

JCDC Ready to go for 'Jamaica 50'

Acting Executive Director of the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission (JCDC), Delroy Gordon, says that all is in place for the staging of a spectacular programme of events in celebration of Jamaica 50th anniversary of Independence.

Activities move into high gear this weekend when the JCDC will kick off a series of colourful and high energy events that will run into Independence Day on August 6. Addressing a JIS Think Tank at the JIS's Half Way-Tree Road head office on July 5, Mr. Gordon said his team is ready to go. "We are pretty much prepared, we are in high spirits. The machinery is well oiled and we say to all Jamaicans to just put on your colours, black, green and gold and just let us come out and celebrate 50 years as a nation on a mission." Mr. Gordon promised that there will be "something for everyone" and no one will be left out. "We are seeking to cater to every age group," he said. Mr. Gordon said the nation will look and feel as if it is celebrating a special occasion, and that the JCDC is finalising a template for the decoration of town centres so that there can be uniformity across the island. In addition, there is a window dressing competition to encourage merchants and organisations to decorate their places of work and business appropriately. There will be one trophy per parish to be awarded to the winning entity. While most of the activities will be centred in Kingston, rural Jamaica will not be left out. There will be events in all parishes staged in collaboration with the local parish councils and various committees. These activities will be diverse in nature, ranging from gospel concerts to variety shows and street dances. Further, there will be large video screens mounted in parish capitals where persons can view the celebratory activities in the Corporate Area. The National Arena will be the venue for the staging of the popular Jamaica Festival Song Competition on July 7, and the Gospel Song contest on July 8. Show time is 7:00 p.m. both nights. Jamaicans will have ample opportunity to see the very best of festival this year. From July 9 to 28, there will be two shows per day inside the National Indoor Sports Centre, which will feature the top acts in the performing arts competition (music, speech, dance, drama and traditional folk form). Each night will feature a different art form and the shows will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m; and from 3:00 p.m.to 9:30 pm each day. On July 22, the Miss Jamaica Festival Queen Competition will be held at the National Indoor Sports Centre, beginning at 7:00 p.m. All JCDC events are free to the public, however, patrons must have a ticket as there are space limitations. Tickets will be available at Lime outlets across the island; Jamaica National branches, and the Music Depot, Clock Tower Plaza; Portmore Mall Pharmacy and the JCDC head office and parish offices. Visitors to the Golden Jubilee Village in the Independence Park complex from August 1 to 6, will have the opportunity to assess just how far Jamaica has journeyed since independence, as they will see exhibitions from many national institutions, government ministries, non government organisations and private sector groups, chronicling their growth. There will also be nightly entertainment, foods, art and craft displays and much more. Entertainment will run the gamut from reggae to jazz, to gospel and classical music. Young and old will have the opportunity to attend the event of their choice. The village will be opened from noon to 1:00 a.m each day and the JCDC head informed that special arrangements are being made for persons to park their vehicles at designated areas and a shuttle service will be in effect to transport them to the venue. Private Security will also be in place to complement that provided by the police to secure persons and property. On midnight on August 5, the National Anthem will be played across the country and there will be a reading of the Independence Proclamation.