The Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) won the hotly contested South East St Mary by-election on Monday, October 30, boosting its majority in the House of Representatives to three and providing Prime Minister Andrew Holness with greater leverage over his government.

**Strengthens majority in Parliament**

**PNP retains South & SW St Andrew**
UWI introduces material to improve media and literacy in schools

THE UNIVERSITY of the West Indies (UWI) has developed material designed to assist in improving media and literacy in primary and secondary schools islandwide.

In welcoming this development, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Olivia Grange said that media literacy will be included in the curriculum of local teacher-training colleges.

The media initiative is a collaboration involving the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, Broadcasting Commission and the Joint Board of Teacher Education.

Jamaican Madhouse feeds the homeless

THE CHARITY group Jamaican Madhouse last week fed some 2,033 homeless and underprivileged persons across all 14 parishes as part of its mandate to draw attention to the plight of the less fortunate members of the society.

With some 120 volunteers joining in the effort, which has been dubbed ‘National Feeding Day’, the organisation targeted the homeless, mentally ill, elderly and shut-ins in several communities and towns in the various parishes.

We anticipated feeding 1,600 people, but ended up feeding 2,033,” said Shena Carte, president of Jamaican Madhouse.

Educators, entertainers use concert to teach culture

SAINTS PETER and Paul Preparatory School recently hosted a Heritage Day celebration in which different aspects of the culture was captured by performers hosted a Heritage Day celebration in which different aspects of the culture was captured by performers.

SAINTS PETER and Paul Preparatory School recently hosted a Heritage Day celebration in which different aspects of the culture was captured by performers.

Eleven new garbage trucks handed over

ELEVEN NEW compact garbage trucks valued at J$214.7 million were handed over last week to the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA). The units were acquired from the proceeds of property tax.

The trucks bring to 28 the number of new garbage units delivered to the NSWMA since the start of the financial year, at an overall value of J$561.8 million.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness (second right) inspect the new compactor garbage trucks with (from left) Linley Reynolds, deputy chairman, National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA); Audley Gordon, executive director of the NSWMA; Desmond McKenzie, minister of local government and community development; and Dennis Chung, chairman of NSWMA, at the handover ceremony at Jamaica House in Kingston recently.

Youth Clubs enhancing community development

MEMBERS OF the Friendship Pen and Bamboo River Police Youth Clubs in St. Thomas are using grants provided under the Government’s Charge UP initiative to assist in fostering community development.

They are also engaged in restorative efforts aimed at further strengthening camaraderie among residents of both areas who were previously at loggerheads.

The clubs have each received J$300,000, in addition to other resources, to carry out projects in their respective communities under the Charge UP initiative, which aims to re-educate youth clubs islandwide.

Polio sensitisation session held in May Pen

THE ROTARY Club of May Pen marked World Polio Day on October 24 by holding a polio sensitisation session about the disease on October 24 at the May Pen Health Centre.

Rotary International established World Polio Day a decade ago. The organisation promotes the use of the inactivated polio virus vaccine, as it has reduced polio worldwide by 99 per cent.

Billions flow into Jamaica from China, despite pandemic

China’s significant investments in Jamaica, said given China’s significant investments in the island.

China’s significant investments in Jamaica, said given China’s significant investments in the island.

Booming business partnerships with China

commerce.

Chinese renminbi, the RMB, as an as reserve currency.

Jamaica's culture.

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On the same day, the opposition People’s National Party (PNP) easily retained its seats in South and South West St Andrew, where former senator and justice minister, Mark Golding, and one of the party’s vice presidents, Angela Brown Burke, respectively, gained 87 per cent and 86.6 per cent of the votes.

However, in these PNP strongholds, where the party had been in power for decades, the results were a stark contrast to the national trend. The by-elections in South and South West St Andrew were seen as a test of the voters’ trust in the current government led by Prime Minister Andrew Holness.

In South St Andrew, the PNP won with 10,792 votes, 937 more than Dr Dennis by securing 6,095 votes, who only managed to eke out 5,158 votes. In South West St Andrew, the PNP won with 9,431 votes to Hyde’s 8,176 votes, 937 more than Dr Dennis.

The low voter turnout for both constituencies was surprising, with fewer electors usually going to the polls during by-elections compared to national polls. The voting in the two Corporate Area constituencies was without any major incident and saw supporters of both political parties engaged in friendly rivalry at various polling stations.

The Electoral Office of Jamaica reported that little less than 12 per cent of the 25,670 electors on the voters’ list had turned out to vote.

Superintendent Arthur Brown updates his team at Whitfield All-Age School in St Andrew South West.
Shirley Castle Primary students plant seeds of self-reliance

AMITABH SHARMA
Contributor

A GROUP OF students lined up, glitter in their eyes, itching to move forward and be the first ones to get in the front. This was not a line to grab their favourite treat, rather, the excitement was all about getting a sapling to plant in their school’s kitchen garden.

The journey to learn about food security, growing what you eat, and appreciating nature is taking root literally and figuratively at the Shirley Castle Primary School in Portland.

Perched on the summit, in the hills surrounded by coffee farms, Shirley Castle Primary is as off the beaten path as the pristine cool air, which one could infuse romantically by describing as ‘kissed by the fluffy clouds’ or ‘bubbly like champagne’.

There is one taxi that plies between the school, servicing the communities in the vicinity to Hope Bay, the nearest township.

The school is romancing with farming, with students getting their hands caked in soil and reaping rewards of their work with a little help from their friends.

Aika Nakakomi and Teppei Sato, Japan International Cooperation Agency volunteers assigned to Portland 4-H Clubs, and Stephen Crimarco, a volunteer with the Peace Corps, have converged their energies toward building a sustainable, self-reliant, and self-sustaining project, one that has converged expertise and skills from across the globe.

“This is a community effort,” said Debbie-Ann Mann-McKenzie, principal of the Shirley Castle Primary School. “We have parents, and the farmers from the surrounding communities come and assist the children with their kitchen garden and teach them techniques to take care of the plants.”

The initiative, which was implemented last year, has evolved into a sustainable, self-reliant, and self-sustaining project, one that has converged expertise and skills from across the globe.

“Stephen, a Peace Corps volunteer, and I met at Portland 4-H Clubs office where I am assigned to work as environmental educator,” said Sato. “We have common interests and share knowledge such as compost, which is my speciality.”

These young volunteers are bringing agriculture and environmental education best practices to the table, and the key, they say, is to sustain the project with the help of the community at large.

CRUCIAL ROLE

“Coffee farms are right in front of us and agriculture plays a crucial role in order to sustain the community,” Sato said as he handed out saplings to the students to be planted. They were being guided by Lennocks Prince, a farmer from the neighbouring community.

There is more to agriculture than getting hands dirty which, unfortunately, has deterred many youngsters from going into this profession, choosing the white- and blue-collar jobs over reaping profits from their backyards.

“You can develop processes. look at how technology can be used with agriculture, if you don’t want to dig the soil,” said Francine Constantine, an intern at Portland 4-H Clubs and student of the College of Agricultural Science and Education, to the students as she scooped out soil for them to plant the saplings.

The school is nurturing an ecosystem.

Nakakomi, who is from Hiroshima prefecture in Japan, is teaching methodologies about vegetable cultivation, how to establish and encourage growth vegetable gardens and to promote container gardens.

Sato, on the other hand, is focusing on recycling, he has initiated the use of plastic bottles as “seed trays”.

“We believe some students realise there are a lot of materials that we can still reuse and recycle and reduce the amount of waste that keeps feeding the dump sites,” Sato, who studied ecological restoration at the University of Washington, said.

Dellion Meickle John, a grade five student is in charge of the seed trays and making compost for the plants.

“I like to see the plants grow,” John said.

Last year the school planted pak choi, sweet pepper, cabbage, cucumber and tomato at the farm, as well as some herbs in two raised beds that students made with plastic bottles.

“We hope that the students recognise the importance of agriculture. such efforts, one community at a time, will make them self-sustained and help cut the food-importation bill,” said Crimarco.

The leftover food is put into making compost.

“We hope that the students recognise the importance of agriculture. such efforts, one community at a time, will make them self-sustained and help cut the food-importation bill,” said Crimarco.

“We hope that the students recognise the importance of agriculture. such efforts, one community at a time, will make them self-sustained and help cut the food-importation bill.”

“The students were a part of the process – sowing seeds, watering the plants, reaping, and eating them – while they were learning from sessions that Stephen and I taught,” Sato said. “Then,” he continued, “We heard a story of the student telling the teacher that he enjoyed his lunch even though he had not been willing to eat pak choi.”

“Containerised gardening is part of the new school curriculum,” said Nakakomi. Students of Shirley Castle are sowing seeds to a minigreen revolution and reaping the bounties of mother nature.

“These little hands, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, are involved in “an ounce of practice, which is worth more than tons of preaching”, and they are developing a love for their greens along the way.

What’s your view? What stories would you like to read? What issues would you like us to focus on? Email: overseas@gleanerjm.com
REAL ESTATE

In the past few months, store owners and shoppers have been contending with cavernous excavations, dust and dirt and the hum of construction as the owners of Mall Plaza execute a transformation of the shopping complex.

The renovations have been ongoing since February, and store owners tell The Gleaner that they have been losing business as the work progresses.

Still, Michael Ammar Jr, a director of Ammar’s department store, says the project is a necessary inconvenience.

“It has had a very negative effect on business over the summer, but I must emphasise that what they are doing is necessary and we just have to bite the bullet,” Ammar said.

“There is no way of fixing the plaza without making some changes,” Ammar said.

We’ve already seen what they’ve done at The Village, and now we are seeing what they’ve done at the Mall – it should be good because it’s a bigger plaza,” he told The Gleaner.

Mall Plaza is part of a string of separately owned malls that line Constant Spring Road from South Avenue to Half-Way Tree square. They were built in the late 1960s to early 1970s and have satisfied the retailing shoppers who had become wary of doing business in the hustle and bustle of downtown Kingston.

Mall Plaza is managed by a company called Fidcom on behalf of owners Rock Investments. The first phase of the redevelopment, which is expected to wrap up by November 15, represents J$100 million of investment, according to Fidcom CEO, Andrew Hamilton.

Hamilton said, however, that Fidcom also manages other complexes that are not family-owned.

RENOVATIONS NEEDED

The renovations at Mall were well needed, according to Ammar, who said the complex had become “more than a little ‘long in the tooth’,” with a drab appearance compounded by flooding incidents, lack of water at times, and a gradual but steep decline in business.

“We put in underground water tanks and correct drainage in addition to redoing the arrangements for sewerage,” said Hamilton.

“It really is trying to make it better not only for our tenants, but the patrons that are coming into the plaza,” she said.

All three companies – Fidcom, Executive and Rock – are connected through Mahfood family members, who own the two plazas.

Ammar said, however, that Fidcom also manages other complexes that are not family-owned.

Alongside Ammar’s, some of the popular businesses at the plaza includes Woolworth’s, Collectibles shoe and clothing stores, Mall Pharmacy, ElectroWorld, Anne Martin, Child’s Play, Sangsters and American Jewellery Company.

Before the renovations began, The Mall housed 26 shops, including a food court.

Most of the shops on the second floor of the building, where the food court was housed, remained open, with Ammar’s giving its top floor to make way for three other stores.

By the time this phase of the repairs is finished, Hamilton expects between five and 10 more stores to be added in some of the available space. She said Fidcom itself also gave up its office space at the complex to house another store.

The new Mall Plaza will feature an outdoor elevator to facilitate access to the upper floor by the physically challenged, older persons, and parents with young children.

The food court is also due for a makeover, but that is scheduled for another phase of the renovations.

The Fidcom boss adds that her company has kept the communication channels open with tenants as the fast-paced repairs progressed, to keep them in the loop on the status of the project.

“There are constant reminders about the sort of improvements that we are putting in,” she said.

“This was confirmed by Ammar, who said shop owners get “constant, weekly updates about what is being done and what to come, and so on.”

The businessman is hoping the renovations will return the complex to its heyday.

“It’s something that we applaud, the fact that the owners are confident to make that kind of investment, because it will take those two plazas right back to the top of the loop where they belong,” Ammar said.

“My hope is for increased business for all the stores that are in there. I know it will happen because you hear all the customers, while they complain bitterly about the construction, in the next breath they say it will look good when it is done,” he said.

The new-look storefronts are already in place with larger, full glass treatments that “open up the store windows”, according to Hamilton.

“It looks like 2017 USA,” Ammar added.

The Mall is usually locked down by 6 p.m., but the refurbished plaza will return with extended opening hours, Fidcom said.

Housing demand expected to rise

Construction workers add a new extension to the Mall Plaza in Kingston, on Tuesday, October 24.

The project is expected to be finalised by mid-November.

The Meal is usually locked down by 6 p.m., but the refurbished plaza will return with extended opening hours, Fidcom said.

Housing demand, are among the highest in the country, with the potential for contributors to borrower more at a lower-rate tier, based on incomes earned, thereby reducing the capital injection for purchase of the property by the borrower,” the mortgage manager said.

The state agency also increased loan limits for home improvement, from J$4.5 million to J$8.5 million. “Existing mortgagees who borrowed from the NHT 15 years ago or more can access these funds under the Fifteen Plus offer for home improvement, repairs and expansion of the said property,” James said.

Referring to the most recent Survey of Business and Consumer Confidence released this month by the Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, she said “the survey revealed that consumers’ home-buying plans increased to 11 per cent during the third quarter, slightly ahead of the previous quarter’s two-year low of eight per cent”.

Housing data for the first fiscal quarter of this year, April to June, show 1,687 housing starts relative to 385 in the corresponding quarter of 2016. Housing starts by the NHT expanded by 77.7 per cent to 684 units in the period, while housing completion increased to 314 units from 290 units in the previous period.

REAL ESTATE investments in Jamaica are among the highest in the Caribbean, and are being driven by highway development and population increase, according to Petal James, the acting head of mortgage sales at JN Bank.

The investments are manifested in the commercial segment of the market, with the development of hotels and office space, but James notes that housing demand is also on the rise.

On the supply side, the Real Estate Board of Jamaica, REB, is reporting that developers are not only building more schemes, they are also converting old schemes.

In the 2015-16 fiscal period, while the total number of applications to REB increased marginally from 78 to 77, the number of lots covered in the applications increased from 2,146 to 3,582, while the housing units planned climbed from 1,045 to 3,187.

The REB noted in its annual report that St Catherine was by far the location with the biggest developments planned.

“While Kingston had the largest number of applications to register new schemes, St Catherine had the largest number of units and lots. St Catherine also had the greatest growth among parishes over two years,” the REB said.

St Catherine accounted for proposals of 1,970 lots and 1,941 units at year ending March 2016. This compared to Kingston & St Andrew with 68 lots and 662 units.

In the prior year, the two parishes also topped the number of new development applications, with St Catherine submitting development plans for 1,198 lots and 305 units; while Kingston & St Andrew featured 10 lots and 578 units.

In Manchester followed in number of housing solutions offered.

RURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In general, rural developments offer fewer and smaller units.

James said highway development and the improved network across Jamaica, such as the construction of Highway 2000 and the North-South Highway, are linked to the growth of housing and commercial developments and mounting intra-migration of Jamaicans from urban centres to rural communities.

Additionally, the Planning Institute of Jamaica is projecting that the Jamaican population will grow to 3.9 million by 2030, the mortgage specialist noted.

She is also attributing the increase in demand and supply to new National Housing Trust policies that offer improved financing options for mortgagees.

“The NHT increased individual mortgage loan lending limits from J$4.5 million to J$8.5 million. This policy change has increased the potential for contributors to borrow more at a lower-rate tier, based on incomes earned, thereby reducing the capital injection for purchase of the property by the borrower,” the mortgage manager said.

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What’s your view? What stories would you like to read? What issues would you like us to focus on? Email: overseas@gleanerjm.com
Jamaica’s Central Bank is weighing the use of the Chinese renminbi, the RMB, as an opportunity to reduce reliance on US dollar usage in the Jamaican economy.

John Robinson, senior deputy governor of the Bank of Jamaica, said “given China’s significant investments in Jamaica and Jamaican businesses’ high trade volume with China, there may be opportunities to reduce the need for a third currency - the USD - for settlements of transactions.”

His response to Financial Gleaner queries followed comments made last week by BOJ Governor Brian Wynter at a Jamaica Chamber of Commerce forum, where he told business representatives they would be hearing more about the RMB, without elaboration, amid discussions on the new foreign exchange trading tool, E-FXTT, introduced in July by the central bank.

“The renminbi is the latest addition to the list of international reserve currencies. Therefore, consistent with the bank’s reserve management policies, we have been investigating the risks and opportunities of adding the renminbi to our basket, which is based on Jamaica’s current and capital transactions with China,” said Robinson.

“As always, we will keep the public regularly informed as to the level and composition of Jamaica’s foreign reserves,” he said.

The renminbi is now used to settle approximately 18 per cent of China’s total trade.

There was no immediate feedback from the Jamaican banking sector and treasury managers on what this signal implies for them.

CORRESPONDENT BANKING

However, that BOJ is looking to the RMB is not entirely surprising, given the midyear pronouncements by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) that regional jurisdictions should consider the RMB as a way around correspondent banking challenges.

CDB President Dr Warren Smith said at the bank’s July conference that now that Caribbean economies are recipients of foreign direct investments flows or trade flows denominated in the Chinese currency, they can now conduct transactions using Chinese banks as correspondent partners through cross-border inter-bank payment systems – alleviating the need for traditional relationships underpinned by western financial networks in North America and the United Kingdom.

In the wake of a conference on the issue, CDB Director of Economics Dr Justin Ram told the Financial Gleaner that the renminbi provides opportunities for Caribbean economies with respect to trade facilitation, investment and aid flows.

In 2016, the International Monetary Fund added the Chinese yuan to its basket of currencies for the calculation of special drawing rights, or SDRs, putting it in the same class of the pound sterling, US dollar, Japanese yen and the euro.

Jamaica’s main import partners remain the United States, from which 40 per cent of imports originate, but trade with China is on the increase.

Canadian ganja firm partners with Jamaicans

CANNAPY GROWTH Corporation, which trades on the Toronto Stock Exchange as WEED, announced this week that it had formed a partnership with Jamaican investors.

The partnership, through Grow House JA Limited, which was registered as a company in September 2016 and plans to trade as Tweed JA, stated that it was granted conditional licence approvals and was already beginning construction of its facility. However, Cannabis Licensing Authority, CLA, has not responded to queries on the type and status of licences applied for by the entity.

“Tweed will serve the needs of the Jamaican medical cannabis market with Tweed’s well-established cultivation, processing and international standards, matched with the local know-how of its Jamaican partners and the renowned sun, soil and water of Jamaica,” stated the company in a release targeted to the Canadian market.

Canopy Growth holds 49 per cent of the share capital of Grow House JA. The other owners are Jasmine businesswoman Paul Haynes, with 30.6 per cent, and Adam Vaz at 20.4 per cent, according to Companies Office of Jamaica records. Calls to the local number associated with the two Jamaicans went to voicemail.

Additionally, Tweed Canada acknowledged receipt of queries about the venture but is yet to respond.

WORLD-CLASS CANNABIS MARKET

“Jamaica represents a world-class cannabis market, and we are fortunate to be working with a highly experienced and knowledgeable local team so we can put the right pieces in place to turn these opportunities into local prosperity and success,” said Bruce Linton, chairman and CEO, Canopy Growth, in the press release. “Ensuring we have the brands, infrastructure, and the right people in place is our priority. We look forward to contributing to a successful Jamaican cannabis market with the addition of Tweed.”

The CLA now has another three undisclosed applicants, whose licences are pending. Another 57 conditional licences have been approved, but those entities are completing their requirements for final sign-off, while another 309 applications are being processed.

Canopy Growth said that it was confident that the production and formulation model it built in Canada, combined with local entrepreneurs with “substantial” cannabis cultivation experience, would promote Jamaica’s well-established and renowned ganja, oils and other cannabis products on a global level.

“Here’s to future ganja growth,” it added.

Through its wholly-owned subsidiaries, Canopy Growth operates numerous state-of-the-art production facilities with over half a million square feet of certified indoor and greenhouse production capacity. It holds CN$743.6 million worth of total assets with relatively low liabilities.

The company made a net loss of CN$4.4 million on sales of CN$16 million over three months ending June 2017. The Tweed subsidiary is a recognised cannabis production brand, which is aiming for global reach.
What role for currency speculators in ‘fixing’ rate exchange?

THE EDITOR, Sir:

RECENT PUBLIC utterances by Central Bank governor, Brian Wynter, and Jamaica Manufacturers’ Association (JMA) and Private Sector Organization of Jamaica (PSOJ) leaders, Omar Azan and Dennis Chung, about the effect of the Bank’s new FIXIT currency (supply/demand) management system, have raised a question or two, in my mind.

Mr Wynter spoke about the ongoing positive effect of Bank of Jamaica Foreign Exchange Intervention and Trading Tools (B-FIXIT), in reversing the hitherto chronic downward slide of the value of Jamaica’s currency in relation to the US Dollar and other foreign currencies. At the same time, he took a thinly veiled jab at unnamed persons who he suggested must have lost millions of dollars, recently, in “bets against” the Jamaican dollar. Thus, by speculating that the Jamaican dollar would continue its one-way slide, even with the presence of B-FIXIT, he enabled them to gain windfall profits, on their foreign currency investments, especially in buying/selling US dollars.

But while agreeing with Mr Wynter that there was heightened pressure on the Jamaican dollar, even with the central bank’s intervention in the market with B-FIXIT, Messrs Azan and Chung expressed the view that central bank “interference” in the foreign exchange market, even under “B-FIXIT”, will not bring a permanent solution to the issue of Jamaica’s hitherto downward sliding dollar, but will be a continuing cause of the problem.

There should be little or no “interference” by the central bank in a “free” currency market, but the currency(ies) should be allowed to find their own “equilibrium”. Here, then, are my questions, for Mr Brian Wynter, and for Messrs Azan and Chung:

1. Is there a role in the foreign exchange market, or in foreign exchange management procedures, for “unofficial/private speculators”?

Should the central bank and the Government allow unofficial/private, totally self-interested “speculators” free reign to influence the market and be influenced by negative rumours, etc., regardless of what else is happening in the economy and/or what else might be true?

2. And what about the role and effect of increased and/or increasing economic growth and favourable import/export and foreign exchange-earning performance?

C. ANTHONY
carltonger@gmail.com

Jamaica-Chinese MOU on fisheries

THE EDITOR, Sir:

IT WAS interesting to read in The Sunday Gleaner on October 22, Dr Peter Edwards’ piece on what he saw as the Chinese connection to our fisheries. I think though, that although he meant well, that he may have misinterpreted the thrust of the MOU with China and Jamaica’s MIFAC. Although I am not in any way privy to the government document, I do know of discussions that had taken place some time ago between major players and buyers in China concerning the export from Jamaica of “live spiny lobsters”.

I am not at present aware of anything, but certain private sector exports of unknown quantities of this item to China and nothing about Chinese fishing for lobsters either now or in the future in our waters.

SPECIAL EXPORTS

So, what are really saying? I think that the impression that Dr Edwards got was one mainly concerning Chinese fishing vessels appearing on our horizons with fishing nets and lines out. I suggest that this might not be the case as I know it, and it may have been to mainly facilitate special Jamaican fisheries exports to China. I must quickly say that that I am unsure if the lobster stock on Pedro Bank can sustainably support any directed fishery to support a special export of lobsters to China if this is what is being planned, as current fishing pressure on lobsters there is extremely high at present and should not be increased any further. In fact, it needs to be reduced somewhat, in my view, based on recent feedback from some industrial lobster fishers.

As a teacher of aquaculture, I hope that this Chinese MOU might also facilitate future technology transfer about aquaculture to us here in Jamaica (remember the Chinese are one of the world’s oldest exponents of this science), particularly about species groups, including sea cucumbers and seahorses, which they are reported to culture in significant quantities.

The country would benefit from the MIFAC disclosing at least the major objectives of the MOU to see if our concerns and out hopes can be clarified and some light shed on the matters mentioned.

DR KARL AIKEN,
Senior Lecturer in zoology,
Department of Life Sciences, UWI, Mona campus.

Editorial Summary October 23 – 27

MONDAY
Sentence-reduction days, but more

The editorial supported the sentence-reduction days the latest initiative to reduce the backlog in the court system, as it called for an acceleration of other programmes other tools to add rev to the slow turning wheels of the justice system. Under the initiative, accused persons pleading guilty depending on the timing of the plea in relation to the start of the trial, receive a reduction in their sentence.

TUESDAY
Is monopoly on legal education right?

The editorial looked at Professor Vascianne Dean of the University of Technology’s (Utech) plea on behalf of legal graduates from Utech, for the same right of admission to training as University of the West Indies graduates enjoy.

The editorial said the question was whether in these times, any institution, or body, should enjoy a monopoly on training.

WEDNESDAY
In the face of crisis

The editorial argued that Jamaica was in a crisis as far as crime situation was concerned. It said that effectively tackling the problem demanded that centrality of fighting the crime problem, to the operation of the government should be felt and appreciated by the prime minister, who should be invested with its solution and infact his ministers with this deep mission.

From this will grow the necessary national, solution-oriented, intense focus on crime, the prioritising of investment in anti-crime measures, and an aggressive overhaul of an ineffective constabulary.

THURSDAY
Keep SE St Mary peaceful

Against reports of tension in the by-election campaigning in South East St Mary for a successor to the PAP MP Dr Green who had died, the editorial appealed to all involved, to endeavour to keep the campaign violence-free despite the competitiveness of the seat. Election day was Monday, October 30.

FRIDAY
If climate denial were a criminal offence

The editorial while appreciating the sentiment concluded that Professor Anthony Chen’s suggestion that Jamaica seeks restitution from global polluters, was impractical in terms of meeting the legal requirements. It suggested that Jamaica can, however, work in coalitions against the climate vulgarists, while doing as much as possible at home to contribute to the mitigation of the crisis.

THE OPINIONS ON THIS PAGE, EXCEPT FOR THE ABOVE, DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE GLEANER.
### Stock Market Trade Sheet

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**JSE Market Data**

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### NCN Agile Lab

The NCN Agile Lab is an innovative team working at the NCN Financial Group. It is a customer-centric, cross-functional team that uses Agile methodologies to deliver software products that meet or exceed customer needs. The team consists of diverse individuals who work together to deliver high-quality products that are responsive to customer needs. The team's focus is on delivering value to the customer in a short and iterative manner, allowing for continuous feedback and improvement. The team's core values include collaboration, openness, and transparency. The team is committed to continuous learning and improvement, and is dedicated to delivering high-quality software products that meet or exceed customer expectations.

### Digital Product Delivery at the NCN Financial Group

At the helm of the entire changing workspace is the lab – which is configured for comfort, replete with couches, bean bags and sturdy padded stools, laptop and mobile phone charging stations, whiteboards or boards used to track the planning of the 36-year-old John-Matthew Sinclair, who is a co-founder of the lab as job as program manager and tasked with building the Agile team.

“We are under review,” Sinclair said.

“No you no longer have to come into the branch to get this money. You can do it online and have the money disbursed to your account,” Sinclair said. The product will be launched in November:

“Once the product is on the market, we will be allowed to customise our loans,” he said. “So, in digital lending, even while you are preapproved for a certain amount, you are provided a toggle where you can adjust the amount that you want and you can also alter the tenure for the loan, the programme said.

“We are very transparent with the product, so you can see all the fees that apply with each adjustment.”

Four the past four years, NCN has been investing heavily in customer convenience, through technology upgrades and banking halls that allow ‘banking on the go’.

“Since then, the banking group has poured substantial investments into its digital transformation efforts, are also working on other account types of which there are nearly 20, as well as mobile apps, and other initiatives.

NCB is Jamaica’s largest and most profitable banking group, but it is operating in a space that added two in-house security analysts but, it has already exceeded another 81.46 billion.

The Agile team, who are the most recent manifestation of those efforts, are also working on other account types of which there are nearly 20, as well as mobile apps, and other initiatives.

“NCB Agile Lab team members (from left) Leon Wright, Alex Leslie and Basil Batchelor, are focused on their work on Wednesday, October 25, 2017. The lab is housed at NCN Financial Group headquarters, The Atium, on Trilgar Road in New Kingston.”

### Clearing Roadblocks

Part of the scrum master’s job is to clear roadblocks, ensuring that the process operates smoothly from design to execution.

The Agile team comprises different skills set, including coders and security analysts, but Powell said the lab does not have a full complement of human resources all the time, which makes it sometimes outsources tasks or services.

### Seeking a Mate

Looking for the one who fits into your life and gives you the love and support you need? Check out our dating services and start your journey to finding true love. Our team of professional matchmakers is dedicated to finding the perfect match for you. From traditional to nontraditional, we have your back every step of the way. Let us help you find the love of your life today. Click here to learn more.
IN ORDER for Citizens to qualify for Returning Resident status and benefit from concessions on personal and household effects and tools of trade, the following requirements must be met:

- Be a Jamaican national who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years.
- Have been resident overseas for at least the last three (3) consecutive years.
- Be returning to Jamaica to reside permanently.
- Be a Jamaican Returning Resident.
- Non-Jamaican whose spouse is a Jamaican Returning Resident.
- A Jamaican who wishes to return home but had renounced his or her Jamaican citizenship and can provide proof of previous Jamaican status.

This concession which is granted to the Returning Resident is a one time benefit only. Persons who return after migrating multiple times will not be eligible to be granted Returning Resident status.

RETURNING STUDENTS

- Returning Students who have attained the age of eighteen (18) years and who studied abroad for more than one (1) year, but less than three (3) consecutive years and are returning to Jamaica to reside permanently.

SPECIAL CASES

- Non-Jamaican spouses or persons who qualify for Returning Resident status are afforded the same concessions as their Jamaican partner. Both parties must have resided overseas for at least three (3) consecutive years.
- A couple will be treated as one family if they return together. Spouses who do not return together but do so within three (3) years of each other are treated as one family and are entitled to only one (1) concession.
- Involuntary Returned Migrants (deported persons) who have received a Deportation Order from the country where they reside.

Eligibility to receive concessions as a Returning Resident is determined by the Jamaica Customs Agency. This must be sought after arrival in Jamaica, and before beginning the process of clearance of personal and household effects and tools of trade. The importation of items should be done within six (6) months after the arrival of the Returning Resident.

It is necessary to attend an interview at the Returning Residents Unit of the Jamaica Customs Agency at the Head Office in Kingston or Montego Bay. The following documents must be presented at the interview:

- Valid Jamaican passport.
- Valid Jamaican passport. If recently issued, an expired passport must also be presented.
- Valid Jamaican passport which should be endorsed with an Unconditional Landing Stamp by the Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (Immigration Section) unless a Jamaican passport is available for presentation.
- Documentary evidence to substantiate residence outside of Jamaica for at least the last three (3) consecutive years.
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- Documentory evidence to substantiate residence outside of Jamaica for at least the last three (3) consecutive years.

ABROAD

- Notarized Letter of Separation from employer.
- Tax returns for the last three (3) consecutive years.
- Tax-return transcripts from the relevant authority.
- Pay stubs (Jan, April, Aug & Dec), W2 and P45, P60 forms for the last three (3) consecutive years.
- Evidence of recent disposal of property.
- Current Retirement Papers/Pension Advice/Social Security Letter.
- Proof of recent disposal of property (for example, Sale Agreement).
- Separation letter from employer (with information on duration of employment) on the company’s letter head duly stamped and signed.

JAMAICA

- Evidence of property owned in Jamaica.
- Contract or letter of employment from prospective employer in Jamaica.
- Rental or Lease Agreement (along with rent receipt).
- Notarized Letter from prospective employer/employer contract on the company’s letterhead.
- Residency letter from head of household certified by a Justice of the Peace (if living with a family member or friend).

STUDENTS

- Copy of Transcript.
- Letter from institution attended confirming duration of course of study or time spent at that institution.
- Identification Card that was issued by the institution attended.

INVOLUNTARY RETURNED MIGRANTS (DEPORTED JAMAICANS)

Deported Jamaicans are required to submit:

- Deportation Order or Case Profile.
- Letter from the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (Deportation Unit).
- Taxpayer Registration Number Card (TRN) Card.
- Identification Card.
- Bill of Lading/Airway Bill.
- Unaccompanied Baggage Declaration (C27) form.

Customs has the final say on concessions.

ELIGIBILITY TO receive concessions as a Returning Resident is determined by the Jamaica Customs Agency. This must be sought after arrival in Jamaica, and before beginning the process of clearance of personal and household effects and tools of trade. The importation of items should be done within six (6) months after the arrival of the Returning Resident.

PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW AT CUSTOMS

It is necessary to attend an interview at the Returning Residents Unit of the Jamaica Customs Agency at the Head Office in Kingston or Montego Bay. The following documents must be presented at the interview:

- Valid Jamaican passport.
- If recently issued, an expired passport must also be presented.

Please see CUSTOMS, 11.
A Jamaican returning resident may import two (2) motor vehicles, whether a motor car and a light commercial unit or two light commercial units or a light commercial vehicle and a regular commercial vehicle. Returning citizens having used this facility within a current year would not be eligible to import vehicles in the capacity of an individual until three (3) years after the date of importation as a Returning Resident.

**AGE LIMIT:**
- Used vehicles should not be more than five (5) years old for motor cars and six (6) years old for light commercial vehicles (pick-ups, panel vans, SUVs, etc.)
- Returning citizens, having gained their status from the Jamaica Customs Agency, are allowed to import motor vehicles (cars and light commercial units) with model year not exceeding ten (10) years. However, these vehicles must have been owned by the importer for a minimum period of six (6) months prior to the date of application for the import licence.
- Approval of licences for motor vehicles that are older than the stipulated age limits will be at the discretion of the Trade Board Limited.

- Classic/Antique: Once a motor vehicle is considered to be a classic car, the importer should submit a recommendation from a registered local classic car club detailing the characteristics of the vehicle that influenced their recommendation prior to the submission of an application to the Trade Board Limited.

**YOU MIGHT NEED INFORMATION FROM OVERSEAS**

While your Jamaican documents are critical to prove your bona fides as a genuine returning resident, you may be asked to provide information from your previous country of residence. These may include, but not limited to:
- Notarised letter of separation from employer
- Tax returns transcripts from the relevant authority
- Pay stubs (Jan, April, August & December), W2 and P45, P60 forms for the last three consecutive years
- Rental or lease agreement (along with rent receipt)
- Letter from institution attended confirming the duration of course of study or time spent at that institution
- Identification card that was issued by the institution attended
- Copy of lease agreement

**PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS ARE DUTY FREE, BUT SOME THINGS ARE DUTYABLE**

Personal and household effects include personal items of clothing, adornment, toiletries, furniture and household appliances, whether new or used, may be imported free of customs duty by an eligible returning resident. Small household and other items carried as accompanied baggage, separate from the allowance for personal and household effects, may also be imported free of customs duty by an eligible returning resident.

**YOU MIGHT NEED INFORMATION FROM JAMAICA**

In the case of students, a letter from the university, college or educational institution from the university, college or educational institution in Jamaica.

- Previous country of residence. These may include, but not limited to:
  - Contract or letter of employment from prospective employer
  - Evidence of property owned in Jamaica
  - Taxpayer Registration Number (TRN)
  - Unconditional Landing Stamp by the Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (Immigration Section)
  - Rental or lease agreement

**YOU MAY ALSO BE ASKED FOR RELEVANT INFORMATION FROM JAMAICA**

- Evidence of property owned in Jamaica
- Contract or letter of employment from prospective employer in Jamaica.
- Evidence of recent disposal of property
- Proof of recent disposal of property
- Separation letter from employer (with information on duration of employment) on the company’s letterhead
- Letter from institution attended confirming the duration of course of study or time spent at that institution
- Identification card that was issued by the institution attended

**YOU MIGHT NEED INFORMATION FROM OVERSEAS**

Personal and household effects include personal items of clothing, adornment, toiletries, furniture and household appliances, whether new or used, may be imported free of customs duty by an eligible returning resident. Small household and other items carried as accompanied baggage, separate from the allowance for personal and household effects, may also be imported free of customs duty by an eligible returning resident.

- Notarised letter from prospective employer
- Employment contract on the company’s letterhead
- Residency letter from head of household certified by a justice of the peace (if living with a family member or friend)
- Student visa
- Proof of recent disposal of property
- Separation letter from employer
- Pay stubs (Jan, April, August & December), W2 and P45, P60 forms for the last three consecutive years
- Separation letter from employer
- Identification card that was issued by the institution attended
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TOOLS OF TRADE are defined as instruments, tools, equipment, devices and machinery used in the normal course and scope of a person’s profession, trade or occupation.

Returning Residents may import these items, either new or used, free of applicable fees provided that the Returning Residents Unit of the Jamaica Customs Agency is satisfied that:

- the individual is qualified to use them;
- the tools are of the type and quantity consistent with their profession, trade or occupation;
- the tools are not being imported for sale or commercial exchange.

If it is intended to establish a business that will require the employment of additional labour, any additional equipment that is required will not be classified as tools of trade and as such, is dutiable. Assistance in determining whether the intended items for importation comply with the definition of tools of trade may be sought from the Jamaica Customs Agency through our Missions, High Commissions and Consulate Generals or the Diaspora Affairs Department. Such requests for assistance should be accompanied by documentary evidence including:

- Notarized certificate or diploma, from a recognized educational or training institution or professional body.
- Reference from a former employer or customer attesting to experience in the designated field.
- Copies of professional or business directories in which the service offered is listed.
- Details of the items. In the case of used equipment, an inventory of the items along with a professional valuation of their current condition.
- Value should be provided, except in the case of equipment less than one year old, where the original invoice from the supplier can be provided. Used equipment are those owned and in use for a period of six (6) months or more.

A certified invoice is required for new equipment.

The determination of compliance is conveyed in writing, including an indication of the duty payable, if the items do not qualify for duty exemption. The definitive assessment of the items however, can be made only on the clearance of the items. In all cases, a concession for tools of trade may be granted to each qualified individual within a family.

PROCEDURES FOR THE CLEARANCE OF UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE

Jamaica Customs Agency requires that for the clearance of unaccompanied baggage the following are required:

- An interview at the Returning Residents Unit of the Customs Agency. Full declaration of the contents of the unaccompanied baggage is required.
- Provision of documentation to have approved Returning Resident status

Once granted there would be the release of the personal and household effects and tools of trade.

INFORMATION

Prospective importers of utility vehicles for agricultural use seeking duty concession MUST FIRST obtain approval through the relevant parish office of the Rural Agricultural Development Agency (RAD Agency) prior to importation. The Trade Board Limited requires evidence of any duty concession granted at the time the application for an import licence is submitted.

An Import Licence is required from the Trade Board Limited for the importation of oversized vehicles/heavy-duty trucks, tractors and trailers. The Trade Board’s website at www.tradeboard.gov.jm provides details of allowable age at importation for those units. A application for units over the stipulated age range will be at the discretion of the Trade Board Limited after liaising directly with the Island Traffic Authority (ITA).

The importation of motor vehicles which are considered to be in a damaged state or in a salvaged state is PROHIBITED.

Vehicles imported from countries in which vehicles are driven on the right-hand side of the road, must be modified to allow the beam of the headlamps to reflect down on the left horizontal plane or up and down on the vertical plane. In addition to the above, importers of buses are also required to do modifications to allow passengers to enter/exit on the curbside of the road.

Import Licences have a validity of one (1) year, except in the case of vehicles close to the age limit, in which case the licence is valid for the remaining portion of the given calendar year.

BRINGING PLANTS REQUIRES SPECIAL PERMITS

A phytosanitary Import Permit is required for the importation of plants and plant products (fruits and vegetables) and other regulated articles such as wood packaging material, craft items, log and lumber. The permit must be obtained prior to the importation at a fee. The permit stipulates the condition(s) of entry and other fees may be applicable such as customs and inspection fees upon entry.

APPLICATION FOR A PERMIT

- Register online with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries (MICAP) Trade site at www.moa.gov.jm/index.php
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A few weeks ago I revisited my island home to spend a few days exploring some of the many fascinating things to do on this enchanting island called Jamaica.

I flew out of Newark early one Sunday morning on a JetBlue flight to Fort Lauderdale where I then quickly and seamlessly connected with another comfortable and relaxing JetBlue flight to Kingston. I arrived in Jamaica’s capital city long before noon, eager to spend the first few days there before heading to Port Antonio. Despite the unusual morning rain, I picked up an assortment of fresh fruits before checking into my favourite Kingston residence, the Alexander Suite at the Altamont Court Hotel.

First on the agenda was the Dub Club, a trendy and eclectic outdoor reggae party in Jacks Hill with a jaw-dropping view of the city. Friends had been raving about how exciting this Sunday night party always is, but I missed it due to rain. I was not ready to end the day yet so I went off with a bunch of die-hard fans to a closer venue, a cosy restaurant and bar called Truck Stop near Trafalgar Road for jerk chicken and Dragon Stout.

The following morning I was on the Knutsford Express, travelling to Port Antonio before. They were friends from New York who had never seen Jamaica, Lorna Goodison. The ride to Port Antonio was celestial, a leisurely three hour ride through verdant mountain valleys that few visitors ever see. The bamboo raft is skillfully guided through calm waters and light rapids by an experienced captain.

The ride to Port Antonio was heaven, traversing verdant hills, unending ribbons of white sand beaches and a bustling market scene in Port Maria. Jamaica is called the land of wood and water, and we certainly encountered many rivers along the way with glistening, crystal-clear waters dancing around in the lush foliage. We ended a most rewarding day with cocktails and dinner on the terrace of the Trident Hotel, overlooking the Caribbean Sea.

As we revelled in the magic of Port Antonio for the next few days, we understood why Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, Eddie Murphy, Brooke Shields, Denzel Washington, Tom Cruise, Patti Labelle and Beyoncé all fell in love with this alluring slice of paradise.

We spent our first morning daydreaming at perhaps the most beautiful beach in Jamaica, Frenchman’s Cove, where a fresh water spring meanders lazily into a postcard-perfect cove. Next, it was Boston Jerk Centre, the original home of jerk where we enjoyed a spicy but indescribably delicious jerk lunch with homemade juice of cucumber and ginger.

Our home in Port Antonio was Goblin Hill, a villa-type accommodation. An experienced cook shops for fresh produce at the local Musgrave Market, and she prepares breakfast and dinner daily, based on our needs. We also dined at the Cliffhanger, and at Geesam, a nearby eco-friendly boutique hotel that also houses a recording studio and a gourmet restaurant.

A must-see too is the Blue Lagoon, an expanse of deep-blue turquoise water fed partly by natural fresh water mineral springs. We made stops to see Great Huts, Kanopi House, Wilks Bay and Bayview Eco Resort, all of them small, eco-friendly dream accommodations with dramatically stunning vistas.

But the high point of the entire trip was the Rio Grande, a leisurely three hour ride through verdant mountain valleys that few visitors ever see. The bamboo raft is skillfully guided through calm waters and light rapids by an experienced captain.

Our only distraction was stopping for a mouthwatering meal cooked on the river bank by a charming and talented cook from the nearby hills, Belinda, who served us chicken and cucumber and ginger. Belinda’s flavours will rekindle memories of your grandmother’s Dutch pot, and it is a pleasant reminder of all the goodies that await you when you stop by to visit relatives and friends.

Port Antonio is the hideaway where your tomorrow’s are prettier than your yesterdays, and it truly is a destination of natural mystic where, once you go, a part of you remains there forever.

Discover this resort region for yourself. To learn more about Jamaica which has been a favourite vacation option for the discerning traveller for decades, go to www.visitjamaica.com. Like them on Facebook or follow them on Instagram @visitjamaica
How do become a citizen?

Dear Ms Powell,

I was born in the Haiti and my mother was born to a Jamaican citizen. She took me to the United States (US) when I was 10 years old. We have not been able to get US citizenship, so we went to Canada. My mother checked with a lawyer in Canada and he said we could apply to stay, but he can’t guarantee that our application will get through. I don’t like the cold in Canada and I met a nice Jamaican online. How can I apply to get Jamaican citizenship? I don’t want to go back to Haiti.

-M.U.

There are a number of factors involved in the application for citizenship in a country in which one was not born. In Jamaica, the citizenship rules stipulate that for an individual to become a citizen you must demonstrate that you are married to a Jamaican citizen, or demonstrate that you have a first-generation connection, that is, your parents were born in Jamaica, or that you have a second-generation connection. That means that you can become a Jamaican citizen if your grandparents were born in Jamaica. So if your parents were not born in Jamaica, but you have a grandparent who was, you are eligible for citizenship on the basis of descent. In order to apply for citizenship by descent, an individual must complete the citizenship application form and pay the requisite fee. An individual can find this form on the Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICIA) website, any Jamaican high commission or consulate.

When applying for citizenship on the basis of descent of a Jamaican grandparent, all of the following documents are required:

- Applicant’s full birth certificate.
- Applicant’s passport.
- Applicant’s marriage certificate (if applicable).
- Father/mother’s passport and birth certificate.
- Paternal/maternal grandparent’s birth certificate and passport (preferably Jamaican).

Other documents pertinent to your case are:

- Father/mother’s passport and visa.
- Grandparent’s birth certificate.
- Applicant’s full birth certificate.
- Applicant’s passport.
- Applicant’s marriage certificate (if applicable).
- Father/mother’s passport and birth certificate.
- Paternal/maternal grandparent’s birth certificate and passport (preferably Jamaican).

Jamaican. Other documents pertinent to your case once you have submitted verifiable documents and lineage is established, a certificate of citizenship will be issued. The full process is estimated to take between six to 12 months if all the correct documentation are provided to PICIA.

In the event that you cannot establish descent through a parent or grandparent because of a lack of documentation, there are other factors considered in granting someone citizenship, such as:

- A non-Jamaican can seek citizenship by virtue of marriage.
- If a person has lived in Jamaica for a minimum of five years prior to the submission of the application and is of good character and financially self-sufficient, he/she may be granted citizenship by naturalization.
- A Commonwealth citizen who has resided legitimately in Jamaica for at least five consecutive years, and is of good character, can make an application for registration as a Jamaican citizen.
- A minor of any citizen of Jamaica can apply to be registered as a citizen of Jamaica by the parent or guardian.

Your case is unique, so I strongly recommend that you consult directly with an immigration lawyer to provide you with personalized advice.

What happens when you enter the US illegally?

The most common way that people enter the United States (US) illegally is to walk across the US border, but it is estimated that two million accounts for more than Mexicans, as persons from all over the world pay smugglers to take them across the border into America.

To a lesser extent, persons also cross the Canadian border with the US. Some persons also enter the States illegally by boat and landing at a non-US check point. Cubans and Haitians have been shown to enter this way, but other Caribbean people have also entered the US in this manner.

Years ago, before machine-readable passports and when photos could be changed in Jamaican passports, US visas, several Jamaicans entered the US on fake passports. That is, they entered the States in someone else’s name, with someone else’s visa and their photograph. Some even came into the US on US birth certificates, posing as US citizens, when US citizens could travel without passports.

Those classes of persons are deemed to have entered without inspection or OEW, and for the most part, are unable to change their status to legal residents. Prior to April 30, 2001, if you entered the States EWI, you would pay a fine and be able to change your status if you were otherwise eligible. After April 30, 2001, the section of the Immigration & Naturalisation Act (Section 245i) that permitted this was eliminated. In order for those persons who entered EWI to obtain US residency, if they have a qualifying relative, they must leave the US, return to their home country to be interviewed at the US embassy/consulates. However, once they leave they trigger a three- or 10-year bar to returning to the US. That can only be overcome if they qualify for a waiver. In 2013, the Obama administration instituted the provisional waiver that allows persons who only have unlawful presence to be able to obtain their waiver while in the US and then leave for their interviews outside the US with their waivers already approved.

Those persons who entered illegally, posing as US citizens, are in the most difficult of situations. There is no waiver for false claim to US citizenship, even if you are married to an American citizen. The only defense to a false claim charge is that you believed that you were a US citizen when you so claimed.

SEVERAL RESTRICTIONS

Of course, being in the US illegally poses several restrictions and will depend on when the person entered. Years ago, persons where able to obtain driver’s licence and social security numbers? these items are critical to survival. Now, you must prove legal status or pending status in order to obtain a driver’s licence, and social security cards are stamped that they are valid for work with immigration approval.

During the Obama administration, undocumented persons found in the US were not a priority for removal especially if they had a US family and were not criminal aliens. Under the Trump administration, everyone is held in the same category “whether they are simply undocumented (overstays or EWI) or are criminal aliens.

The Department of Justice, headed by Attorney General Jeffery Beaucar Sessions, prosecutes deportation cases in Immigration Court. The attorney general has taken the position that there is to be no discretion in the assessment of cases “the law is to be followed in all circumstances.

The biggest problem for those who entered illegally to gain lawful status is how they entered the US, and whether they have an immediate relative to petition for them in order to qualify for a provisional waiver.

Dahlia A. Walker-Huntington is a Jamaican-American attorney who practises immigration law in the United States; and family, criminal, international and personal injury law in Florida. She is a mediator, arbitrator and special magistrate in Broward County, Florida. info@walkerhuntington.com
The Collection MoDA has partnered with Berger Paints to launch this year’s series in a very unconventional way.

In lieu of a traditional launch, the MoDA series has directed its focus on community upliftment by adopting 100 feet of JUTC’s wall along Windward Road for what has been dubbed, the MoDA Mural.

The first phase of the MoDA Mural features work from three local artists under the theme ‘Urban Art’. Painted with strokes of vibrant yellow as the dominant feature - the mural depicts the MoDA story- art, design, creativity and the spirit of the Jamaican people. MoDA’s vision to make Kingston the creative hub of the Caribbean, influenced Matthew McCarthy to portray Kingston and its creative elements. The whimsical elements that contextualise the city are found in his larger-than-life drawings of the individuals depicted in the cityscape.

For Paige Taylor, inspiration came from combining high fashion with street and some of his personal flair. Inspired by the mural’s colour palette, Esther Beckford envisioned Kingston as a strong brown woman, transforming the city with her presence and leaving a trail of beauty in her wake.

Managing Director of The Collection MoDA Kerry-Ann Clarke, spoke to the decision to focus on the community to launch the series. “We have always believed in making a contribution, and this year we really wanted to do so in a way that would reach far and wide. We are huge fans of street art and we have seen how this plays a critical role in the revival of communities globally and even right here at Fleet Street.”

Windward Road was selected as the home of the MoDA Mural, in part for its rich musical history, and with the hope that the mural will attract income generating opportunities to the volatile community.

“Bringing beauty to a volatile area such as Windward Road and sparking conversation was one of our goals,” stated MoDA curator Aiesha Panton.

She continued, “We also wanted to create economic opportunities for community members and the three extremely talented young artists we engaged to create the MoDA mural.”

Clarke believes that launching the series in this way is serving the greater good of giving back to the community, which is reflective of the MoDA spirit. “The feedback from the community has been amazing!” she notes. “One of the best parts of the experience has been how residents have shared stories of important events in their lives and happenings in the community over the years. Many of these elements were actually woven into Matthew’s section of the mural.”

The Collection MoDA will take place from November 9 to 12, at The Worthington, Spanish Court Hotel.
Rebel Salute seeks to preserve legacy

STEPHANIE LYEW
Gleaner Writer

Rebel Salute has managed to continue under the theme of the preservation of reggae without having a monotonous presentation of the music and entertainment reflecting that part of Jamaica’s culture.

It began in 1994 in Mandeville as a small concert to celebrate the birthday of reggae recording artiste and producer Tony Rebel but has matured into the 4th century old cultural festival that is anticipated globally.

“People need to identify Jamaica as the authentic home of reggae music and that there is a positive side to the culture, and the aims of the festival are to keep the work of foundation reggae artistes alive, create a space to entertain people while simultaneously educating patrons through the use of music,” said Rebel to The Gleaner.

The two-day festival highlights the creative kind of living, from the music that is made available. It also doubles as a marketplace for educators and innovators who have a conscious idea or product to share.

“The festival seeks to further the Legacy of Reggae while also providing a platform for the younger generation to show their talents,” said Rebel.

Operation Black Vote Canada presents GENERATION NEXT Black Youth Political Summit, for youth 16-24 years on October 28, 1-4 p.m. at Toronto City Hall, Community Room 1, 100 Queen St W, Toronto. Sponsored by Councilor Michael Thompson, Ward 37

JCA Women’s Committee Mental Health Wellness Fair, “Minding Your Mind Matters,” on Saturday, October 28, 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Jamaican Canadian Centre, 955 Arrows Rd, Toronto.

Black Health Alliance presents its 3rd annual forum on black health, "Beyond A Sound Mind: Building a Black Health & Well-Being Strategy," on Saturday, Nov. 4, 8:30am-4:30pm at Dalla Lana School of Public Health, 155 College St, Toronto.

JCA’s Political Advocacy Committee presents a townhall meeting for Peel’s Black community on Thursday, Nov. 9, 6-8pm at Xaymaca Restaurant, 30 Kennedy Rd, South, Brampton. RSVP at dowdy.danielle@gmail.com

New York

Alpha Tri-State Autumn Fest Fundraising Oldies Party; Rochdale Village, 169-65 137th Avenue, Bronx, NY. Music by DJ Prentice. For further information contact Joyce at 718-726-7425.


Events

Events: Canada

Alpha Tri-State Autumn Fest Fundraising Oldies Party; Rochdale Village, 169-65 137th Avenue, Bronx, NY. Music by DJ Prentice. For further information contact Joyce at 718-726-7425.

The Organic H.E.A.R.T. Group of Companies has not yet released the names of those who are performing at the event slated for January 12 and 13, 2018, but promises a fulfilling musical line-up even better than the last one.

Jamaica Awareness Association presents the 31st Annual Fundraising Banquet Saturday, November 11, 2017. Los Angeles Airport Marriott Hotel. 5855 W. Century Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Contact us for info: Patrick - 310-522-6713 or Carl - 917-716-4569. Email: jifdpinc@yahoo.com, Website: www.jamaicaawareness.org

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CARL GILCHRIST
Gleaner Writer

IN HER early years, new Nurses’ Association of Jamaica (NAJ) President Carmen Johnson had hopes of being a sociologist, but having been steered into nursing, maybe by spiritual means, she is convinced that this is her true calling.

“I see it as something that the Lord wanted me to do,” Johnson, a departmental manager at the St Ann’s Bay Regional Hospital, told The Gleaner, less than a week after being elected to lead one of Jamaica’s most visible organisations for nurses.

Having spent more than 20 years at St Ann’s Bay hospital, after a one-year internship at the Kingston Public Hospital, Johnson has earned the moniker ‘Devotional Sister’, as she is always ready to have devotions and prayers for the patients at the institution.

Originating from Aeron Town in Clarendon, Johnson was placed in St Ann to work and, so made the Garden Parish her home. More than 20 years as a Christian, she started attending the New Testament Church of God at St Ann’s Bay and Salem before the Runaway Bay church was established some five years ago. That is where she now worships.

“Sometimes when patients come asking for prayer she would ensure that, whenever time allows, she would offer them the prayers they seek. This has basically become the norm for her over the years.

SERVING OTHERS

“Being a Christian, I recognise that what I do is not of myself, and as I say to my colleagues, each day we come we are here to serve, we are here as individuals who can encourage the patients when they’re at their lowest,” related Johnson.

“We’re here where we can help them to pray, and because of that it has humbled me. I see myself as a servant because of what the Lord did. The Lord Himself was a servant, so we ought to be like Him as He says we ought to, and nothing is too low or too high to do once it will impact patient care.

“Bo, I’m able to speak to my patients. I’m able to pray with them, I’m able to encourage them.

“We’re here where they’re born and we’re here when some die, and so it is for us to see how we play that role. As I say to my staff, let not one die or leave this world without, as the song says, you never mentioned Him to me. That’s what we strive to do.”

The Lord wants me to do nursing

CARMEN JOHNSON

New USA-based president of the Nurses’ Association of Jamaica, Carmen Johnson, is saving at-risk youth.

The other day, I was with some basic-school children. One little boy stepped on another little boy, and that little boy told the other one a whole heap of choice words and ready fight, and when we were going to say, ‘Alright now, stop’, the little boy said, ‘Mi mother seh nobody nuh fi lick mi,’ so it is coming from the home, but at the same time, we have to work with them,” she said.

“We need to get back to the Jamaican where we reach out and care for each other. If we don’t reach there, we are in trouble. We have to also get back to the place where the ‘licky-licky’ culture is not so big, where we are ‘craven’ and want everything for ourselves. I don’t know if we can call it resocialisation. It is really starting from the basic school and training the next generation differently. That is where I want to go. I want us do some work in the schools in looking at how they live with each other and that kind of thing.”

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JASON CROSS
Gleaner Writer

T HE GENERAL attitude towards young Jamaicans suffering from mental-health problems is usually one of scorn, and according to co-founder and executive director at Children First, Claudette Pious, that needs to stop.

Pious sat down with The Gleaner on Tuesday at the Molyneux Road offices of Children First in St Andrew to discuss topics related to saving-at-risk youth.

“There is major work to be done generally, because as a nation, we don’t pay attention to mental health. There are a lot of people on the verge, and generally, we don’t pay attention. I think that some of our young people who we call all sorts of names really have mental health problems and just need help to get to a place where they can function as normal as possible,” she said.

“I think generally, as a people, we treat people with mental illness a kind of way, and we don’t understand that some of us who treat them bad are really mad already. We really need to spend some time and focus on mental health,” Pious said that Jamaica may end up in problems if the nation cannot get back to a place where care for each other is a common characteristic of Jamaicans.

SOCIALISATION ISSUE

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Ayesha Allen

BEYOND THE CALL OF BEAUTY

"D"O YOUR little bit of good where you are, it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”

The words of Desmond Tutu, rings true for 31 year old Ayesha Allen, president of the Gift of Love Ja, who believes that championing the cause of those in need and starting a charity to fulfill it is a part of God's plan for her life.

Blessed with an infectious smile and warm personality, Allen admits that starting a charity, aimed at changing the lives of hundreds of children and helping families who have experienced various forms of tragedy was never a part of her plan – but instead is God’s way of using her to make a difference in other people’s lives and infecting their lives with some happiness.

Unlike typical children, Allen grew up interacting mostly with adults from all walks of life on the political campaign trail, as her single-parent mother, Karen ‘Dawn HoYoung,’ worked in the Office of the Prime Minister. This took her to various work-related events across the island. It was these early experiences that helped to shape Allen’s love for people and develop a spirit of giving.

Giving came natural to Allen because of the examples set by her mother and late grandmother, Marie Wray. “I grew up seeing my mother and late grandmother, Marie Wray. ‘I grew up seeing my mother and late grandmother, Marie Wray, because of the examples set by her,” Allen explained. “An emphasis is still given and remembering that you can’t give to everybody, knowing that you have enough to give to those in need.”

Allen sees helping those in need as part of God’s plan for her life.

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US-based Jamaican guides student athletes

Vice-President and liaison international scholastic director of US Elite International Track and Field Incorporation, Jamaican Keisha Thorpe, visited the island last week for the third US-Jamaica Scholarship and Athletic Convention and College Fair. Thorpe has a programme whereby she has been guiding Jamaican athletes to go through the academic and track circuit in the United States. The Gleaner caught up with her at a fair at St Andrew High School, which she had organised to sensitise Jamaican high school athletes hoping to study in the United States about requirements and expectations.

Thorpe, a past student of St Andrew High, had joined with her twin sister, Trecia, to start the programme of guiding athletes. She gave The Gleaner an insight as to how it began.

"After graduating from college, we began mentoring some younger athletes and we really tried to chart their path to success," Thorpe said at St Andrew last Friday.

"We realised that when it was time for these student athletes to attend college, there was a lot lacking in their academics as there was so much focus on sport. We helped them to balance both by putting them in colleges with coaches that allowed them to shine both in athletics and academics," she added.

WORK IN PROGRESS

"This is a work in progress as we have always tried to find new ways to make our organisation better, especially now when we have new immigration and NCAA eligibility standards. We can confidently say at this point that we have helped the majority of the student athletes who go through our programme to matriculate and transition through college and into a career field," she said.

"I am happy to be back at St Andrew High School and we are here to go over all the rules to make it easier for them to register. In the United States, at around this time, it is college fair month, where athletes are being guided by their advisers on how to go through the process of enrolling in college, and we want to make sure the athletes here have access to these opportunities and can compete with those students, especially for scholarships into different colleges," she concluded.

Several coaches from overseas, including the former Jamaican middle-distance athlete Inez Turner, were also here with Thorpe.

Leon Bailey wins Man of the Match award

LEON BAILEY’S Man of the Match performance on Saturday October 28, lifted Bayer Leverkusen from a goal down to beat Cologne 2-1 in the German Bundesliga.

Playing on the right, Bailey carved out the game’s first real chance, but neither Sven Bender nor Julian Brandt could convert the Jamaican’s cross.

Sehrou Guirassy gave Cologne the lead in the 23rd minute of play. However, 20-year-old Bailey found the equaliser eight minutes into the second half, running on to a pass from Lucas Alario and rounded Timo Horn in the Cologne goal, before tapping home.

The Jamaican came close to putting Leverkusen ahead 10 minutes later, but Horn denied his low drive from a tight angle. Leverkusen completed the comeback in the 74th minute by Bender, who scored with a clever finish after the Cologne defence failed to clear from a corner.

Bailey was excellent throughout the game, creating numerous opportunities for his teammates. He assisted on a disallowed goal late in the game. ‘’The Jamaican won possession at the top of his area and played a pass to Bender in midfield. He assisted on a disallowed goal late in the game. The ball was called back after Bailey was adjudged to have handled the ball during the run of play.”

Bayer have now stretched their unbeaten run to five games. They are eighth in the standings with 20 points from 10 matches. Bailey, who also scored in his previous outing, last weekend, in a 5-1 defeat of Mochengladbach, has so far tallied three goals for the season.
Sunshine Girls earn Fast5 silver

JAMAICA’S SUNSHINE Girls achieved their best finish in the Fast 5 Netball World Series to date, when they won the silver medal after losing to England 29-34 in Melbourne Australia, on Sunday October 29.

The confident Sunshine Girls had raised hope among local fans when they indicated on departure that they were looking at a top three finish. Trailblazing nine goals at the end of the first quarter, Jamaica fought back in the second and third quarter to tie the match going into the final quarter.

England got the better off the Jamaican girls in the preliminary round, the Sunshine Girls won all their games beating South Africa 37-29, Australia 26-23, Malawi 31-24, defending champions New Zealand 30-23 and England 47-38. They had finished fifth in their last participation at the Fast 5 series in 2016.

Have a story or photo to share? Tell us of your achievements, new business initiatives, birthdays, anniversaries, church happenings, issues and problems facing you. Email: overseas@gleanerjm.com

No indecent exposure

Chris Gayle wins defamation case against Aussie newspaper

SYDNEY (AP) WEST INDIES cricket star Chris Gayle has won his defamation case against an Australian media organisation which published reports that the player indecently exposed himself to a woman in a team dressing room during the 2015 World Cup.

A jury in the New South Wales state Supreme Court on Monday found that Fairfax Media hadn’t established that the allegations were true and there was an element of malice in the timing of the publication.

Gayle denied the allegations when he gave evidence on the first day of the trial last week, saying he sued because wanted to clear his name after the claims were published in three newspapers in January 2016. The Cricket World Cup was held in Australia and New Zealand in 2015.

“I came this far, all the way from Jamaica, to defend myself, my name and my character,” Gayle was quoted as saying outside the court.

The amount of damages awarded will be determined at a later hearing.

Jamaica, China sign agreement on sport coaching

THE GOVERNMENTS of Jamaica and the People’s Republic of China have signed a three-year Letter of Exchange for a Technical Co-operation Project on Sport Coaching which is expected to cost US$7 million and is being funded by the Chinese government.

Commencing next January a team of coaches from China will be working with local coaches and athletes for one month to provide technical assistance in the areas of swimming, synchronised swimming, badminton, gymnastics, volleyball, football and basketball.

Under the agreement which was signed on October 23, by Olivia Grange, minister of Culture, Gender Entertainment and Sport, and Niu Qingbao, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to Jamaica, Jamaica will send 138 athletes, coaches and other support personnel to China for training and competitions for two months.

Grange said the genesis of the programme is founded in the Government’s objective of improving Jamaica’s performance in those disciplines where, historically, Chinese athletes have excelled.

“This will be the first of such programmes, which we will mutually benefit from. We reaffirm our partnership and friendship with the People’s Republic of China in the area of sport development,” she said.

CHISS IN Jamaica is set to go islandwide, according to Jamaica Chess Federation president Ian Wilkinson.

According to Wilkinson, work is under way popularise the game through parish chess associations. In addition, he hopes to have champion chess players visiting locations all over the island.

“We hope to have chess in Emancipation Park and all the public squares Half-Way Tree, Liguanea, downtown all around the country,” he said.

“We are setting up branches of the federation or associations in all the parishes because it’s difficult to be in Kingston and help Trellary, so we’re doing that, and we have at least eight parish associations established now.”

He is also hoping that champion players can go around the parishes to give impetus to the initiative.

“They used to go around the various parishes to spread chess,” he said. “What is happening now, we are setting up a programme with the younger junior chess players and female players to have visiting arrangements throughout the various parishes and various centres. We leave Kingston and Saint Andrew, where most of the top players reside, take them around the island and spread the gospel of chess,” Wilkinson enthused.

Wilkinson said this was an activity promulgated by the federation in the late 1960s and the 1970s.

KING OF GAMES

Citing the presence of talent “in various nooks and crannies of the country”, he listed the benefits of what he called the king of games.

“Because of the numbers and letters on the board, players automatically do maths without knowing it. They do it in a fun way,” he enthused.

Each of the 64 squares on the chess board is assigned a number. For example, the square on the top left hand corner is ‘A1’ and the one in the bottom right corner is ‘H8’.

“They do commerce, business without even realising that they’re doing it, and that spills over into natural life,” he said.

Bid to push chess islandwide

National Fide Master Malaku Lorne (left) engages Jamaica Chess Federation (JCF) vice-president Ambassador Dr Nigel Clarke (right) in a game of chess while JCF president Ian Wilkinson looks on.
sportshorts:

SRI LANKA A WINS UNOFFICIAL TEST SERIES AGAINST WINDIES

Sri Lanka A won the third and final unofficial test in three days against their West Indies counterparts on Saturday, October 28, at Sabina Park, Kingston, to take the series 2-1. Scores: Sri Lanka 273-9 and 27 without loss, Windies 181 and 118. West Indies won the first test.

SUNSHINE GIRLS WIN FAST5 SILVER

Contributed
Jamaica captain and goal shooter Jhaniele Fowler-Reid (right) is challenged for the ball by England’s Geva Mentor during their Fast5 Netball World Series match in Melbourne, Australia.

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