

Government Commits to Transparency regarding Activities at SSL

MINISTER OF FINANCE and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, has given the commitment of full transparency into alleged fraudulent activities at Stocks and Securities Limited (SSL).

In a statement issued on January 19, Dr. Clarke also assured the public of full disclosure around the Financial Services Commission (FSC) and its role and decisions on the matter.

The Government empathises with all investors who have been impacted

He said the investigative authorities such as the Financial Investigations Division (FID) and the Fraud Squad have operational independence to pursue this investigation, wherever it may lead.



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

"There will be full transparency. No stone will be left unturned in unearthing exactly how funds were allegedly

stolen, who benefited from such theft, and who organised and collaborated in this," Dr. Clarke pledged.

"The probe will also seek to identify whether assets have been acquired with the proceeds of this fraud. If and when such assets are identified, all legal steps will be taken to restrain these assets with the intention of full forfeiture," he noted.

The Minister called for patience and understanding, even while there is need to have the investigations done in a speedy manner, noting that complexities will arise from the long period over which the alleged fraud was perpetrated.

Meanwhile, Dr. Clarke said preliminary updates show that a number of elderly investors are among those defrauded in the SSL matter.

He said the Government empathises with all investors who have been impacted.

National Health Fund Pays \$6.41B in Subsidy for 2021/22

NATIONAL HEALTH Fund (NHF) approved subsidy payments of \$6.41 billion for more than 4.3 million claims made in the 2021/22 fiscal year.

The statistics were provided during a press conference at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston on January 17 to provide details of increases to NHFCard Benefits.

Five conditions accounted for 78 per cent of the total NHFCard subsidy payments made over the period.

These are diabetes, which represented 30 per cent of the total subsidy, followed by hypertension, 24 per cent; high cholesterol, 11.3 per cent; prostate cancer, seven per cent; and glaucoma, six per cent.

For the 2021/22 fiscal year, the total enrolment on the Individual Benefits Programme grew by 42 per cent, ending the year with 720,272 enrollees on the NHFCard Programme and with approximately 350,000 active beneficiaries.

Minister of Health and Wellness, Dr. the Hon. Christopher Tufton, in noting the figures, charged the NHF to take a "greater advocacy"



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

role in encouraging persons to take personal responsibility for their own health.

The NHF's expanded support will improve access to healthcare for the 350,000 active beneficiaries of the NHFCard and the more than 21,000 beneficiaries of the Jamaica Drug for the Elderly Programme (JADEP).

Eight conditions on the NHFCard will see increases in subsidies and new drugs will be added, including for JADEP benefits.

The prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test will be made available for all male beneficiaries 40 years and older.

Health System Receives Hygiene Supplies

THE PUBLIC health system has received a donation of hygiene and sanitisation supplies valued at \$10.5 million from technology company Konnex Services Limited.

The items, which include electrostatic sprayers, sanitisers and sanitiser dispensers, sanitiser mats, and hygiene supplies, will be distributed to 26 hospitals to aid in the fight against viral and bacterial infections.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness and Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Hon. Juliet Cuthbert Flynn, were presented with the supplies by Founder and Managing Director of Konnex Services Limited, Dean Nevers, during a ceremony in the Banquet Hall, Office of the Prime Minister, on January 18.

Prime Minister Holness expressed gratitude for the donation.

"I want to commend you, Sir, and your company for taking a very nationalistic approach, looking at what you can do to better Jamaica and for being a very good corporate citizen. You are a



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (right) looks at the contents of a bag containing sanitisation and hygiene supplies, during the handover of items at the Banquet Hall, Office of the Prime Minister on January 18. Sharing the moment (from left) are Founder and Managing Director, Konnex Services Limited, Dean Nevers; Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Wellness, Hon. Juliet Cuthbert Flynn; and Operations Manager, Konnex Services Limited, Kerrie-Anne Gray.

perfect example of an enlightened businessman who is fulfilling his corporate social responsibility," he said.

Prime Minister Holness encouraged other corporate entities to give back to the

country. "This is a good look for Konnex and, indeed, Jamaica's healthcare system is... grateful," he added.

State Minister, Mrs. Cuthbert Flynn, said the donation represents another

demonstration of public-private partnership in action.

For his part, Mr. Nevers said the donation aims to support disinfecting and sanitising needs in the healthcare system.

Road Repairs Valued at \$415M Being Programmed for Manchester Southern

REPAIRS BEING programmed for two roads in the constituency of Manchester Southern will cost an estimated \$415 million.

These are the Porus to Red Berry road, which will cost \$104 million, and the Newport to Pusey Hill road, to be done at a cost \$311 million.

The estimates were provided by Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Everal Warmington, who inspected the damaged roads during a tour of sections of the constituency on January 18.

He was accompanied by Member of Parliament Robert Chin, and the National Works Agency (NWA) officials.

Mr. Warmington advised that work was initiated on several road infrastructure projects in the constituency.

These include Pusey Hill to Restore, \$35.9 million; Alligator Pond to Guts River, \$38 million; Porus and Bussel Lane, \$20 million; Downs to Alligator Pond, \$20 million; and Cross Keys to Cocoa Walk, \$20 million.



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Hon. Everal Warmington

The Minister indicated that other road restoration projects will be undertaken throughout the constituency, noting that discussions will be held with the NWA regarding estimates of these undertakings.

For his part, Mr. Chin said he was appreciative of the fact that the Minister was able to get a first-hand view of the roads, to make an assessment, adding that "I'm looking forward to good results, moving forward".

JCF Gets Handsets and Handheld Printers for Ticketing System

THE MINISTRY of National Security has handed over 750 Traffic Ticket Management System (TTMS) handsets and 750 mobile handheld printers to the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

This is the first instalment of devices towards nationwide implementation of the fully digitised ticketing system.

The ceremony was held on January 19, at the Office of the Commissioner of Police in St. Andrew.

Smart android devices and portable printers are to be used to facilitate the electronic issuance of traffic tickets and allow for electronic recording of tickets.

This will enable police officers to reference driver and vehicle information, including ticket history, outstanding tickets, and warrants.

In his address, National Security Minister, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, said the TTMS replaces the yellow ticket book, which was inefficient and prone to errors.

The initiative was piloted in Kingston and St. Andrew



Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang (right), inspects a Traffic Ticket Management System (TTMS) handset at a handover ceremony held at the Office of the Commissioner of Police on January 19. Others (from left) are Commissioner of Police, Major General Antony Anderson; Minister of State in the Ministry, Hon. Zavia Mayne; Senior Director, Major Technology Transformation Branch in the Ministry, Emil Holgate and Woman Constable, Morata Murdoch.

between January 1 and March 31, 2022 with 70 devices and yielded a 90 per cent error reduction.

"This sends the signal that the pilot worked and worked well. We are now going to execute. We are going to give enough police officers

to take it islandwide," Dr. Chang informed.

The TTMS is a centralised, web-based platform designed to improve traffic ticket management from the point of issuance to either payment of the fines at tax offices or adjudication in court.

All traffic tickets issued with the devices will instantly be uploaded to a centralised database, which is accessible to the JCF, the traffic courts, and all other government agencies.

For more JIS News visit www.jis.gov.jm

RADA Receives Six Tractors Valued at \$49.7million



Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Parnell Charles Jr. (right), presents the keys for six tractors that were handed over to the Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), to St. Catherine Parish Manager, Ruth Barrett (centre), at the Agro-Investment Corporation on Spanish Town Road in Kingston, on January 17. Observing (at left) is State Minister in the Ministry, Hon. Franklin Witter.