

Kikwete wants Agri ties with Jamaica

Tanzanian President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete says he is impressed with Jamaica's agricultural research, and wants closer cooperation between both countries in that area.

"There is need for exchanging information and exchanging experience, and to use that experience for the benefit of our two peoples and two countries," Kikwete said yesterday, during a tour of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries' Bodles Research Station in Old Harbour, St Catherine. The tour formed part of the itinerary for his three-day state visit to Jamaica.

Kikwete said efforts are being made to transform the agriculture sector in his country to make peasant farming more productive.

"Our preoccupation is increasing about the use of water for our agriculture, meaning irrigation; the use of high-yielding seeds and the challenge is about its availability, and this is where the research institution comes in," he explained.

Echoed need

Agriculture Minister Dr Christopher Tufton welcomed the visiting president and his delegation for the tour, and echoed the need for cooperation.

"We're quite mindful of the fact that in Tanzania the bulk of your economic activity is in the area of agriculture," Tufton said, noting that almost 20 per cent of Jamaica's labour force is involved in agriculture.

"As a consequence, we share that important variable, and we believe that we can learn from each other."

Kikwete will leave Jamaica tomorrow for Trinidad and Tobago to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Port-of-Spain. - JIS