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MSET DAILY NEWS REPORT

October 2, 2019

Seventy Net Billing Licences Issued Since January

OCTOBER 2, 2019

WRITTEN BY: TANESHA MUNDLE



PHOTO: RUDRANATH FRASER

- Seventy net billing licences have been issued to power suppliers since the start of the year, bringing to 800 the total number of licences that have been approved since the arrangement started in 2012.
- Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Hon. Fayval Williams, made the disclosure during her opening remarks at the MPC Renewable Energy Forum, held on Tuesday (October 1), at the Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston.
- Net billing is a facility that allows people to sell the excess power generated from renewable sources in accordance with a net billing licence and a contract with the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS).

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“At the policy level, we will be revising our national energy policy and subpolicies to further develop the energy sector and establish new targets, especially for renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation,” she said.

Mrs. Williams said the Ministry recognises the importance of harnessing the potential of renewable energy sources to secure Jamaica’s energy future, and as a result is always seeking new opportunities and partnerships to build the sector.

She lauded MPC Caribbean Clean Energy Limited for its investment in the renewable energy sector and for helping the country to lead the Caribbean in its renewable energy thrust, through the erection of the Paradise Solar Energy Park in Westmoreland, which is the largest in the region with a 51-megawatt solar plant.

“Our recognition of the integral role that energy plays in development makes our commitment to diversifying our energy mix with the inclusion of renewables and cleaner fuels and securing Jamaica’s energy future that much stronger,” the Minister said.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer of MPC Capital, Ulf Hollander, said that the need for cleaner energy in the island and the Caribbean at large is very obvious, adding that the potential for renewable-energy production in the region is enormous.

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Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Hon. Fayval Williams, in dialogue with Chief Executive Officer of MPC Capital, Ulf Hollander, at the MPC Renewable Energy Forum, held on Tuesday (October 1), at the Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston.

“It is a widely accepted thesis that the dependence on fossil fuel has to come down; it has to be reduced,” Mr. Hollander said.

“This region and this country, in particular, know what it means to be dependent on commodity prices, and the lasting impact it has on the economy and also on politics,” he said.

Citing Bloomberg, an international financial media, he said wind and solar energy can cover two-thirds of the global energy needs and, luckily for Jamaica, the island has a boundless supply of wind and sun.

Turning to the solar park that MPC has built in the country, which sells power to JPS at US8.5 cents per kilowatt hour, Mr. Hollander said the plant demonstrates that renewable energy can provide clean energy that can compete with conventional electricity sources.

Source: <https://jis.gov.jm/seventy-net-billing-licences-issued-since-january/>

Bidder Chosen For Schools Energy Efficiency Project

OCTOBER 2, 2019

WRITTEN BY: TANESHA MUNDLE



A bidder has been chosen for the Schools Energy Efficiency and Solar Energy Public-Private Partnership (PPP) pilot project, and is now awaiting final approval from the Cabinet.

This project is expected to reduce the electricity cost to public schools by 40 to 70 per cent.

“The Development Bank of Jamaica (DBJ) tendered this opportunity in 2018 and a preferred bidder has been identified and this is now subject to the approval of

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Cabinet,” Managing Director of the bank, Milverton Reynolds, informed at an MPC Renewable Energy Forum, held on Tuesday (October 1) at the Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston.

The energy project, which will involve the use of photovoltaic (PV) solar systems to generate cheaper electricity in 30 selected high schools across the island, is costing the Government \$120 million. The National Education Trust Limited is responsible for implementing the project.

Some of the targets under the project include complete upgrade, repair and retrofitting of roofs with solar systems at schools that have already been assessed; the payment of fees to DBJ of approximately \$15 million, and the development of a business case and Cabinet approval to proceed to the transaction stage of the PPP.

Source: <https://jis.gov.jm/bidder-chosen-for-schools-energy-efficiency-project/>

Preferred bidder selected for schools energy efficiency project

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Minister of Science, Energy and Technology, Fayval Williams, in discussion with Managing Director of the Development Bank of Jamaica, Milverton Reynolds, during the MPC Renewable Energy Forum held on October 1, 2019, at the Spanish Court Hotel in New Kingston - Contributed photo

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Source: <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20191002/preferred-bidder-selected-schools-energy-efficiency-project>

All hands on deck

Wednesday, October 02, 2019



Handel Lamey, Petrojam Limited's reliability and maintenance manager, assists Telroy Morgan, manager, strategic planning, to lift a bag laden with garbage from the coastline close to the Petrojam refinery. With the help of students from the University of Technology's Rural Society and The University of the West Indies's Engineering Society, almost 900 pounds of garbage was removed from the coastline as part of International Coastal Clean-up Day activities.

Source:

<http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/article/20191002/ARTICLE/191009964/1373>

Phytomedicine and Medical Cannabis Institute to be established in Jamaica

Wednesday, October 02, 2019



Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Audley Shaw, addressing a press conference at the ministry's St Lucia Avenue offices in New Kingston, on October 1.

KINGSTON, Jamaica — A Phytomedicine and Medical Cannabis Institute is to be established in Jamaica.

This forms part of the research partnership with Harvard International Phytomedicine and Medical Cannabis Institute.

Phytomedicine is a plant-based traditional medicinal practice that utilises various plant materials in preventive and therapeutic processes.

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The research partnership aims to explore Jamaica's vast botanical resources and their natural medicinal properties for the development of new nutraceutical and pharmaceutical products.

The Economic Growth Council and the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries will be coordinating the project to ensure that there is economic gain for all stakeholders, particularly farmers and traditional herbalists who possess decades of knowledge in plant medicine.

Speaking at a press briefing yesterday in Kingston, Minister of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, Audley Shaw, said the global phytomedicine industry is expected to reach US\$111 billion with an annual growth of 7.2 per cent.

He said with Jamaica's rich plant diversity, traditional use of medicinal plants, and advances in scientific research and technological development, the country stands to benefit from and contribute to this new and emerging field.

“Jamaica has 52 per cent of the established medicinal plants of the world. More than 85 per cent of our population still uses some form of herbs or potion to treat common illnesses, from a common cold to cancer,” the minister noted.

He lamented that Jamaica has been slow to leverage the benefits of the local herbs to the advantage of its people, commercially and financially.

“If you travel around this country, you see a lot of idle lands and you see a lot of idle hands, and we can't hold on to sugar anymore. We now have to move aggressively into diversification, and one of those areas of diversification is the phytomedicine industry,” Shaw noted.

He said Harvard University, through its Harvard Catalyst, has acknowledged the importance of plant medicine for economic empowerment.

“Jamaica was chosen to be a part of the International Phytomedicine and Medicinal Institute. With the technology and research of Harvard and the science of our herbs, we will take plant-based medicine and extracts to a new dimension,” the minister said.

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Director, Harvard Global Health Catalyst, Professor Wilfred Ngwa, said investment in research and development is crucial, as it drives economic development as well as healthcare.

“In this particular case, what is particularly unique for the ministry is that this research and development starts from the farm to the bedside,” he said.

Vice President, Economic Growth Council, Dr Sherene Smith, said development of a Phytomedicine and Medical Cannabis Institute in Jamaica will validate the country's medicinal plants in terms of safety, efficacy and dosage in their clinical use.

She added that it will also facilitate participation in joint research, utilising information and communications technology (ICT), artificial intelligence, biotechnology and informatics to patent and commercialise plants and plant extracts.

“This will, in turn, allow the agronomist and traditional herbalists to be a part of this venture, utilising indigenous knowledge to gain intellectual property rights and part ownership of patents. In this way, indigenous knowledge and resources will be scientifically validated and made medically useful, while creating jobs and increasing wealth,” she said.

Dr Smith said the Economic Growth Council recognises that research plays a key role in growth and development and this project provides the means to pull together traditional medicine and advancements made in technology to make a worthwhile contribution to the health and agricultural sectors.

“We see this as an investment in human capital that will stimulate economic growth and development,” she said.

A team from Harvard International Phytomedicine and Medical Cannabis Institute is currently in Jamaica to tour the University of the West Indies, Natural Products Institute, Biotech Research and Development Institute, the Scientific Research Council, University of Technology and Northern Caribbean University, which showcases Jamaica's work in phytomedicine research.

— JIS

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Source:

[http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/_Phytomedicine, Medical Cannabis
Institute to be established in Jamaica?profile=1228](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/latestnews/_Phytomedicine,_Medical_Cannabis_Institute_to_be_established_in_Jamaica?profile=1228)