

SOEs Provide for Better Use of Resources - PM

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the States of Public Emergency (SOEs) provide for a better use of resources to fight crime.

"What the SOE does is to give us the ability to have the police force and the military deployed. People will say 'well, you can deploy the police and the military generally'. The difference with the SOE is that the military is also able to deploy on its own," Mr. Holness said.

"The military operates on a different tempo than the police and so their deployment can be more intense and more long-term, and that gives us a multiplying effect of the security forces. So, we use the SOEs for that reason as well, when we need more

resources to be injected into an area," he added.

The Prime Minister was speaking to the media, following a tour of the parish of Westmoreland on November 18.

The SOEs have been declared in St. Andrew South, Kingston West, Kingston Central, and Kingston East in the Corporate Area, and St. James, Hanover, and Westmoreland.

Mr. Holness noted that, in the communities where the SOEs have been declared, "you would see a dampening effect [on crime], except in Westmoreland."

"We have to invest more resources here, spend more time here to bring that problem under control," he stated.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Holness expressed his condolences to Mabel Forbes,



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness consoles the mother of Trainee Constable, Duvaughn Brown who was killed on November 17.

the mother of police trainee, Constable Duvaughn Brown, who was killed recently.

He said every effort will be made to provide the necessary assistance needed.

New COVID-19 Measures now in Effect

THE NEW COVID-19 measures announced by Prime Minister, the Most Hon. Andrew Holness are now in effect.

The new measures will remain in effect for a three-week period ending December 9, 2021.

Speaking in the House of Representatives on November 16, Mr. Holness said the changes represent the start of a cautious, gradual, and controlled approach towards getting the economy back to full productive capacity.

The new measures are as follows:

- The curfew hours will be from 9:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. daily
- The general public gathering limit remains at 10 persons.
- The limit on the number of persons in attendance at places of worship has increased from the current limit of 50 to 100 persons.
- The number of persons permitted to physically attend a wedding has increased from 50 to 100.
- The limit on persons physically attending annual or extraordinary general meetings has increased from 50 to 100.
- Physical attendance at events hosted by public entities will continue to be limited to a maximum of 50 persons. These are to be controlled functions by invitation only and persons attending will be required to be fully vaccinated.
- The limit on the number of persons at a burial has been increased



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness

from 15 to 20 to align with the limit for funeral services. Burials are permitted Monday to Friday between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Memorial services, that is services without the remains in church, can be up to 100 persons subject to the size of the church.

- The requirement for all travellers to present a negative COVID-19 test conducted within three days of travel remains in place, as does the requirement to self-quarantine for 14 days after arrival for persons who are not fully vaccinated.
- Fully vaccinated persons who obtain a PCR test as their pre-test prior to travel will not be required to conduct another PCR test after arrival to be released from quarantine.
- However, if fully vaccinated travellers do an antigen test prior to arrival, they would still be required to either quarantine for eight days or do a PCR test in Jamaica to be released from quarantine.

PM Urges Parents to Get Children Vaccinated

THE MOST Hon. Andrew Holness is renewing the call for parents and guardians of children 12 years and older, to take them to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

"There is one vaccine so far that has been approved for children 12-18 years old and that's the Pfizer vaccine. We encourage parents to allow their children, to give approval for their children, to take the vaccine," Mr. Holness said.

He was speaking to journalists during a tour of a vaccination site at the Manning's School in Savanna-la-Mar, Westmoreland on November 18.

The Prime Minister also appealed to Jamaicans to take any of the three vaccines that

are available to them at vaccination sites across the island.

Mr. Holness said that all the vaccines approved by the World Health Organization are "safe and effective" and persons should no longer be apprehensive about getting inoculated.

"Delay could mean danger and I would encourage those who are waiting to stop the procrastination. We have been vaccinating on a wide-scale basis since August [and] we are closing out the year now," he pointed out, adding that getting the jab means protection against COVID-19.

"This is the way for us to return to normalcy," the Prime Minister added.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right), conversing with Medical Officer of Health for Westmoreland, Dr. Marcia Graham (left) during a tour of a vaccination site at the Manning's School in Savannah-la-Mar, Westmoreland on November 18.

Contract Signed to Complete Rehabilitation Work at CRH

THE MINISTRY of Health and Wellness has signed a contract with construction firm M and M Jamaica Limited, for the completion of the second to last phase of rehabilitation work on the Cornwall Regional Hospital (CRH) in St. James.

The contract was signed during a ceremony held at Sandals Inn in St. James on November 18.

Portfolio Minister, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, in his address, informed that funding for this phase of the project is estimated at \$1.7 billion.

The Minister, who admitted that the rehabilitation of the Type A facility has been a "consistent source of discontent", noted that repair of the roof and the structure

"We had to change course several times, but I am hoping that this particular course will be the [one] that takes us to completion and will end the season of discontent that still lingers," Dr. Tufton said.



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

tent that still lingers," Dr. Tufton said.

He said there is a "clear path, a definition of work" that is in place that the contractor is aware of, and there is "no ambiguity" around that.

Dr. Tufton added that work for this phase of the

project is expected to begin in short order.

"We are running into Christmas, but... if it's even the scaffolding and the mesh around the building, we will try and do something before Christmas, because I want January morning to be serious

business, if not before," he said.

10,000 Families to Benefit From US\$1.085M World Food Programme Grant



Minister of Labour and Social Security, Hon. Karl Samuda (left), is presented with a symbolic US\$1.085-million cheque by Head of Office at the United Nation's World Food Programme, Regis Chapman, during a handover ceremony at the New Kingston offices of the National Insurance Fund on November 16. The funds will support selected poor families in Jamaica that have been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

IMF Predicts Strong Rebound for Jamaica's Economy

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund (IMF) is projecting that Jamaica's economy will rebound from the fallout caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to record growth of 8.25 per cent for the fiscal year 2021/22, moderating to 3.5 per cent in 2022/23.

In a statement on November 17, following an IMF 2021 Staff Article IV Mission Consultation for Jamaica, the Fund indicated that the availability of pre-COVID-19 buffers built up by the Government, coupled with the calibrated policy response

through an ambitious reform programme and strengthened oversight of the financial system, ensured the pandemic-related shock was not followed by a fiscal, financial, or balance of payment crisis.

"Tourism has rebounded to near 70 per cent of the

pre-crisis levels, despite two COVID-19 waves this year, and the other sectors have picked up as well. Real GDP in [the second quarter of] 2021 was 14.2 per cent higher than the same quarter a year earlier," the IMF statement indicated.

The Fund pointed out that the third COVID-19 wave is abating and the Government's vaccination programme has "picked up pace", with one million people having now received at least one dose.

The IMF also emphasised that as the pandemic

recedes and recovery advances, Jamaica should restart debt reduction and rebuild buffers, given the country's high susceptibility to external shocks and risks to debt sustainability.

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