

Gov't Targeting "Heart-Ware" to Fight Crime

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the Government will be investing in the "heart-ware" of Jamaicans as part of the fight against crime and violence in the society.

He noted that approximately \$40 billion has been spent to strengthen the country's security architecture over the last four years, including the acquisition of vehicles, boosting communication systems, and recruiting and training members of the security forces, and the next phase of the plan to secure Jamaica will involve developing the heart-ware.

Mr. Holness, who was addressing the annual 'Heal the Family, Heal the Nation' National Day of Prayer at the Power of Faith Ministries in



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness addresses the annual 'Heal the Family, Heal the Nation' National Day of Prayer service, at the Power of Faith Ministries in Portmore, St. Catherine, on January 6.

Portmore, St. Catherine, on January 6, called on the support of the church as part of the process.

"Yes, we can make policies but we need partners, and that is why I have decided to use this platform [because]

the best partner in all of this is Jesus Christ and His institution on earth, the church.

"We have a massive army of heart surgeons, right here in the church. You have the medicine, which is the bible and the gospel. I need you to reach beyond the walls of your church and the numbers of your congregation to those men, especially those young boys, who believe that the only solution to conflict is violence," Mr. Holness urged.

The annual National Day of Prayer was hosted by the Power of Faith Ministries International Inc. and the Jamaica Umbrella Group of Churches under the theme 'We shall be victorious'.

Infrastructure to Facilitate Digital Birth Certificates 90 Percent Complete

THE IMPLEMENTATION of infrastructure that will facilitate the production of digital birth certificates for Jamaicans is now 90 per cent complete.



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

This was disclosed by Programme Director for the National Identification System (NIDS), Warren Vernon, who said the National Public Key Infrastructure (NPKI) project is expected to be completed by March, following the conclusion of certain processes.

"There are some public registration that we need to

do. We have to certify it, we have to get those NPKI auditors in and there is a process to go through," he said.

Mr. Vernon was speaking at the Joint Select Committee of Parliament on the NIDS legislation, during its meeting on January 5.

He informed that with the NPKI in place, it is also expected that by March "we'll also be in a position to launch phase one of the project, which is to allow the public to go online, request a copy of your birth certificate, a digital copy which you take anywhere in the world and they can verify it [and] tie it back to the security framework for the NPKI".

Mr. Vernon also noted that the NIDS team is currently working with Tax Administration Jamaica, the Registrar General's Department (RGD), Jamaica Post, e-Gov, and a number of other government entities, including the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information to digitise their services.

Huawei Donates 500 Tablets to Education Sector

GLOBAL PROVIDER of information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and smart devices, Huawei Technologies Company Limited, has donated 500 tablets in support of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information's 'One Laptop or Tablet Per Child' initiative.

"Huawei has heard the call and has stepped forward to help our children at this point in time when all are feeling the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic globally."

Portfolio Minister, Hon. Fayval Williams, in her remarks at the handover ceremony held on December 7 at the Ministry's National Heroes Circle location in Kingston, thanked the company for its continued support and urged



Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Fayval Williams (left), accepts a tablet from Regional Executive of Huawei Technologies, Bo Zhou, during a ceremony for the handover of 500 devices on December 7 at the Ministry's National Heroes Circle location in Kingston.

the participation of other entities in the initiative.

"We are pleased with the many companies that have come on board. Huawei has heard the call and has stepped forward to help our children at this point in time when all are feeling the

impact of the COVID-19 pandemic globally," she said.

"I have given my commitment to the Jamaican students that I will not relent until all of them have a device in their hands and are able to connect regardless of whether or not we return to

full face-to-face learning," she added, noting the Ministry's mandate to strengthen the ICT infrastructure and to enrich the learning experience for students.

China's Ambassador to Jamaica, His Excellency Tian Qi, who participated in the ceremony remotely, reiterated the important friendship between the two countries.

"China stands ready to continue to do work with Jamaica to promote exchanges and cooperation in science, technology, education, human resources and information," he noted.

Minister Williams Pleased With Measures to Facilitate Face-to-Face Classes

MINISTER OF Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Fayval Williams, says she is satisfied with the measures put in place at schools to facilitate face-to-face classes.

"I'm pleased with the care that I see. They have been careful. You can see where they have been planning for this moment of face-to-face and it gives confidence that students who are on the compounds physically are here safely," she noted.

Mrs. Williams was speaking to JIS News after a tour of three schools in the Corporate Area on January 5 to observe their adherence to the coronavirus (COVID-19) protocols.

The institutions visited were Penwood High, Seaward Primary and Junior High, and Haile Selassie High.

They are among 125 institutions that were approved for the resumption of face-to-face classes for the second term of the 2020/2021 academic year, which began on January 4.

Mrs. Williams reiterated that all students in Jamaica



Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Fayval Williams, (2nd right) engages with Seaward Primary & Junior High School student, Shardanaye Crawford (left), during her visit to the institution on January 5. Looking on (in background from left) are Education Officer, Ricardo Kennedy; Acting Regional Director, Region 1, Dasmie Kennedy; Vice Principal, Seaward Primary & Junior High School, Carol Gordon Marshall; and Principal, Arlene Thomas.

must be engaged in school, whether remotely or physically, during the pandemic.

She encouraged school administrators to have flexibility with both online and face-to-face classes.

"Schools are allowed to look at their student body and plan for the student body, in terms of allowing some classes on certain

days. They're allowed to do rotation, they're allowed to do the blended approach, because we know that all students cannot be back on the school compound at the same time," she noted.



Health Ministry on Campaign to Control Diabetes in Jamaica

THE MINISTRY of Health and Wellness has put together a number of initiatives geared towards the control of diabetes in Jamaica.

In an interview with JIS News, Director of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) at the Ministry, Dr. Nicola Skyers, said one of the main activities is to increase publicity around the prevention and management of the disease and, in a more general way, NCDs.

"We are in the process of scaling-up and developing our media campaigns to help us to get the information out to the population to increase awareness around matters such as the fact that controlling diabetes is not just about taking your medication," she stated.

"Diabetes is a lifestyle condition, and in another

couple of months, we should have a media campaign around physical activity," Dr. Skyers added.

She emphasised that weight management is important in dealing with diabetes and points out that the Ministry has launched its Food-based Dietary Guidelines.

The guidelines are expected to help people understand food groups and how to plan meals to meet the Recommended Dietary Allowance, which is the average daily level of intake that is sufficient to meet nutrient requirements. Dr. Skyers further noted that there will also be a social marketing campaign around nutrition, which will target persons with diabetes as well as the general population.

10 Judges Promoted to Higher Office



Chief Justice, the Hon. Mr. Justice Bryan Sykes (left) and President of the Court of Appeal, Hon. Mr. Justice Patrick Brooks (right), with the judges who have been appointed to higher office, at a swearing-in ceremony held at King's House in St. Andrew on January 7.