



This Newsletter highlights news, events and activities in Science & Technology (S&T) and related subjects which have taken place primarily in Jamaica over the last month.

Science, Technology & Innovation News

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Executive Director of the Scientific Research Council (SRC), Dr. Charah Watson (right), makes a presentation to the team from Brown's Town High School in St. Ann, at the awards ceremony for the 2022/2023 Young Inventors and Innovators Competition (YIIC), held on May 2 at the SRC's Hope Gardens headquarters in St. Andrew. From left are Teachers, Alex Holmes and Molly Coombs and students Leroy Gallimore and Tamelia Thompson.

Agro-Industry

Farmer Hails Banana Board's Continued Support



Portland-based banana and plantain farmer, Winsome Crosdale Delaney, is lauding the Banana Board for the invaluable support provided in enabling her to boost production. Speaking to JIS News in a recent interview, she said over the past 12 years, the Board has provided technical assistance through scientific research conducted on her farm. [...]

FAO Hosting Bridging Organisations and Networks Development Farmers Workshop



The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is hosting a Bridging Organizations and Networks Development (BOND) Learning Guide for Trainers Workshop, which aims to build on the Government's focus on increasing the capacity of small-scale producer entities. The workshop, being held at the Medallion Hall Hotel in Kingston from May 22 to 24, [...]

Banana Farmers Urged to Increase Surveillance for Pests and Diseases



Banana and plantain farmers are being encouraged to increase surveillance for pests and diseases that can affect their crops. General Manager of the Banana Board, Janet Conie, told JIS News that preempting diseases and pests with proper preparation can protect farmers' investments. "Banana being a plant that grows year-round makes it susceptible to diseases, and when a plant is around for a long time [...]"

Backyard Gardeners Encouraged to Use Compost to Boost Plant Health



The Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) is encouraging backyard gardeners to utilize composting to boost soil nutrients. Composting is the process of decomposing organic solid wastes. The resulting compost, a dark, crumbly, rich material, which is used as a fertilizer, improves the soil's composition. [...]

Prime Minister Lauds St. Thomas Farmers for Outstanding Onion Production



Onion farmers in St. Thomas are being lauded by Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, for their continuous strides in production, including their recent massive crop. Speaking during his latest visit to the parish for the handover of a social housing unit, Mr. Holness said, "I could not come into St. Thomas without also mentioning the progress that you are making in your agriculture. [...]"

Agriculture Ministry Strengthening Support for Dairy Industry



The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries will be strengthening its partnership with stakeholders in the dairy industry to boost the island's milk production. Currently, Jamaica's milk production ranges between 11 and 13 million litres annually. Speaking with journalists following a recent tour of the Island Dairies plant in Priory, St. Ann, Portfolio Minister, Hon. Parnell Charles Jr, [...]

More Insurance Options for Farmers and Fishers



Farmers and fishers can now access increased insurance options to protect their lives and livelihoods, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Parnell Charles Jr., has informed. Making his presentation in the 2023/24 Sectoral Debate in the House of Representatives on May 2, Mr. Charles Jr. announced that GK General Insurance Weather Protect is now offering a new type of microinsurance. [...]

Business News

PM Credits Prudent Fiscal Management for Economic Recovery



Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, has credited the economy's quick recovery and return to pre-COVID-19 growth levels to the Government's prudent fiscal management. He noted that unemployment has dropped to six per cent, the lowest ever in Jamaica's history, to the point where the country is practically approaching full employment. [...]

\$30 Million Boost for Rural Youth Economic Empowerment Programme



The HEART-NSTA Trust has extended its support for the Rural Youth Economic Empowerment Programme (RYEEP), by presenting \$30 million to the Jamaica 4-H Clubs, which organises the initiative in tandem with the agency. RYEEP is an entrepreneurial engagement, designed to support youth participants through training in life skills, business development and management, as well as best practices in agriculture. [...]

Climate Change

Jamaica to Benefit from £7-Million Climate Financing Package



Jamaica is set to benefit from a £7-million package to increase the country's access to climate financing. This was announced by Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom (UK), the Rt. Hon. James Cleverly, during a press conference following the Jamaica-UK strategic dialogue at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade downtown Kingston offices [...]

Energy

Expressions of Interest Invited to Supply Up to 100 Megawatts of Renewable Energy



An advertisement has been published inviting 'Expressions of Interest for the supply of up to 100 megawatts (MW) of Energy Generation from Renewable Energy-Based Power Generation Facilities on Build Own and Operate (BOO) Basis'. Minister of Science, Energy, and Technology, Hon. Daryl Vaz, made the disclosure during his contribution to the 2023/24 Sectoral Debate in the House of Representatives on Wednesday [...]



Health Issues

CHASE Fund Partners with HFJ to Reduce Cardiovascular Disease



Like the Heart Foundation of Jamaica (HFJ), the Culture, Health, Arts, Sports and Education (CHASE) Fund is concerned about the high number of Jamaicans who are ailing from cardiovascular disease. Each year, thousands of citizens become incapacitated by the malady and some even die, largely because of late diagnosis. Hence, both organisations are working endlessly to give those who are suffering [...]

Ban on Plastic Lunch Boxes Effective December 2023



A ban will be imposed on the use of plastic lunch boxes, effective December 31, 2023, as government efforts continue to shift to more sustainable options. This was announced by Minister Without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda, while addressing Thursday's (May 18) non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing ceremony [...]

Don't Throw Away Your Masks!



Jamaicans are being urged to maintain precautions against COVID-19. Medical Officer of Health for Westmoreland, Dr. Marcia Graham, said that while the World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared the pandemic over on May 5, the virus is still an issue on the island and persons should continue to protect themselves. "COVID is still here. Please do not throw away your masks, [...]"

Pregnant Women Advised to Stay Active



The Ministry of Health and Wellness is encouraging physical activity during pregnancy as an essential ingredient in ensuring overall health and to reduce serious complications that can threaten the life of both mother and baby. Minister of Health and Wellness, Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn, said that exercise has benefits for maternal and foetal health. [...]

Physically Active Children Less Likely to Get Sick – Cuthbert-Flynn



Students who participate in regular physical activity not only tend to get better grades but are less likely to get sick and be absent from school. State Minister in the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn, said this is a well-founded position held by health experts and should be a part of every school platform across the island. She was speaking at the annual Jamaica Moves in Schools initiative, [...]

Science and Technology

Young Inventors and Innovators Awarded



More than 20 students have been recognised for their innovative entries in the 2022/2023 Young Inventors and Innovators Competition (YIIC). They were recognised at an awards ceremony held on May 2 at the Scientific Research Council (SRC) Hope Gardens headquarters in St. Andrew. Hosted annually by the SRC, the YIIC helps students to develop an appreciation of key scientific and technological [...]

Government Allocates \$834.9 Million for Research and Development



The Government has allocated \$834.939 million for research and development, which is \$47.207 million or six per cent more than the 2022/2023 allocation. “While we are not yet at a target of 1.5 per cent of our gross domestic product (GDP) being allocated to research and development, implementing the objectives of the Science, Technology and Innovation Policy will put us well on our way,” [...]

Jamaica and British Council Sign Five-Year Partnership on STEAM Education



Jamaica is to benefit from a five-year partnership with the British Council aimed at enhancing cooperation in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM). A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which will guide the arrangement, was signed during a press conference following the Jamaica-United Kingdom (UK) strategic dialogue at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade's [...]

Sectoral Presentation 2023 by the Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Hon. Daryl Vaz, MP



As a serving Member of Parliament since 2007, I am privileged to be standing here today to inform this Honourable House of the accomplishments of my Ministry for the period 2022 to 2023, and the outlook for the Financial Year 2023 to 2024. I thank God, for his continued strength and guidance, and for enabling me to update our blessed nation on the strides we continue to make in science, energy, and technology. [...]

PM Says There Is No Attempt to Remove Cash from System



Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, says there is no attempt from the Government to remove cash from the system or to create a cashless mandate for Jamaicans. Speaking today (May 31) at a digital transformation forum of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) at the AC Hotel, in Kingston, Mr. Holness said that citizens will be able to choose whether they participate in the ongoing digital [...]



Public and Private-Sector Entities Endorse the Jamaica Business Gateway



Public and private-sector entities are endorsing the Jamaica Business Gateway (JBG), an online portal designed to revolutionise transactions between businesses and the Government. Speaking during the digital platform's launch at the AC Hotel by Marriott Kingston on May 17, Chairman and Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), Dr. Wayne Henry, [...]

'We Showed Them What It Meant to Be Jamaican'



The success of the Jamaica College (JC) robotics team in the recent first Tech Robotics Championship, is being hailed as a testament of the country's 'little but we tallawah' mantra. The international contest, held in Houston, Texas in April, brought together 192 student robotics teams from around the world who put their innovation, teamwork, and robotics skills to the test under the guidance of coaches [...]

Jamaicans Must Prepare to Embrace AI – Senator Hill



Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, Senator the Hon. Aubyn Hill, says Jamaicans should be prepared to embrace artificial intelligence (AI) as a new phenomenon, which, if properly managed, can be extremely useful. AI is the ability of a computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks commonly undertaken by humans. [...]

PM to Make Announcement on Digital Transformation



The Government will shortly be announcing additional steps to advance Jamaica's transition to a digital society. "In the coming weeks and days, I will be making certain announcements regarding the acceleration of Jamaica's intention to become a fully digital society," said Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness. He was speaking at the official commissioning service for three community Wi-Fi access [...]

Jamaica to Receive Funding for Cybersecurity



The Ministry of Science, Energy, and Technology will be receiving funding to strengthen Jamaica's cybersecurity framework. Portfolio Minister, Hon. Daryl Vaz, said that commencing this financial year, US\$6.5 million in loans and US\$3.5 million in grants will be provided through a project jointly funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) [...]





The Scientific Research Council

Bar Soap WORKSHOP

June 29, 2023

9:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.

Come Experience:

- The fundamentals of making cold press bar soaps
- Hands-on training to make your own soap
- Q&A session with our expert Research Scientists

Cost: **\$23,000** (inclusive of GCT)

Registration and Payment Deadline: June 26, 2023

To register, contact Deneé Gilman



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