

Gov't Strengthening the National Security Architecture

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the Government has been taking firm and deliberate steps to harden the national security architecture and ensure that the country does not become a haven for organised criminal groups.

"This is so that a drug cartel somewhere or a crime syndicate somewhere does not have uncontested access to use Jamaica as a transshipment hub," Mr. Holness noted.

He said that once the loopholes are closed "you will begin to see, over time, significant reduction in the street-level crime that the average person experiences".

He was speaking at a national security seminar hosted by the Office of the National Security Advisor, at the AC Hotel in Kingston on January 12.

The Prime Minister informed that the structure of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) has been strengthened, while the Ja-



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness addressing a national security seminar hosted by the Office of the National Security Advisor, at the AC Hotel in Kingston, on January 12.

maica Defence Force (JDF) has been undergoing structural reform.

"We are also building the capacity of the Major Organised Crime & Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA)," he said, noting that the entity is "emerging very nicely as a strong, robust law-enforcement and investigative

agency to tackle high-level crime and corruption".

Mr. Holness further noted that the Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA) and the Passport, Immigration & Citizenship Agency (PICA) are being modernised to assist crime-fighting.

In addition, he said that the Firearm Licensing Authority

(FLA) has been strengthened, so that legal weapons are properly regulated.

He further mentioned the strengthening of the maritime space, with investments in offshore/inshore patrol vessels; aircraft, including new helicopters to assist in emergency response.

Pay Your Tickets Now! – Dr. Chang

MOTORISTS ARE again being implored to settle outstanding traffic tickets ahead of February 1, 2023, when the new Road Traffic Act and Regulations take effect.

The Government's end-to-end digitised ticketing system will also be implemented on that date.

"You will not be able to hide from being held accountable. Pay your tickets now," implored National Security Minister, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang in a statement in the House of Representatives on January 10.

"Motorists must be mindful that as of February 1, 2023, traffic enforcement will be efficiently managed by the traffic ticket management system, and rogue motorists will not escape prosecution," he said.

"All information will be readily available to the police

officers, who will be outfitted with either a smart-check application in their vehicles or the hand-held devices. Indisciplined motorists must remember that when they attend court they are at the

discretion of the judge," the Minister pointed out.

In December, Cabinet arrived at a decision that if motorists paid off their outstanding traffic tickets by the end of January 2023, demerit

points will be expunged upon the implementation of the new Act. This applies to tickets accrued after February 1, 2018.

"Take advantage of this window of opportunity that has been provided by the Government and pay up your outstanding tickets," Dr. Chang said, while informing that in 2022, some 720,000 tickets were issued by the police.



Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang

NIDS Draft Regulations Tabled in the House of Representatives

DRAFT REGULATIONS governing implementation of the National Identification System (NIDS) were laid in the House of Representatives on January 10.

The Regulations were tabled by Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister, Hon. Floyd Green.

Four drafts of the Regulations were tabled in the Lower House, including the National Identification and Registration Regulations, 2023, which outlines the practicalities regarding the application, enrolment, cancellation, and renewal of the identification card.

The National Identification and Registration (Information Security) Regulations, 2023, were also tabled.

Mr. Green said these go into detail in treating with issues such as security standards, processes, and practices that the National

Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) will be expected to abide by.

The National Identification and Registration (Assignment of National Identification Numbers) Regulations, 2023, and the National Identification and Registration (Appeal Tribunal) Regulations, 2023, were also laid in the House.

Copies of the Regulations will be uploaded to the NIDS website at <https://www.nids-facts.com>.

Members of the public have until February 21 to make submissions.



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

"The NIDS will provide a safe and reliable means for persons to prove their identity."

The NIDS, when implemented, will provide a safe, convenient, and reliable means for persons to prove their identity while aiding in furthering the digitalisation of Government, which is expected to reduce bureaucracy and encourage public-sector efficiency and accountability.

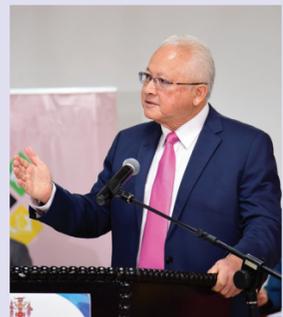
Mr. Green said NIDS is intended to make it easier for persons to do business in Jamaica.

CAD\$12M Boost for Jamaica's Justice System

JAMAICA HAS received a CAD\$12-million boost from longstanding international partner, Canada, through the newly launched Social Justice (So-JUST) Project.

The seven-year initiative, which runs from 2021 to 2028, aims to facilitate a more rights-based and gender-sensitive justice system that yields equitable outcomes for all Jamaicans.

So-JUST is intended to integrate the four pillars of social justice – equity, access, participation, and rights.



Minister of Justice, Hon. Delroy Chuck, addresses the launch of the Social Justice (So-JUST) Project at the Ministry's offices in Kingston, on January 12.

"The project is designed to benefit the most disadvantaged users of justice services."

It will focus specifically on enhancing the rights of and access to justice for women, girls, people with disabilities, and residents of rural and vulnerable communities.

The project is designed to directly benefit the poorest and most disadvantaged users of justice services, in particular survivors of gender-based violence.

Speaking at the ceremony held at the Justice Ministry's offices in Kingston on

January 12, Portfolio Minister, Hon. Delroy Chuck thanked the Canadian Government for supporting the project, emphasising that, "Jamaica must respond by becoming a peaceful, safe and secure society".

For her part, High Commissioner of Canada to Jamaica, Her Excellency Emina Tudakovic, said Canada is "honoured to be associated with the justice reform process in the Caribbean", and assured that the country "remains committed to supporting stakeholders as they seek a more equitable, efficient and responsive justice system for all".

The So-JUST Project is being implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in partnership with the Justice Ministry and the Office of the Chief Justice, with funding from Global Affairs Canada.

Residents of Mocho Clarendon Now Have Internet Access



Minister without Portfolio in the Office of the Prime Minister with Responsibility for Information and Member of Parliament for Clarendon North Central, Hon. Robert Morgan (centre), and Chief Executive Officer, Universal Service Fund (USF), Daniel Dawes (right), are joined by students of Brixton Hill Primary, Mocho Primary, and Lennon High Schools, during the launch of the community wi-fi hotspot in Mocho Square, Clarendon, on January 11.

Jamaica on Course to Generate Over US\$4B in Record Tourism Earnings

JAMAICA'S TOURISM sector continues to rebound strongly from the COVID-19 pandemic-induced economic fallout, generating earnings of US\$3.64 billion in 2022.

Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, made this disclosure on January 10, during the sitting of the House of Representatives.

"We ended the year equalling the record-breaking earnings of tourism of US\$3.64 billion, and the [2022/23] fiscal year, which I will report on when we make our [2023/24] budget presentation, is going to show US\$4.2 billion earnings in tourism, which would be US\$500 million more than 2019, which is the best year in our history," Mr. Bartlett said.



Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett

He added that the 2022/23 winter season has, so far, "started with a bang", with January's figures, to date, showing a 463 per cent increase over last year and 29 percentage points growth over 2019.

Regarding the tourism pension scheme, Mr. Bartlett said nearly 8,000 workers are now contributing to the plan, generating savings of \$350 million.

He indicated that the scheme is on track to reach 10,000 members during the current winter season.

"The potential for this pension programme is to have over 350,000 members, and that savings will bring billions of dollars, which will now become a pool of affordable funds for capital development and on-lending for various other investment projects," Mr. Bartlett said.

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