Mr. Speaker, last year, through the support of the Sugar Transformation Project, funded by the European Union, we were able to rehabilitate the West Prospect Road, Church Road in Bog Walk, portions along the Linstead Bypass, and the Zion Hill to Parkes Road stretch. Thanks to a partnership forged with the Ministry of Local Government and the St. Catherine Parish Council, the Cedar Valley Road was also rehabilitated.

SPORT POLICY MADE SPORT REALITY – Capitalising on our Sporting Successes

Mr. Speaker, there has been a vast improvement in the road quality experienced by those who travel towards the Flat Bridge, along Brunswick Avenue to Dam Head Road, on the Bog Walk to Knollis Road and on the Five Miles to Sligoville Road. Through JEEP, we have been able to do much-needed work on Angels Drive and Canal Crescent in the Lakemore housing schemes.

Mr. Speaker, major roadwork is just wrapping up on the Bog Walk to Santa Maria Road (Pleasant Hill to Waugh Hill) at a cost of over J\$470 million. This will provide a viable alternative route through Sligoville for persons coming in from the North Coast, while residents of Sligoville and the surrounding areas will be able to get in and out of Kingston in 15 to 20 minutes.



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Mr. Speaker, these roadworks also have implications for Jamaica's economic growth as the movement of produce to market will be significantly improved.

Private Sector Involvement

Mr. Speaker, we are blessed in North Central St. Catherine with a number of small, medium and large businesses, which include agro-manufacturing facilities. These businesses employ many local workers, thereby contributing to an improved quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that public/private partnerships are not only important at the national level but equally so at the local level. For this reason, I wish to express my

appreciation to Trade Winds Citrus Ltd., the maker of Tru-Juice, for accepting my proposal to adopt the Angels roundabout as a project for upgrading, beautifying and maintaining over the long-term. The project designs have been completed and we are now awaiting final approval from the St. Catherine Parish Council.

Social Services and Social Empowerment

Mr. Speaker, we are all painfully aware of the enduring need for investment in the creation of social service and social safety nets throughout our various communities. For my part, I have sought to undertake many projects in my constituency in order to give those most in need the chance for improved lives.

Mr. Speaker, computer and other technologies have revolutionised the way we live and do business. Persons without access to the Internet, for example, will lose ground to their more-informed competitors. With this in mind, we are grateful for the partnership forged with the Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining to create Internet computer access-point (CAP) sites across the constituency in order to assist young entrepreneurs in the development of small businesses and to provide students with access to the Internet. Through this partnership, CAP sites are planned for four communities with one already completed in Commodore and three others soon to be rolled out in Cedar Valley, Harkers Hall and West Prospect.

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North Central Community Youth Entrepreneur and Education Programme (NCCYEEP)

Mr. Speaker, one of my proudest achievements this year was the recent launch of the North Central Community Youth Entrepreneur and Education Programme (NCCYEEP) in partnership with the Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC), the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), the Young Entrepreneur Association (YEA), the HEART Trust/NTA, and the Social Development Commission (SDC).

This initiative is a constituency entrepreneurship grant programme which encourages young people to development their skills as they seek to establish small businesses in the North Central St. Catherine constituency.

The NCCYEEP also serves as a catalyst to promote entrepreneurship, to militate against the high level of unemployment, to create enrichment opportunities and to give those involved the capacity to grow towards economic and sustainable development.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my profound gratitude to all the partners involved in advancing this very important project. In this regard, I wish to offer special thanks to Custos Steadman Fuller for donating lands to be utilised for agriculture-related purposes.

Mr. Speaker, on the matter of **Land Development and Housing**, there has been progress with respect to **the Angels Heights Land Settlement**. After years of intervention and advocacy, the residents in this informal settlement will be able to settle permanently in the area. Plans for the Settlement continue to move forward. The land has been purchased from the owners and is now vested in the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing. Sub-division plans are now being developed. Thank you Minister Davies and Minister Guy for your outstanding support in resolving this matter.

Education

Mr. Speaker, by far, the greatest activity and success in the community has been in the area of education.

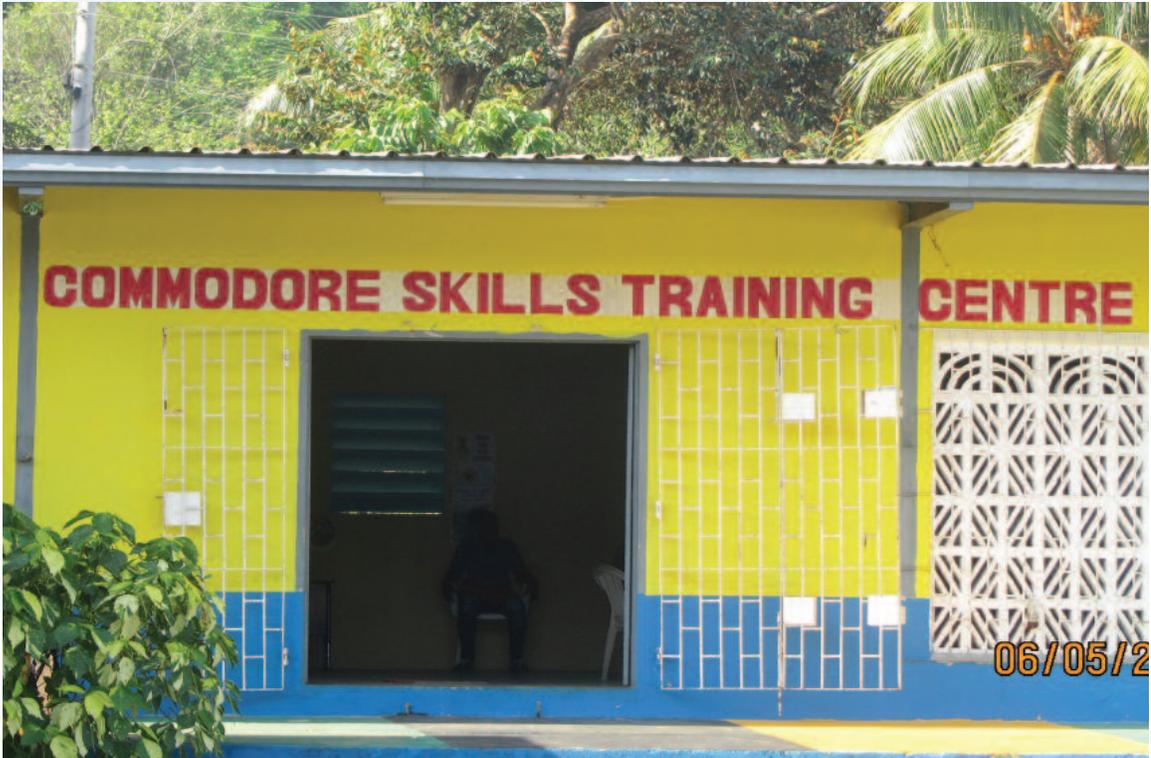
Mr. Speaker, education is a critical part of our development agenda. We cannot attain our Vision 2030 Jamaica goals without ensuring that there is an educated population to lead this process.

Mr. Speaker, I made it a priority and I was able to provide in excess of \$7 million to fund scholarships for GSAT high achievers. I was also able to offer secondary and tertiary school grants and school infrastructure and capacity-building grants, thanks to the support of the Jamaica Energy Partners, the Citizen Security and Justice Programme (CSJP) in vulnerable areas and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

Mr. Speaker, we are nearing the end of our campaign to remove pit latrines from primary schools in the constituency. We have prepared detailed plans for the **improvement of sanitary facilities** at the last two remaining primary schools with pit latrines, Mount Moreland Primary and Junior High and the Giblatore Primary. Thanks to the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and our private sector partners for their help in this effort.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to upgrade facilities and curriculum at the **Commodore HEART Training Centre** to allow the centre to provide courses in Food Preparation, Pastry Chef Certification, Data Processing (level two), Housekeeping and General Office Administration.

Mr. Speaker, in the Harkers Hall community, RADA has given permission for the use of its under-utilised building as a Resource Centre. Food for the Poor has committed to assist with providing the requisite furnishing and the Centre is expected to be fully functional by September 2014. This arrangement will allow students of varying age groups to improve their academic performance while gaining greater access to information and technology.



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Mr. Speaker, plans are also far advanced for the creation of a Sligoville Institute which will offer CXC Classes in Math, English, Biology and Social Studies. This project will be implemented through funding by the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and the the Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL).

Culture

In the area of culture, Mr. Speaker, we have commenced several projects. This year marks the sixth year of the staging of the **Sligoville Emancifest Festival**. Last year was a major success with over 8,000 patrons attending and attracting overwhelming support from the public and private sectors. There was a total budget of \$3.2 million, which was made available through sponsorship and support from the CHASE Fund, the Constituency Development Fund and Petrojam. This event has become an important cultural festival on Jamaica's culture and entertainment calendar and has the potential to bring substantial economic opportunity and development to the Sligoville area, including tourism interest.

Mr. Speaker, this year, Sligoville, our first free village, will collaborate with the Ministry of Youth and Culture to host the National Emancipation Vigil. Thank you Minister Hanna for endorsing this partnership.

We are also in the process of undertaking a heritage tourism project in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment, commencing with the Rehabilitation of the **Sligoville Great House**. Thank you UNESCO for training 20 tour guides who will be engaged in the

project and who will stay on to conduct tours of the Great House and its environs once the restoration is completed.

Sport

Mr. Speaker, long before I was asked to serve as the Minister with responsibility for Sport, the young people of North Central St. Catherine were fully engaged in football, netball and cricket sport leagues with over 70 teams participating annually. Working with the St. Catherine Football Association, and the Institute of Sports, the league seasons were implemented successfully in 2013 with a budget of \$3.5 million and the competitions were a resounding success.

Mr. Speaker, at every level of our society, sport has proven to be that unifying force that is able to build strong bonds of friendship, inspire the pursuit of healthy lifestyles and unearth talent.

The Constituency Development Fund

Mr. Speaker, allow me a moment to update this Honourable House on the activities of the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), for which I have ministerial oversight.

The CDF was established as a designated funding mechanism aimed at increasing the effectiveness of Members of Parliament in responding to the needs of their constituents within the prescribed guidelines set out by the Ministry of Finance. An equal amount is allocated to each constituency and it now stands at Fifteen Million Dollars (\$15M). The programme is project driven and goes through a rigorous development, evaluating and monitoring process.

Mr. Speaker, the financial year just ended, 2013/2014, showed that the total allocation from 63 Members of Parliament for education was \$301 million representing 48% of the whole pie. This clearly demonstrates the commitment of our parliamentarians to the development of human capital. We cannot go wrong there.

The Social Development Commission (SDC) is the main Implementing Agency for these education projects. I will convene a meeting with the management of the CDF and the SDC with a view to having a reduction of the management fees from 5% to 2.5%. This will be our second attempt on this mission and as you can all understand with a little more funding, we can help that many more students.

MOVING FORWARD IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORT

Mr. Speaker, this brings me to my presentation in my capacity as Minister without Portfolio with responsibility for Sport.

Mr. Speaker, our Prime Minister has already shared some of the highlights of the work which is in progress at the OPM and the successes our athletes have been enjoying in the many sporting disciplines in which we participate.

Mr. Speaker, our little country has had a long and glorious tradition in sport, hailing from the great performances of G.C. Foster, the Right Excellent Norman Washington Manley, Cynthia Thompson, George “Atlas” Headley and Arthur Wint, to name just a few, and still we continue to blaze new trails and achieve groundbreaking performances every year. There is undeniable proof that our legacy in sport continues and expands with our sporting preparation and our sporting ambition. The last 12 months in sport were no exception.

Mr. Speaker, despite our not qualifying for the 2014 World Cup that is now underway in Brazil and in spite of the number of Adverse Analytical Findings among our athletes, Jamaica had yet another stellar year in sport.

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Mr. Speaker, there are 42 National Sport Associations and Federations registered in Jamaica at this time. This speaks volumes for the number of opportunities we are able to offer young people across the various sporting disciplines as they begin to see sport as a vehicle for educational, professional and financial success.

Just last week, Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of being present for the launch of our newest Federation, the Jamaica Wrestling Federation. Due in no small measure to the involvement of expatriate Jamaicans, we are already able to field teams to three major competitions, the Canada Cup, the Pan-American Festival and the Commonwealth Games.

In **volleyball**, we had the historic qualification of Jamaica's U-19 Boys' Beach Volleyball pair of Rojey Hutchinson and Shavar Bryan for the Youth Olympic Games, scheduled to take place in August of this year at Nanjing, China.

Mr. Speaker, in **basketball** Jamaica achieved level three (3) status for the first time, finishing eighth at the FIBA Americas Men's Championship in Venezuela. Both the men's and women's basketball teams achieved their highest ever global ranking. Basketball also benefited from the launching of the new National Basketball League (NBL) organised in regional conferences across the island.

Mr. Speaker, in **boxing**, the Contender Series continues to revive the local fortunes of the sport. We note that Nicholas “Axeman” Walters and Alicia Ashley had an outstanding year and successfully defended their world titles.

Mr. Speaker, on the heels of the successes in the February 2013 Special Olympics Winter Games, Jamaica was selected to host the Caribbean Business Meeting in April 2014 and has been invited as one of only two regional nations to participate in the November 2014 first ever Special Olympics Unified Football World Cup tournament. These are truly outstanding achievements for Special Olympics Jamaica and I wish to express my heartiest congratulations to our Special Olympians and particularly to Mrs. Lorna Bell who continues to give yeoman's service to this movement.

Mr. Speaker, in 2013, the **Limacol Caribbean Premier League** (CPL) Twenty 20 cricket tournament was launched. In true Jamaican form, our Jamaica Tallawahs walked away with the inaugural title. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Jamaica Tallawahs on their victory and wish them all the best in defending their title in the upcoming staging of the CPL.

Mr. Speaker, we are also very proud of how well our women continue to perform in a variety of sporting disciplines:

Our **women cricketers**, led by Stafanie Taylor continued to shine brightly both at the regional level and as part of the West Indies Women's Cricket team. In 2013, Miss Taylor continued her dominance and now rated among the world's best all-around women cricketers.

In **football**, the Jamaican Women's Under-20 team won the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) title in October and the Under-17 Reggae Girlz were also impressive, just failing in their bid for qualification to the Under-17 FIFA Women's World Cup.

In **netball**, Jamaica finished third at both the World Youth Netball Championship in Scotland and at the Fast5 Netball World Series in New Zealand. Janhiele Fowler, playing her first year in the Australia/New Zealand (ANZ) League, scored 666 goals from 709 attempts (93.9% accuracy) to break the league record for most goals in a season. She also set a record for most goals in a game, twice netting 65 goals during league play.

Mr. Speaker, I must congratulate our Under-16 netballers who continue to dominate the annual Jean Pierre Caribbean Youth Netball Championship. The tournament was held in April and our young netballers won the tournament again, for the 10th time.

Mr. Speaker, Jamaica also had a star in the pool as **Alia Atkinson** set a world-leading time for the short course 100 metres breaststroke in Dubai. She has also set several National Records during the season. In addition, Alia earned 21 FINA Short Course World Cup medals during the year including 10 gold medals, finishing second in the World Cup series. These are outstanding achievements for an outstanding Jamaican young lady and a role model for many of our young swimmers.

Mr. Speaker, Jamaica's team performance at the **2014 CARIFTA Swimming Championships** was one of our best performances to date. All team members achieved at least one or more personal best times. Though their swimming times were improved, only 75% of the team progressed to the finals with only 69% of these swims producing faster times.

The team broke eight records which included one senior record from Sidrell Williams in the 100m Butterfly 15-17 boys. Our team placed seventh overall with a total of thirty two (32) medals.

In **golf**, Peter Horrobin became the first Jamaican to qualify for the U.S. Senior Open Golf Championship.

In **motorsport**, Douglas Gore won the 2013 Caribbean Motor Racing Championship series driver's title, the Rally Sport Promotions Limited's "Rally Jamaica". Jamaica secured the prestigious position of being selected to host the last leg of the North American Central America (NACAM) Rally Championship in 2016.

Mr. Speaker, in **squash**, Chris Binnie had the historic achievement of becoming the first player to win the Caribbean Area Squash Association's Senior Championship four times.

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Jamaica also won **badminton** medals at the junior and senior Pan-American Championships and the Jamaica Badminton Association's (JBA) First-Vice President, Mr. Audley Astwood, was voted in as the new president of the Caribbean Regional Badminton Confederation.

Mr. Speaker, these successes are a testament to the growth of our sport sector and the increase in the overall participation in the various disciplines.

Jamaica was also outstanding in **Para-Sport**, earning two superb medals at the International Paralympic World Athletics Championships (July 2013) in Lyon, France. Sylvia Grant continues to represent Jamaica with excellence, earning the silver medal in the Women's F57/58 Javelin. Jamaican global medallist Alphonso Cunningham again won gold in the men's F52-53-54 Javelin throw, incredibly setting three world records enroute to the gold medal.

Mr. Speaker, one of the Government's priorities as outlined in the National Sport Policy is Sport for All. As a Government, we want to continue to facilitate increased participation in sport by persons at all levels regardless of age, gender, physical and intellectual ability or ethnicity. For this reason, I urge parents, guardians and individuals who are interested in the Paralympics or Special Olympic sport to get involved. Opportunities for success abound for our sportsmen and sportswomen with disabilities.



Mr. Speaker, traditionally, track and field has had the largest level of participation among our national and international athletes. This continues to be the trend and the performance on the world stage is unmatched by any other sporting discipline at this time.

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Mr. Speaker, **at the Regional Championships** – the CARIFTA Track & Field Games and the Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Senior Athletics Championships, Jamaica again made its mark in the record books. At the 2014 CARIFTA Games, our young athletes set a new record of medals won at the Games by winning a total of 89 medals.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, since 1990, Jamaica has won a total of 1,648 medals with our next closest rival winning 585 medals. As I like to say, our cupboard is full of talent waiting to burst onto the senior international scene.

Mr. Speaker, special mention must be made of O'Dayne Richards who, at the **CAC Athletics Championships, won a gold medal** in the shot put in a championship record performance, as Jamaica went on to win a total of 10 gold medals.

Mr. Speaker, on the **World Stage** our performances have been outstanding, whether at the IAAF World Championships in Athletics in Moscow, the IAAF World Youth Championship, the Inaugural World Relay Championships, IAAF Diamond League or the World University Games.

Mr. Speaker, permit me to highlight a few of the superb performances of our athletes who are all managed by world class coaches and other athlete support personnel, most of whom are graduates of our premier sport college, G.C. Foster College of Physical Education and Sport.

At the **IAAF World Youth Championship**, for the very first time, Jamaica finished at the top of the medal table at a global track and field championship with Yanique Thompson of Holmwood Technical High School becoming the first Jamaican in any age group to hold a world record in the hurdles.

During the inaugural **IAAF World Relay Championships**, held this May 2014, in the Bahamas, Jamaica finished second in the medal table behind the United States. All of our four relays teams qualified for the 2015 IAAF World Championships. Our male sprint relay team was impressive in winning both the 4x100 metres and the 4x200 metres, setting a new world record.

In the **IAAF Diamond League competition**, Jamaica produced two event champions in three disciplines in 2013. Warren Weir was champion in the 200 metres Male Series. Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce took an outstanding double, winning the Diamond at both the 100 metres and the 200 metres and gaining the most Diamond League points for any athlete in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, despite all these remarkable achievements, our performance at the 2013 **IAAF World Championships in Athletics** in Moscow was arguably the most spectacular. Jamaica finished third in the medal table behind Russia and the United States. Of special



note was the performance of 18-year-old Javon Francis who, after receiving the baton in fifth place on the anchor leg of the 4x400 metres men's relay, proved that he would not be denied a medal and ran his leg in 44.00 seconds to earn Jamaica the silver medal at the line. His time equalled the famous relay leg run by the late Herb McKenley in Helsinki in 1952 and made Javon an immediate global track sensation.

Mr. Speaker, at this same event, Usain Bolt and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce both won three gold medals in the men's and women's 100 metres, 200 metres and 4x100 metres relay, respectively, to become the most successful athletes at the event. Usain Bolt also earned the distinction of being the most successful athlete in the history of the World Championships with eight gold and two silver medals.

Mr. Speaker, 2013 was the year when this little country of under three million people became “the home of the fastest man and the fastest woman in the world.”

Mr. Speaker, the achievements of both Usain Bolt and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce earned them a unique double for Jamaica at the **IAAF Athletics Gala**, with Usain Bolt being named IAAF Male World Athlete of the Year for the fifth time and Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce was named the IAAF Female World Athlete of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce is also about giving back. Her Pocket Rocket Foundation was born out of her desire to create lasting change in the lives of student athletes and children in children's homes across Jamaica by providing academic scholarships and other assistance.

Mr. Speaker, having lifted the spirits of my colleague Members of Parliament with a condensed recap of our sporting year, I now pivot to the policy issues on which we have been focused.

For the 2012/2013 fiscal year, the Government focused its attention on the development of a framework for improving the effectiveness, collaboration and accountability in the delivery of sport policies and programmes. This was achieved through the completion of the National Sport Policy that was tabled in Parliament last year.

The National Sport Policy

The vision, as articulated by the National Sport Policy, is “***To create a dynamic and enabling environment in which persons enjoy and excel in sport at all levels while building strong bonds of unity in their communities and benefiting from the economic opportunities to be derived from sport.***”

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to reiterate that the National Sport Policy provides the framework for the coordinated development of sport through the realisation of the following key objectives:

1. Make sport accessible to all;
2. Facilitate an environment in which there will be increased participation in sport;
3. Promote a coordinated and structured programme that supports athletes' development, well-being and progression to high performance;
4. Enhance and leverage the sport component of "Brand Jamaica";
5. Utilise sport as a vehicle for peace, unity and community development;
6. Promote opportunities for economic development and prosperity through sport;
7. Promote the development of public/private partnerships to include Diaspora funding support for the financing of sport; and
8. Promote healthy lifestyle and wellness for all.

Achievements in 2013/2014

During 2013/2014, the Government addressed all aspects of the policy objectives and priorities; however, it focused attention primarily on:

- 1. Physical Infrastructure Development: facilitating an environment in which there will be increased participation in sport; and promoting opportunities for economic development and prosperity through sport;**
- 2. Athletes, Development and Well-being – promoting a coordinated and structured programme that supports athletes' development, well being and progression to high performance.**

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Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to the attention of this Honourable House to the fact that sport and sporting activities do not only occur in the Ministry with responsibility for Sport and in the sport associations and agencies. There are sport programmes and activities being actively pursued in many other Ministries, Departments and Agencies, for example, the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development and the Social Development Commission (SDC) have been using sport in a key role in its community mobilisation and community development strategy. The Ministry of National Security, through its various projects and programmes, utilises sport as a critical component of community policing and peace building initiatives within and among communities. The Ministry of Agriculture, through the sugar transformation and community rehabilitation programme, has invested in the development of community sport infrastructure. The Ministry of Health, through its many healthy lifestyle programmes and initiatives helps promote the importance of physical activity across all age groups. Physical Education and training in sport are core components of the Ministry of Education's programmes.

Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased that we have been able to achieve significant progress towards the establishment of a National Sport Museum.

Mr. Speaker, a temporary location for the Museum has now been identified after visits to several proposed sites and after much deliberation by the technical team. A Curator has been loaned to assist with the development of the project.

Mr. Speaker, the physical location of the Museum is critical, as the Museum must be a commercially viable venture and a medium for collecting and storing artifacts. We have taken into account the need for accessibility to the public, adequate parking in identifying a location that fits the profile of the Museum.

Special thanks to the members of the Capacity Building and Infrastructure Committee of the National Council on Sport led by Mr. Don Anderson.

Mr. Speaker, the Beckwith International Leadership Development (BILD) JAMAICA's Leadership and Youth Development Training Project commenced in 2013. BILD JAMAICA is a collaborative effort between the GOJ, our international partners International Inspiration, UK Sports, Youth Sport Trust and the TOP Foundation, and the private sector; the main international partner being BILD. The project will be implemented over four years and will target the training of six hundred (600) Young Sport Leaders annually. These Leaders will be deployed across the island and will seek to positively impact the lives of as many as 120,000 youth over the life of the project.

Mr. Speaker, two training sessions were conducted as part of a pilot in St. Catherine and St. Mary with a total of 21 Local Trainers and 54 Young Sport Leaders being trained and over 250 primary school-aged children engaged for two one-day sport festivals in which the Local Trainers and Young Sport Leaders were able to practise what they had learnt.

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Sport Infrastructure Development

Mr. Speaker, over the last two years, the Government, through its various Ministries, Departments and Agencies, has spent well over a billion dollars on sport development.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that our high schools bear the brunt of our sport development and sadly many of the recurring injuries of many of our senior athletes have been linked to the poor infrastructure on which they trained and competed during their early years.

Mr. Speaker, last November, we launched the High School Sport Infrastructure Improvement Project (HSSIIP) in partnership with the Sports Development Foundation (SDF) and the Sugar Transformation Project, to begin to address some of our infrastructure needs. The Project is expected to improve fields, running tracks and courts in 24 high schools across Jamaica over two years. This is a J\$250 million project which is intended to institutionalise and sustain our successes in the various sporting disciplines.

In the first year of this project, that is this fiscal year 2014/2015, work will be conducted as follows:

1. Happy Grove High School, Portland
2. Tarrant High School, St. Andrew
3. St. Jago High School, St. Catherine

4. Calabar High School, St. Andrew
5. Haile Selassie High School, Kingston
6. Munro College, St. Elizabeth

The improvements to be undertaken at these High Schools will be funded by SDF.

1. Grange Hill High School, Westmoreland
2. Balaclava High School, St. Elizabeth
3. Vere Technical High School, Clarendon
4. Kellits High School, Clarendon
5. William Knibb High School, Trelawny
6. Bog Walk High School, St. Catherine
7. Paul Bogle High School, St. Thomas
8. Holmwood High School, Manchester

The improvements to be undertaken at these High Schools will be funded by The EU Sugar Transformation Programme.

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Mr. Speaker, the SDF has conducted need assessments of all fourteen schools slated for work this year. Six of the projects are currently being tendered, with the first project to commence at the Happy Grove High School in Portland.



Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank all the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) that partnered with the OPM and signed the Memorandum of Understanding to make this initiative a reality. I also wish to express special thanks to the European Union for its generous contribution to the development of sport in these former sugar dependent communities.

SABINA PARK LIGHTS

Economic Impact of Cricket at Sabina Park

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased to announce that work on the installation of floodlights at the Sabina Park Cricket Ground is progressing steadily.

Mr. Speaker, at the end of March, the Government of India generously signed a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Jamaica to provide financial support for the installation of the floodlights at ***Sabina Park in the sum of US\$2.1M.***

The Urban Development Corporation (UDC), which is managing the project, awarded a contract to the Fosrich Group of Companies in the sum of **US\$2,752,817.63**. Recognising the sport tourism value of Sabina Park, the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) Board has also approved funding toward this project.

Mr. Speaker, let me once again thank the Government of India, the Tourism Enhancement Fund and the team of persons who worked to make this project come to fruition for the invaluable support they have given to the development of Jamaica's sport infrastructure.



TRELAWNY STADIUM

Mr. Speaker, plans are now being put in place to make the Trelawny Stadium, the Stadium of the West. Work has already commenced to improve the facilities. Just over \$8 million was spent recently on the refurbishment of the outfields, the players' area and the installation of four new pitches. Several other works were completed including the installation of the scoreboard, retiling of the ground floor, replacement and addition of some furniture and equipment such as massage tables, thanks to the generosity of the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) and the Sports Development Foundation (SDF).

Mr. Speaker, this initial initiative was undertaken in order to host the Jamaica/New Zealand warm-up matches and is a part of the plan to attract local and international interest to the facility.

INDEPENDENCE PARK LIMITED

Mr. Speaker, the focus for 2013/2014 was on the upgrade of the National Stadium facilities in order to adhere to international standards. These improvements will enhance our ability to attract more international events. The overall cost projected for the upgrade of our National Stadium facility is \$270 million.

Mr. Speaker, these upgrades will take place in five phases. These scope of work for these phases involve the construction of concession stands, additional restrooms and the installation of skyboxes in the south and north bleachers.

Mr. Speaker, Phase 1 of the refurbishment has begun on the bleachers. Fourteen street lamps have been retrofitted with LED bulbs in order to improve IPL's energy efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, new filters for the National Stadium swimming pool were replaced and commissioned in February 2014 thanks to the over \$31 million in funding provided by the Sports Development Foundation (SDF).

Mr. Speaker, the long awaited upgrade of the Leila Robinson netball courts is now a reality. The new surfaces have been laid and the markings completed. The goalposts were installed yesterday and I am told that the courts are now ready for a good game of netball. Mr. Speaker, the contract for upgrading of the seating was signed on Friday, June 20, 2014 and the material is expected to arrive in Jamaica within the next three to four weeks.

Mr. Speaker, in the coming year we plan to further consolidate the gains of the past year, complete unfinished projects and embark on new ventures in our sport infrastructure development.



The G. C. Foster College of Physical Education and Sport

Mr. Speaker, we must ensure that we present First World facilities to our visitors and provide for our home-grown and home-trained athletes with the same standards they would have encountered had they gone overseas.

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Mr. Speaker, the College remains the only one of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean and currently serves student athletes as well as Physical Education Teachers and coaches in training.

Recommissioning of Gymnasium Floor

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, in March, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, we recommissioned the gymnasium floor at the G.C. Foster College. Minister Thwaites will agree with me that the gym is now a First World facility that will inspire First World performances.

Installation of a new Synthetic Running Track

Mr. Speaker, the Sport Development Foundation (SDF) has also undertaken to underwrite the cost of the replacement of the running track at G.C. Foster. This is estimated to cost US\$1.5 million. It is expected that the track will be replaced and ready for use by the end of 2014.

Contribution to the National Sport Associations and Federations

Mr. Speaker, a total of \$247.8 million was contributed to 42 national sporting associations through the SDF. In turn, to promote effective governance and accountability, the SDF requires that each National Association submit the following reports:

- a) Quarterly reports for periods ending March, June, September and December; and
- b) An annual development plan and budget for the following year by October 31 of each year.

Mr. Speaker, in 2013, SDF enforced its rule by withholding subventions to National Associations that had not submitted their quarterly reports. At present a 90% compliance rate has been achieved.

Jamaica Athletes Insurance Plan (JAIP)

Mr. Speaker, during the fiscal year 2013-2014, the Office of the Prime Minister commenced work on the development of a health insurance plan for our athletes.

The Jamaica Athletes Insurance Plan is designed to assist, in the first instance, approximately 1,500 national athletes enrolled in a national sport programme of a registered Sport Association or Federation, with access to comprehensive medical insurance. Cabinet has endorsed the plan. Additionally, the development of the procurement documentation for the entity which will execute the Jamaica Athletes Insurance Plan is underway.

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Mr. Speaker, the Jamaica Athletes Insurance Plan will be a landmark achievement for Jamaica and in particular for sport development.

Mr. Speaker, with the support of the Sports Development Foundation (SDF), the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) and the National Health Fund (NHF), the full roll-out of this project is scheduled for the 2014/2015 fiscal year. Special thanks to the members of the Athletes Development and Well-Being Committee of the National Council on Sport led by Mr. Christopher Samuda for your invaluable work.

JAMAICA ANTI-DOPING COMMISSION (JADCO)

Mr. Speaker, many of our athletes are using supplements as part of their training or competition routines. This practice may stem from the belief that a normal diet is not sufficient for optimum performance. Unfortunately, there is no substitute for good nutrition and a balanced diet. Additionally, an over-reliance on supplements can result in the athlete neglecting his/her core diet.

Mr. Speaker, sport supplements have also been found to contain ingredients that are not stated on labels and some have been linked to the cause of death among athletes worldwide.

Mr. Speaker, given the recent increase in the number of Jamaican athletes who returned Adverse Analytical Findings in the last year, I must take this opportunity to once again encourage our athletes, juniors and seniors, to avoid adopting this trend of reliance on

supplements and to focus instead on building a diet based on good nutrition and healthy practices; bearing in mind that “the giving of one’s best is good enough.”

Mr. Speaker, legislation is being considered to address the illegal importation of banned supplements. Let me admonish coaches, administrators and athlete-support personnel that they are equally culpable if they are found guilty of providing banned substances to junior athletes.

Education and Sensitisation

Mr. Speaker, JADCO in collaboration with the Jamaica Athletics Administrative Association (JAAA) hosted a series of five anti-doping workshops under the theme ‘Junior Athletes Anti-Doping Education’ in different regions across the island. The training workshops focused attention on the Doping Control Process, the WADA Prohibited List of Substances and Methods, the Testing process and other elements that are critical to understanding and appreciating of the Anti-Doping process.

Mr. Speaker, in an effort to help athletes avoid the problems associated with Adverse Analytical Findings, the 2013 list of prohibited drugs was produced in late March. One thousand (1,000) copies were printed and 500 copies were distributed to clubs and federations.

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- A medical declaration card was created and 150 copies were printed for distribution to the athletes who were selected for the 2013 IAAF World Championships.
- The new website, e-learning and video production platform for JADCO is now being completed and will be ready for testing shortly.
- JADCO participated in sensitisation and awareness initiatives at five events by the end of the 2nd quarter 2013/14. Among these was the ‘Chill Spot’ at the athletes’ village, located at Stadium East, on June 15th and 16th during the JAAA National Junior Championships. The booth was a new approach to the outreach sessions and aimed to create an inviting space/comfort zone where the athletes can relax while learning important anti-doping information.
- A partnership has been established with the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) to develop a joint initiative programme that focuses on the following major objectives:
 1. To have JADCO’s anti-doping programme meet the full requirements of the 2015 World Anti-Doping Code and mandatory International Standards by January 1, 2015; and
 2. To have JADCO successfully address the recommendations outlined in WADA’s November 2013 report.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to conducting the Junior Athlete workshops, JADCO has also conducted several other workshops with a number of Sport Associations and Federations.

Additionally, there will be specific interventions for the parents and guardians. These interventions will set the stage for the introduction of the testing of junior athletes across various sporting disciplines.

Mr. Speaker, workshops will also be conducted for elite athletes and their support personnel to ensure that they are familiarised with the current rules as well as the changes that will come into effect on January 1, 2015. We intend to be ahead of the game in this important process because as a country we are committed to integrity in sport.

Mr. Speaker, a new Board of Commissioners was appointed in January this year. I take this opportunity to again thank the members of the old Board for the invaluable service they provided and welcome and thank the new Board, led by R. Danny Williams, for work you have advanced since your appointment.

- 203 tests have been administered so far (69 out of competition and 134 in competition).
- A 63 per cent increase in budgetary allocation to \$105 million for 2014/2015 despite fiscal constraints
- Increased staff complement of trained professionals
- Review and revision of the Anti-Doping in Sports Act and JADCO rules to ensure they are fully aligned with the WADA 2015 Code was commenced

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Mr. Speaker, we are not just talking sport, we are maximising the benefits to be derived from sport.

Addressing Ethical Issues

Mr. Speaker, one of the imperatives of the business of sport is ensuring its integrity. Globally, match-fixing and sport-gambling have become major problems threatening the fairness of sports and corrupting athletes and officials alike in the rush to make easy money.

Mr. Speaker, the OPM intends to commission a study in order to determine how we should deal with these issues and identify the legislative measures needed to dissuade participation and punish violators. We cannot wait for the first major match-fixing or sport-gambling scandal to respond. We need to take appropriate pre-emptive actions now.

Student Transfers

While we are heading towards ensuring that all our schools are elevated to standards conducive to growth in all areas, we might consider including on the forms at GSAT an option for a child to indicate his or her interest, which may be utilised in effectively selecting the school of choice for that student.

SPORT POLICY MADE SPORT REALITY – Capitalising on our Sporting Successes

Mr. Speaker, on another sensitive matter, we are also looking seriously at the issue of mandating across all disciplines that onsite medical teams give the okay before athletes who may have been injured during competition can continue to participate. This, Mr. Speaker, is currently the practice in professional boxing. No junior or senior athlete's career or physical well-being should be threatened by the over enthusiasm of the athlete, the coach, the supporters or the fans in order to win points, medals or games.



CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker, the four leading causes of health-related deaths are hypertension, tobacco-use, diabetes and physical inactivity.

A sedentary lifestyle, especially among the youth, was rare among Jamaicans as I was growing up. We played dandy shandy, bull-in-a-pen, hopscotch, ring games, and lick-and-run in the schoolyard or in the streets. We made bats out of coconut boughs and footballs from soft drink boxes.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, things have changed. Today we spend more time in front of our televisions and computers, playing on our tablets, iPods, iPads and smartphones and less time outdoors engaged in physical activity. The dangers associated with physical inactivity have become alarmingly real.

Culturally, we have come to celebrate and admire persons who are on the fluffy side, like me, without giving sufficient thought to the potential health implications of being overweight and unfit. We need to begin to change those mindsets and make the effort to combat this trend by continuing to create opportunities for Jamaicans to engage in physical activity in a safe, fun, and healthy environment that will encourage them to continue participating day after day.

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Mr. Speaker, while sport inspires and uplifts, it is also a vehicle for economic development. Sport is a major employer. It is a major income earner through sport tourism, through the establishment of training and wellness centres for sports and through the development of investment instruments for our sportsmen and women that encourage them to reinvest in Jamaica.

The health insurance plan for our national athletes will go a far way towards showing that we care about their development and well-being. The sport infrastructural development projects will allow every Jamaican to feel confident that their safety and security is paramount as they go out to participate in or watch the many sporting events being staged island-wide. What we need now is the development of international events that will attract the world's best to Jamaica to provide competition for our athletes and earning opportunities for all involved in the sport industry.

Mr. Speaker, I have confidence in sport and its power to enhance lives and look forward to achieving substantial progress towards our goals in the next financial year.

Mr. Speaker, we have what it takes to make our sport policy into sport reality.

Thank you and may God bless this Honourable House, this sport-loving nation and all its people!