

# Gov't Apologises for 2010 West Kingston Operations

**T**HE GOVERNMENT has formally apologised to residents of West Kingston and all Jamaicans who were affected by the operations of the security forces in May 2010, which resulted in the loss of lives and damage to property.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness delivered a statement in Parliament on December 6, in which he expressed regret for the pain and loss which occurred during the operation.

"The loss of life was never the option that the State wanted to take. The fact that lives were lost, therefore, is regrettable, is something that we are sorry for, and to start that process of healing, I believe there is ground, and room for us to make a sincere apology," the Prime Minister said.

During the 2010 security operations to capture the fugitive, Christopher 'Dudus'



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness delivers a statement in Parliament on December 6 in which he expresses regret for the pain and loss which occurred during the 2010 West Kingston Operation.

Coke, 73 civilians and a soldier were killed while other persons were detained and properties damaged and destroyed.

A Commission of Inquiry into that operation recommended financial compensation for persons

victimised by the State and that the Government issue a formal apology for the use of excessive force by the security forces. An apology was proposed as one form of redress and promoting justice as well as restoring trust and confidence in the State.

The Prime Minister said the Government has accepted the recommendations of the Commission and is leading "by extending the hand of peace, starting the process of healing, and in engineering the recovery of a country from one of violence and conflict, to one of peace, order, and the supremacy of the rule of law."

A sum of \$200 million has been approved by Cabinet as compensation to aggrieved persons who were affected by the operations of the security.

The agreed figure was put forward by a Compensation Committee, which was established to investigate all claims brought by aggrieved persons and to determine the compensation payable to injured persons and to the personal representatives of deceased persons in respect of the events of May 2010.

## NIDS Database 90 Per Cent Complete

THE CIVIL and identification database being established under the National Identification System (NIDS) is now 90 per cent complete.

**NIDS, which is scheduled for implementation in 2019, will provide a comprehensive and secure structure to enable the capture and storage of identity information for all Jamaicans.**



Project Director for the National Identification System (NIDS), Warren Vernon

Mr. Vernon said the NIDS team is engaged in developing the cyber-security strategy to deal with all of the threats and risks related to the system.

This was disclosed by Project Director for NIDS, Warren Vernon, who noted that work is advanced "in terms of defining all of the features and the requirements in order to deliver the system."

He was speaking at a town hall meeting at Emancipation Park in New Kingston on December 5.

NIDS, which is scheduled for implementation in 2019, will provide a comprehensive and secure structure to enable the capture and storage of identity information for all Jamaicans.

Under the system, each citizen will be provided with a randomised nine-digit National Identification Number (NIN), which they will have for life.

"We are also in the process of developing a plan to generate awareness, because how we use technology now, it's very clear that there are so many persons that are not aware of the various threats and risks that are out there," he noted.

Implementation of the NIDS is supported by the National Identification and Registration Bill, which was passed in both Houses of Parliament in November.

For more information, visit the website: [www.nidsfacts.com](http://www.nidsfacts.com); follow @NIDSfacts on Twitter and Instagram, NIDS Facts on Facebook; or call: 927-9941-3.

## 74 Receive PM Youth Awards for Excellence



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (5th left) stands with the recipients of the Prime Minister's Youth Awards for Excellence, at the awards ceremony held on December 6 at the Office of the Prime Minister. Sharing the moment are Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Senator the Hon. Ruel Reid (5th right) and State Minister for Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Floyd Green (4th left).

## 10-Year Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence Launched

THE GOVERNMENT has launched a 10-year National Strategic Action Plan to eliminate Gender-Based Violence (NSAP-GBV).

Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange, said the Government continues to take a collaborative approach to tackle violence against women.

**The Plan focuses on five priority areas – prevention, protection, intervention, legal procedures and protocols for data collection.**

She pointed out that earlier this year, the public was invited to make submissions to the Joint Select Committee of Parliament, adding that recommendations were made regarding proposed amendments to the Domestic Violence Act, Sexual Offences Act, Offences Against the Person Act and the Child Care and Protection Act.

"The Committee is set to reconvene shortly to review the recommendations and arrive at consensus regarding the way forward," she said.

The Plan was launched in collaboration with the Bureau of Gender Affairs – a division within the Ministry, and the High Commission of Canada.



Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Olivia Grange

The Plan focuses on five priority areas – prevention, protection, intervention, legal procedures and protocols for data collection.

It takes into account the socio-cultural background; specific needs of the victims, survivors and witnesses of violence; and the human and financial resources available to ensure sustainability and alignment with the Vision 2030 National Development Plan, National Policy for Gender Equality, and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Speaking at the launch of the Plan at the Jamaica Conference Centre in Kingston on December 6,

## House Approves First Supplementary Estimates

THE FIRST Supplementary Estimates for the 2017/18 financial year, which reflect an increase of \$89.9 billion, was approved by the House of Representatives on December 6.

Tabled in the House by Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw, on December 5, the Budget for this fiscal year was increased from \$715.6 billion to \$805.4 billion.

The Estimates show an increase in the Recurrent (housekeeping) expenses from \$493.7 billion to \$515.4



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Hon. Audley Shaw

billion, while Capital (development) spending moved from \$221.8 billion to \$290 billion.

Outlining areas which accounted for the increase, Mr. Shaw told the House during Wednesday's sitting that the Government provided a loan of US\$100 million (\$12.7 billion) to Petrojam Limited.

The Minister noted, as well, that there was an increase in non-debt expenditure of \$8.7 billion, which will serve to address a number of critical issues that have come to the fore during the financial year.

Among them is the severe structural damage to roads as a result of heavy rainfall over the past several months. A sum of \$2 billion has been allocated to the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation to undertake islandwide rehabilitation of parish council, farm and main roads.

Other areas accounting for the increase include national security issues; payment for judgement debts; and a sum of \$800 million for the Jamaica Tourist Board.

## PM Urges Junior Mayors to Help Push Local Government

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness is urging the island's Junior Mayors to use their platform to inspire more Jamaicans to support the activities of Local Government.

He gave the charge as he welcomed the youth

representatives of the island's 14 municipal corporations during a courtesy call at Jamaica House on December 6.

Appointment of the Junior Mayors was the last major activity for Local Government Month in November.

The Prime Minister noted that Local Government is an important part of the country's system of governance.

"It is Government at the grassroots, Government of the community, and it is the way in which the local aspirations of the people

can be realised. Local Government has a deep history in Jamaica, he stated.

Mr. Holness said Local Government is evolving, and certain changes have been made to the Constitution to make the process an established part of Government.

He noted, however, that it is not just the constitutional arrangements that have to change but "we have to ensure that people understand the importance of Local Government and understand the direction in which we are trying to take." As such, he is urging the Junior Mayors to help with the transformation of their communities and educate citizens about the importance of Local Government.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (back row, centre), and Local Government and Community Development Minister, Hon. Desmond McKenzie (2nd right, third row), are flanked by the recently installed Junior Mayors during a courtesy call at Jamaica House on December 6.