

Consumers Welcome Increase in Duty-Free Threshold

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to increase the duty-free threshold on imported personal items has been welcomed by local consumers.

Effective April 1, 2024, the *de minimis* value for imported goods increased from US\$50 to US\$100.

“For me to import stuff here and keeping it under US\$50, it has been taking a toll on me. So, having it under US\$100, I can order more stuff and keep it at that limit... So, I really love that it has increased...”

In announcing the increase in the threshold, Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke said, “the measure aims to facilitate access to a wider variety of goods by local consumers and stimulate business in the local economy as shipping companies and intermediaries capitalise on the increased activity”.

He made the announcement during his budget debate presentation in March.

Meanwhile, entrepreneurs have been lauding the implementation of the measure.

Entrepreneur, Ottina Lawman, who imports items for sale, tells **JIS News** that the increase in the duty-free threshold is welcome.

“For me to import stuff here and keeping it under US\$50, it has been taking a toll on me. So, having it be under US\$100, I can order more stuff and keep it at that limit, and I don’t have to pay the weight cost in parts. So, I



Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness speaks in the House of Representatives.

really love that it has increased, and it has been working for me so far,” she says.

Digital Content Specialist, Oneilia Bryan Passley, says the increase in the duty-free threshold is a good move by the Government.

She notes that “US\$50 was not sufficient [based on current prices], so I think

US\$100 will aid persons to shop for things they may need for the house or for clothes”.

For items under US\$100, I no longer pay the heavy customs fees; I am able to just focus on the weight of the items. So, it has helped in my budgeting,” she tells **JIS News**.

She says further that she can now freely shop for

items that are not available locally and “it increases my options of where I can shop”.

Brian Anderson, a 24-year-old Content Creator from Morant Bay, who specialises in videography and photography also welcomes the increase.

He generates content about the parish of St. Thomas for his YouTube page, Eastside Media, which has an audience of nearly 8,500 subscribers.

“We (content creators) will benefit more because we can ship in more items. Normally, when I am shipping equipment and it costs over US\$50, I have to worry about customs, and the equipment we use are hard to source for below that price. With the increase, I can add more things to my cart, and I can more comfortably pursue my passion,” he states.



Minister of Finance and the Public Service, Dr. the Hon. Nigel Clarke, announces the increase in the duty-free threshold from US\$50 to US\$100.



Digital Content Specialist, Oneilia Bryan Passley

New Duty-Free Threshold to Diversify Offerings

TWENTY-THREE YEAR-OLD Customer Service Representative, Imani Foster, says the increase in duty-free threshold will allow her and her relatives to purchase more things on their favourite online shopping platforms with more flexibility.

Another member of the public, Kenisha Carnegie, feels that an increase in the duty-free threshold is appreciated, given the increase in costs, while University of the West Indies (UWI) Mona student, Courteney Lewis, says that while she might not be a frequent online shopper, she will be taking advantage of the increased duty-free shopping.

“This increase is actually good for Jamaicans and

people who use the shipping companies are seeing a decrease in prices and the shipping companies are seeing an uptick in their consumer base,” she notes.

“This increase is actually good for Jamaicans and people who use the shipping companies are seeing a decrease in prices and the shipping companies are seeing an uptick in their consumer base.”

Meanwhile, owner of Shopping Assistants, Christine Ade Gold says the increase in the threshold was a good move by the Government.



Entrepreneur, Ottina Lawman

“The recent increase in the duty-free threshold from \$50 to \$100 USD for Jamaicans bringing goods into the country has positively impacted my busi-

ness. Clients are shopping more online now, and some even waited until April 1, just to be able to benefit from it,” Ms. Ade Gold says.



Customer Service Representative, Imani Foster



UWI Mona student, Courteney Lewis

Shipments Exceeding US\$100 will Attract Full Duty

THE JAMAICA Customs Agency (JCA) is reminding persons bringing personal items into Jamaica that imports over US\$100 will attract customs charges on the full declared value.

“For example, should a shipment be declared with a value of US\$101, duty will be calculated on the full amount, not just the excess of US\$1,” the JCA said.

In a post to X, formerly Twitter, the JCA also urged the public to familiarise themselves with Customs policies and import procedures to ensure smooth and efficient clearance of imported goods.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister the Most Hon. Andrew Holness noted that the increase in the threshold was possible, as the Government has created a stable and robust macroeconomic environment of fiscal certainty, which supports employment and income generation, capital invest-

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ment, and increased economic activity. This, he said, has allowed the Government to actively reduce the tax burden on the people of the country.

“Now, when we are approaching a budget, the question that is being asked is, ‘What goodies the Government is going to announce?’ That is a profound change. Workers, families, small business, investors – can plan their affairs and think long term without worrying that the Government will impose a tax,” Mr. Holness said.



An employee of the Jamaica Customs Agency examines imported goods. (Contributed photo)

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