

JCF Targets 1,300 Recruits for 2022/2023

THE GOVERNMENT has embarked on a sustained recruitment drive to increase the Jamaica Constabulary Force's (JCF) membership to a level that is appropriate for the size of Jamaica's population.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness noted that approximately 1,260 police personnel were recruited and trained over the 2021/22 fiscal year with a target of 1,300 recruits for 2022/23. This brings the Force's total membership to 15,000.

He said the objective is to build the JCF's capacity to effectively combat crime in the society.

"We have improved and expanded our training capabilities, and we have put in place a very robust system of attracting persons to the ranks of the JCF," he pointed out.

The Prime Minister added that "we have been building the capacity and capabilities of the JCF to contend with and respond to all threats – internal, external, real or



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre) presents Woman Constable Mitcheika Bryan, with the award for Highest Mark Obtained during the Passing Out Parade and Awards Ceremony at the National Police College of Jamaica (NPCJ) in Twickenham Park, St. Catherine on September 14. At left is Police Inspector Dave Foreman.

hypothetical, to ensure that we can give our citizens that sense of security."

Mr. Holness was speaking at the passing Out Parade and Awards Ceremony for the 328 new constables who graduated from the National Police College of Jamaica (NPCJ) in

Twickenham Park, St. Catherine, on September 14.

Noting that criminality and violence are rooted in social, educational, and familial issues, Prime Minister Holness said the entire society must be mobilised to address this "public health emergency".

"In the coming months, you will see certain measures put in place to support the law enforcement efforts to treat with violence," he indicated.

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Community Interventions to Identify Operation Birthright Beneficiaries

A SERIES of community interventions will be undertaken to identify persons who qualify for free birth certificates under Operation Birthright.

Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Floyd Green, said teams from the National Identification System (NIDS) Project and the Registrar General's Department (RGD) will go into areas across the island, to sign-up persons who fit the criteria for support.

"We will also be working with our young people through the National Youth Parliament, and they are going to be helping us to coordinate community engagements to identify these persons, so that we really reach our goal of having 11,000 persons reached," Mr. Green said.

He noted further that "we will be taking a deliberate approach to work with the Jamaica Council

for Persons with Disabilities (JCPD) to identify persons within that community who are without a birth certificate'.

The Minister was speaking in the House of Representatives on September 14.

At least 11,000 undocumented Jamaicans, who earn less than \$37,000 monthly, will be provided with their birth certificates free of cost under Operation Birthright.

A sum of US\$350,000 has been earmarked to fund the programme through NIDS.

Persons can access and download the application form for the programme at www.nids-facts.com and submit the completed document to any RGD office islandwide for processing.

The RGD will also be printing and distributing the form at its branch offices.

MOEY moves to implement initiatives for recovery of Education Sector

THE 2022/23 academic year will see the full implementation of the Ministry of Education and Youth's initiatives, to help strengthen recovery of the sector.

Addressing the official launch of the new school year at the Cedar Grove Academy, in St. Catherine, on September 13, Portfolio Minister, Hon. Fayval Williams, said that among the initiatives underway are the Coding in Schools and Sixth Form Pathways Programmes.

Additionally, she pointed out that the Civics Education Curriculum and Character Education Programme are to be launched shortly.

"The National School Leaving Certificate programme will also be implemented this year. This is in keeping with our vision that all students leaving the secondary level will have the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be successful in the current and future



Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams (second right), speaks with student from Newell High School in St. Elizabeth, Sanjea Ward (left), about his hydroponics station. Looking on are State Minister in the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Hon. Alando Terrelonge (right), and Principal (Acting) at the school, Andrew Morris. They were at the official launch of the 2022/23 academic year, held at Cedar Grove Academy in St. Catherine.

economies, and their personal lives," she noted.

Mrs. Williams said she remains optimistic that "this will be a good year for the

education of our young people at all levels of the system".

She argued that the Ministry's efforts will reflect the theme for the new aca-

demical year: 'Building Resilience; Strengthening Recovery and Achieving Excellence'.

"We know there are some hurdles to clear, but we are also happy to note that students and teachers have returned to the classrooms focused and determined to get on with the business of teaching and learning," the Minister said.



Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Floyd Green

Students Must not be Denied Access to School due to Unpaid Fees – PM

STUDENTS MUST not be denied access to classrooms and school resources because of unpaid fees, says Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness.

Speaking at a recent education townhall meeting at Jamaica College in St. Andrew, the Prime Minister said some public schools are charging parents "exorbitant fees which are exclusionary".

"If we are truly serious about creating this equal society, then how can we punish a child who, by virtue of their household income, is unable to meet the school fee of the school in which the State places them?" he asked rhetorically.

Mr. Holness said students from low-income households should be able to attend school without feeling discrim-



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) addressing a recent education townhall meeting held at Jamaica College. Looking on is Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams.

inated against due to their guardian's "ability or inability to pay".

"It so happens that there is a high correlation between [student] performance and household income. But if we are to break that, then we need to ensure that all our children have access to a high-quality education," he pointed out.

For her part, Minister of Education and Youth, Hon. Fayval Williams, noted that some schools are charging fees that are "burdensome to the majority of parents".

"We cannot make the Government-sponsored education so out of reach of our children," Minister Williams stressed.

Justice Ministry Embarks on Sensitisation Drive for all ADR Programmes

THE MINISTRY of Justice is embarking on a major sensitisation drive with all its Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) programmes, offered free of cost to the public.

Portfolio Minister, Hon. Delroy Chuck, made the disclosure during the sitting of the House of Representatives, on September 13.

ADR programmes include restorative justice, child diversion programme and mediation.

Mr. Chuck informed that in addition to the success in Restorative Justice matters, the Victim Services Division has counselled 13,674 new and follow-up clients for the period January to December 2021.

For the period January to July 2022, a total of 8,025 new and follow-up clients have been seen.

"The Child Diversion Programme is steadily pick-



Minister of Justice, Hon. Delroy Chuck, speaks in the House of Representatives on September 13.

ing up steam and we continue to encourage the courts and the police to refer children to the programme. We have excellent treatment plans for the children in the programme, administered by over 23 of the best counselling and clinical psychologists across the island," Mr. Chuck said.

The Ministry is also conducting training to increase the number of Restorative Justice facilitators, in order that every parish will have

trained personnel in restorative justice principles and to be available for restorative justice circles.

Restorative justice circles are the mechanisms that enable parties to meet and settle their conflicts.

"It is important that restorative justice should be available in every corner of Jamaica and this successful mechanism should not only be known but should be utilised," Mr. Chuck said.

Prime Minister Signs Condolence Book



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) signs the Condolence Book opened at King's House for Her Majesty The Queen. Observing is wife of the Prime Minister and Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Most Hon. Juliet Holness. Both officials signed the book on September 12.

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