

More Drugs for HIV/AIDS Treatment

The Government will be acquiring additional antiretroviral (ARVs) drugs for the treatment of HIV/AIDS.

Cabinet has approved the award of contracts to Hetero Drugs Limited and Matrix Laboratories Limited in the sums of US\$529,793 and US\$784,823, respectively for the supply of the drugs. Addressing yesterday's (October 21) post-Cabinet press briefing at Jamaica House, Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister with responsibility for Information, Telecommunications and Special Projects, Hon. Daryl Vaz, informed that the drugs will be partially funded from a grant from the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. "The grant is intended for the implementation of a project to consolidate existing gains while ...providing universal access to treatment, care and prevention services with special emphasis on vulnerable populations in Jamaica," Minister Vaz noted. On another matter, the Minister informed that Cabinet approved the additional sum of US\$45,809 (as at November 25, 2008) for works on phase 1 of the Montego Bay Convention Centre. This sum, the Minister explained, represented the difference between the amount, which was approved by Cabinet in December in 2008 and the sum required to cover works under the existing phase 1 contracts. The Minister informed that a Cabinet submission made by Prime Minister, Hon. Bruce Golding, noted the need for additional funding for the Montego Bay Convention Centre due to increased commodity and services costs since the signing of the original loan agreement between the Government of Jamaica and the Export-Import Bank of China on June 1, 2007.