

## **ST. ANN COURTHOUSES SET FOR IMPROVEMENT**

The Ministry of Justice will be undertaking rehabilitation works at the St. Ann's Bay and Claremont Resident Magistrates' courts to improve the physical facilities for members of the public and the court staff. This project is scheduled to begin at the end of this month and is expected to be completed towards the end of June 2008.

Meanwhile, the Ministry is also in the process of identifying lands in and around Ocho Rios to construct a judicial complex, to provide court services from a centralised location, in that parish.

The Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Senator the Hon. Dorothy C. Lightbourne, Q.C., said that the move to enhance the Claremont courthouse is to allow for an increase in the number of fixtures and the frequency in the use of the Claremont Courthouse. This would be especially beneficial in enhancing the efficiency of the Resident Magistrate cases for Claremont and reduce the demand in the facilities at St. Ann's Bay. The latest arrangements would, over time, contribute to the reduction of the backlog in trial cases in that parish.

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The Minister, accompanied by the Chief Justice, Her Hon. Mrs. Justice Zaila McCalla and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Justice, Mrs. Carol Palmer, made a site visit to St. Ann recently (May 16), to assess the conditions at the St. Ann's Bay Courthouse and the Claremont Courthouse. Personnel from the Property and Project Units in the Ministry were also present to provide technical assessment.

Subsequent to the assessment tour, Minister Lightbourne disclosed that the Justice Ministry and the Urban Development Corporation (UDC), are now in discussions with a view to locate land for the construction of the St. Ann Judicial Complex. The facility, when completed, will accommodate the Circuit Court, the RM Court, Traffic Court, Family Court and Petty Sessions.