

# Traffic Fines Aim to Deter Bad Behaviour – PM

PRIME MINISTER the Most Hon. Andrew Holness says the provision of stiffer monetary penalties for breaches under the Road Traffic Act and Regulations, is aimed at discouraging bad behaviour on the roads and keeping people safe.

He said it is not designed as a revenue measure.

“We have no interest in trying to collect revenue on bad behaviour. It is to prevent bad behaviour and that must be said,” he pointed out.

“So, taking careful note of this argument being presented, that the fines are too high, that is effectively to say, ‘we want lower fines so that we can pay them and continue to breach’,” Mr. Holness argued.

“The idea of the high fines is to say to you, don’t breach.

We’re not interested in the money; we’re interested in your safety,” he stressed.

The Prime Minister was addressing a meeting of the National Road Safety Council (NRSC) held at the Office of the Prime Minister on February 9.

Among the monetary penalties are \$25,000 for failure to yield the right of way to an emergency vehicle, \$10,000 fine for using a wireless communication device while driving as well as smoking marijuana while attempting to or driving.

Drivers of motorcars and cycles whose muffler systems exceed 85 decibels will attract a fine of \$10,000, while motorcyclists will be fined \$10,000 for doing a ‘wheelie’ on roads.



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness

## Police Report 31 Per Cent Drop in Major Crimes

THE POLICE are reporting a 31 per cent decline in all major crimes since the start of the year with murders down by 34 per cent over the corresponding period of 2022.

Commissioner of Police, Major General Antony Anderson, who provided the statistics at a digital press briefing on February 7, said that shootings are down by 26 per cent, rapes by 44 per cent, and break-ins, seven per cent.

He said that gang conflicts accounted for 65 per cent of all murders committed during the period.

“We note the significant number of murders from interpersonal conflicts impacting police divisions and we renew our appeal to citizens – if you are aware of a domestic

dispute or other interpersonal conflict, report it to the police so we can intervene,” Major General Anderson urged.

Turning to other matters, the Police Commissioner said that the process of boosting the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) is ongoing.

He informed that the target of adding more than 1,200 additional members to the organisation by the end of the financial year is moving apace and invited young persons who want to make a positive impact on the society to apply to join the force.

In addition, he said the fleet of motorcycles was recently boosted with disbursements to St. Catherine North, St. Andrew North, St. Elizabeth, and St. James.



Police Commissioner, Major General Antony Anderson

## Gov’t Adjusts Child Restraint Requirement

THE GOVERNMENT is amending the provision regarding the use of child restraint systems under the new road traffic laws.

Minister of Transport and Mining, Hon. Audley Shaw, informed that a regulation is to be inserted making reference to the type of child restraint required for the conveyance of children based on age and size in different types of vehicles.

“The child seat requirement will be a table added to the 13th schedule to set out what is required for different categories of vehicles based on the different age/size ranges and different types of restraints,” Mr. Shaw said.

He was speaking in the House of Representatives on February 7.



Minister of Transport and Mining, Hon. Audley Shaw

The Road Traffic Act, 2018 and Regulations were brought into effect on February 1, and since then, there has been feedback from the public regarding the use of child restraints.

The Minister informed that under the updated requirements, in the case of licensed public passenger cars or buses, children under one year must be restrained by an adult.

In addition, one to three year-olds may travel with no restraint or be restrained by an adult; three to six year-olds may travel without restraint, restrained by an adult or a lap belt; six to nine year-olds may travel without restraint or with a lap belt; and children over nine years old may travel without restraint, with a lap belt or a three-point seat belt.

Only children who are of the weight and size to use an adult seatbelt are permitted to travel in the front passenger seat.

## Manchester Residents Receive Land Titles

TWENTY RESIDENTS of New Forest and surrounding communities in Manchester are now proud landowners, having received certificates of title for property they have occupied for several years.

The documents, provided under the National Land Agency’s (NLA) Systematic Land Registration (SLR) programme, were handed over during a ceremony held on February 7 at the New Forest High School in the parish.

Under the SLR programme, people receive assistance to become legal owners of the land that they have lived on openly and undisturbed and have had undisputed possession of for 12 years or more.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness, who delivered the keynote address, said that some 40 per cent or 350,000 parcels



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness shares a light moment with Chief Executive Officer of the National Land Agency (NLA)/Commissioner of Lands, Cheriese Walcott, during the land titling ceremony under the NLA’s Systematic Land Registration (SLR) programme, held at the New Forest High School in Manchester on February 7.

of land in Jamaica are unregistered, and many persons are occupying property for which they do not have titles.

This, he argued, prevents them “from using the value of the land for the benefit of themselves and their families or as a tool for wealth creation”.

He noted that living, farming and existing on the

land does not unlock its true value.

“If you want to go a step further in creating wealth and value out of the land, you need to have Government’s backing of the land to say you own it and can claim its value if you want to sell it,” the Prime Minister pointed out.

## Improved Water Supply for Residents of Dalvey in St. Thomas

MORE THAN 4,500 residents in Dalvey, St. Thomas, now have improved water supply, through the National Water Commission’s (NWC) Fraser Hill Storage Tank Replacement Project.

The 50,000-gallon glass-fused-to-steel bolted tank was installed at a cost of \$20 million and will serve the residents even if the Water Lane Re-Lift Pump, which feeds the Dalvey area, is out of commission.

The project forms part of the Tank and Pump Rehabilitation for Operational Efficiency Improvement Programme.

Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda, in the keynote address at the commissioning ceremony on February 8, pointed out that the tank is “a major step” for the community.

He noted that there is still work to be done on the distribution network in the area and gave a commitment to continue the progress in the upcoming financial year. This is in a bid to help residents “realise the benefits of the tanks that



Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda (second right), enjoys a sip of water from the newly commissioned Fraser Hill Storage Tank Replacement Project in St. Thomas, on February 8. Sharing the moment (from left) are National Water Commission’s (NWC) Regional Manager for Kingston, St. Andrew and St. Thomas, Dr. Phillipa Campbell-Francis; Councillor, Port Morant Division, Michael Hue; and Member of Parliament for St. Thomas Eastern, Dr. Michelle Charles.

have been put into Eastern St. Thomas”.

Recently, tanks were installed in the John’s Town, Prospect and Needham Pen areas of the constituency.

Mr. Samuda pointed out the significance of the number of projects that the NWC has been undertaking.

“Every single parish of Jamaica last year received capital works from the NWC to expand the utility footprint of the Commission. That has never happened in Jamaica’s history before,” the Minister noted.

## PM Holness Receives Courtesy Call From National Spelling Bee Finalists



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness (centre, background) with the finalists in the 2023 Gleaner Children’s Own Spelling Bee competition, during a courtesy call on February 9 at Jamaica House.

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