

Gov't Extends COVID-19 Prevention Measures

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness announced a three-week extension to the infection prevention and control measures, under the Disaster Risk Management Act.

Speaking in the House of Representatives on April 13, Mr. Holness said the measures that were implemented have been successful in slowing down the spread of the virus.

The measures under the Disaster Risk Management Act are as follows:

- The weekend curfew is modified to begin on Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. ending at 5:00 a.m. the next day.
- The nightly curfew from Monday to Friday of 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. the next day has been extended until 5:00 a.m. May 5, 2021.
- The maximum number of individuals who may be physically present to facilitate worship has been increased to 30 persons effective April 14, 2021.
- All travellers are required to present a negative COVID-19 test conducted within three days of travel, and self-quarantine for 14 days after arrival.

- The travel ban applicable to the United Kingdom will continue until April 30, 2021.
- For South American countries of Brazil, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Argentina, and Paraguay, the travel ban has been extended to May 4, 2021.
- All other measures which remain the same have been extended to May 4, 2021.
- Persons 60 years and over are required to stay at home.
- Persons in the public sector are required to work from home, and employers in the private sector should allow all persons who can work from home to do so.
- The gathering limit remains at 10 persons.
- Social events, handing over ceremonies, launches, ground breakings, and other such events remain prohibited.
- Market and vending operations in public arcades and public transportation centres will open one hour after the end of the curfew and close one hour before the start of the curfew.
- Motor cars that provide public transportation are to have one passenger less than is allowed by the licence.
- There should be no face-to-face instructions in all



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness speaks in the House of Representatives on April 13.

primary and secondary schools, including students sitting exit examinations. These students are, however, permitted to sit physical exams at school when those exams are due.

- Funeral services are not permitted.
- Burials are permitted from Monday to Friday between 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for 30 minutes with 15 persons, including 10 mourners,

- clergy and gravediggers.
- Marriage ceremonies should have no more than 15 persons.
- Beaches and rivers not under organised management and control will remain closed.
- Zoos, parks, gyms, attractions and bars are subjected to the existing restrictions and must close at designated times.
- The ban on events remains.

Jamaica to Receive Another 55,000 Doses of Vaccine Through COVAX

JAMAICA IS set to receive a shipment of 55,000 doses of vaccine shortly, under the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) facility.

The arrival of the shipment will facilitate the continuation of the islandwide vaccination blitz events to help in the fight against the virus.

Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, made the disclosure during the weekly COVID Conversations virtual press conference on April 14.

“The next blitz would have to be influenced by another shipment, which we anticipate we will get in a week under the COVAX pro-

gramme, which we had earlier announced – some 55,000 doses [are] to come in,” he said.

The blitz events aim to get as many Jamaicans as possible inoculated with the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Jamaica is among at least seven countries that are slated to receive nearly 2.3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines through COVAX.

The facility is designed to accelerate equitable access by countries globally to appropriate safe and efficacious vaccines.

Jamaica received its first shipment of vaccines procured through COVAX in March.



Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton

Prepare for Digital Currency – Dr. Clarke

MINISTER OF Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, is encouraging businesses to prepare for digital currency, which is expected to be launched in 2022 by the Bank of Jamaica.

Dr. Clarke was speaking at the Jamaica Customer Service Association Leadership Forum and Service Excellence Webinar on April 14.

“I would charge you, as leaders of customer service in Jamaica, to make sure that your enterprises are among the first to be equipped with the ability to accept this new form of payment,” the Minister said.

“I encourage you to invest in the platforms that are necessary for this kind of innovation, so you can stay ahead of the curve and deliver that superior experience to your customer,” Dr. Clarke added.

He highlighted that the central bank digital currency



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke

is a significant aspect of the customer service experience and will allow businesses to not only reach and attract new customers but also retain existing ones.

With this major benefit to commerce and business, the Finance Minister said he is anticipating the innovation of businesses as they take advantage of this new payment

methodology and revolutionise the commercial space in Jamaica.

The Ministry of Finance and the Public Service is facilitating the framework for amendments to the Bank of Jamaica Act to make the central bank the sole and exclusive issuer of digital currency.

The pilot for the central bank digital currency will take place in the 2021 calendar year.

CHEC to Carry Out Montego Bay Perimeter Road Project

THE MINISTRY of Economic Growth and Job Creation has entered into a contractual agreement with the China Harbour Engineering Company Limited (CHEC) for the entity to carry out the works under the Montego Bay Perimeter Road Project.

The US\$220 million design build contract also involves Barnett Street/West Green Avenue upgrading and work on the Long Hill Bypass.

Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Fayval Williams, who made the announcement during a virtual post-Cabinet press briefing on April 14, informed that Cabinet has given approval for CHEC to be the main contractor for the implementation of the project.

The objective is to create a safe and reliable alternative route for motorists travelling across and within Montego

Bay, which will result in less congestion within the city and open up new lands to facilitate structured developments.

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Beneficiaries Receive Backyard Gardening Kits



Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Floyd Green (right), presents a backyard garden kit to Brithany Thomas, at the Twickenham Industries Training Centre in St. Catherine on April 15. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in collaboration with the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) has embarked on a “Backyard Garden Kit” initiative to assist residents to grow vegetables and herbs in small spaces in their backyards. Some thirteen beneficiaries received the kits.



Minister of Education, Youth and Information, Hon. Fayval Williams, addresses a virtual post-Cabinet press briefing on April 14.

In the meantime, Minister Williams informed that Cabinet also gave approval for the reassignment of the operations for the certification of drivers and the oversight of the repair and maintenance of Government vehicles from the National Works Agency (NWA) to the Island Traffic Authority.

“This better aligns with the capabilities of the Island Traffic Authority and allows the NWA to focus mainly on road works and other similar infrastructural activities,” she said.

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