

Brown Burke: JLP Cabinet good mix, but...

BY CLAUDIENNE EDWARDS Observer writer edwardsc@jamaicaobserver.com



BROWN BURKE... I would have wanted to see more women

KINGSTON Mayor Angela Brown Burke has described the new Jamaica Labour Party Cabinet as a good mix of youth and experience. But Brown Burke said that the 18-

member Cabinet announced by Prime Minister Andrew Holness on Monday would have been more interesting had there been more members of the fairer sex. A total of five women are included in the Cabinet — named more than a week after the JLP formed the Government following a dramatic victory in the February 25 General Election, winning 32 seats to the People’s National Party’s 31. The JLP had gone into the election defending a mere 21 of Parliament’s 63 seats.

“I would have wanted to see more women,” Brown Burke said at Tuesday’s monthly meeting of the Kingston and St Andrew Corporation (KSAC).

Meanwhile, Brown Burke congratulated Desmond Mckenzie — former KSAC mayor — on his appointment as local government minister, and said that many local government employees were looking forward to getting a pay increase through the income tax relief promised by Holness for

Pay as You Earn workers earning \$1.5 million and less. The tax break was a major part of Holness' campaign promises.

She said that because a one-seat margin separated the Government from the Opposition in the Lower House, "collaboration is of absolute necessity".

With Tuesday being observed as International Women's Day, Brown Burke said that there were several women in Jamaica who were "role models for the hope and possibility of our girls".

Among the role models she listed were former prime minister and now Opposition Leader Portia Simpson Miller; Chief Justice Zaila McCalla; Public Defender Arlene Harrison Henry; Director of Public Prosecutions Paula Llewelyn; and the newly appointed attorney general and Member of Parliament for St James West Central Marlene Malahoo Forte.

Although an international study shows that Jamaica tops the list of countries with the highest percentage of female managers, the mayor said she was concerned that women were still underrepresented in senior executive positions in the country.

Brown Burke also noted that women performing the same jobs as men earned 60 - 70 per cent less pay.

The End