

PLEASE CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Statement to the House of Representatives
by
Hon. Robert Montague, MP., Minister of National Security
Tuesday June 13, 2017**

Mr. Speaker, I wish to give a brief statement on the current crime situation which is of concern to all of us who live in Jamaica, as well as those in the Diaspora.

I wish to give the assurance to the Jamaican public that the team at the Ministry of National Security and the security forces are actively devising strategies to address the situation that we have been experiencing in the last few weeks.

I will reiterate that there is no quick fix, and this is going to take the effort of each and every law-abiding citizen, and a whole-of-society approach to arrest this issue.

There has been an increase in operations islandwide, but more so in the parishes of Hanover and Clarendon. The Commissioner of Police is at this time hosting a press briefing where he will give details on the increased security operations.

Regarding the latest quadruple killing in Hanover, a special team has been dispatched to the area, and the police are following strong leads.

A massive manhunt is now underway.

Of note is that a nephew of one of those killed in Hanover this morning, is a person of interest for his involvement in multiple murders.

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The security forces will be strategically increasing their presence in the public space; there will be roadblocks, curfews, and cordon and search operations.

I urge members of the public who may be inconvenienced by this increase in security operations to exercise patience and understanding, and to cooperate with the security forces.

As part of measures to clamp down on crime, the police will also release a list of wanted persons and Persons of Interest, and we are asking members of the public who have information to use any of the channels to anonymously pass on information. They may download the Stay Alert app from the Google or Apple Store, call Crime Stop, or write the information, place it in an envelope, mark an **X** on it and drop it in the mailbox at any post office.

Mr. Speaker, we are far advanced with amendments to the Firearm Act, and when enacted, we expect to reap benefits.

In addition, the Special Measures Act is before a Joint Parliamentary Committee, and I am urging the quick passage of that Act to enable the police to clear, hold and build specific communities that are of interest. Consequent to this Act will be amendments to the Anti-Gang legislation which will allow the police to apply to the courts and designate criminal organizations, seek Control Orders for, members of these organizations, and make it an offence to be a member.

The Bail Act will also be amended by the Ministry of Justice. Mr. Speaker, there are too many incidents being perpetrated by persons on bail.

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Our investment in the intelligence network is paying huge dividends as we are retrieving more firearms, and this in turn is creating inter and intra-gang discord, resulting in an increase in gang related feuds and killings. These gang-related incidents are resulting in multiple killings per incident.

The investment in our forensic system is paying off as more intelligence is being gleaned from the scenes of crimes.

Mr. Speaker, we also note that some of the crimes are domestically related, as persons are resolving conflicts with weapons, rather than by mediation.

The security forces have also noted a worrying trend, where disputes overseas are being resolved violently in Jamaica.

We urge everyone who has information on these conflicts to report it to the police.

Some of the initiatives we have undertaken include, but are not limited to:

- We have received 35 of the 200 pre-owned cars, with another 45 cars and 15 pickups to be delivered in two weeks.
- The two ships we bought recently are patrolling the seas and are helping to stem the entry of contraband, whether drugs or guns via our porous coastline
- The procurement of 20 lawyers for the Jamaica Constabulary Force to assist in building cases is well under way

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- The Police High command is reviewing the case files of police personnel who have been suspended/interdicted, with a view to fast tracking the process which will allow for more police to be put back on the streets
- The JCF has received 3000 ballistic vests, and 2500 ballistic helmets for the protection of its members
- We will shortly take possession of five of 20 mobile stations for the Jamaica Constabulary Force
- We have increased the installation of CCTV cameras in Montego Bay, and have started to install in Spanish town and Kingston; as a matter of fact, 21 have already been installed in Kingston.
- We are far advanced with the development of a National CCTV Network where the feeds from private entities will be received. The necessary analytical software will be used to process the footage received.
- We are far advanced in negotiating special traffic cameras with licence plate readers to be installed across the island to track the movement of persons of interest, and stolen vehicles.
- I have also just been informed by the Commissioner that he will be undertaking an exercise of reassignment of Commands and promotions shortly

Mr. Speaker I wish to reiterate that as the security forces increase their operations islandwide, respect for people's rights will be strictly observed.

I once again urge all well-thinking Jamaicans to unit, to be aware, pass information to the police, and to be calm.

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We also make this call to invite all Jamaicans with workable ideas and solutions to come to the table as we remain committed to working with everyone who has Jamaica's interest at heart.

We urge persons to exercise care in their daily business, report suspicious activities to the police, seek counseling for domestic disputes, refer those having domestic disputes to the necessary agencies, and be your brother's keeper.

Our five-pillar crime reduction strategy is being rolled out.

We once again remind persons that the manifestations of the crimes today, these seeds were planted years ago, and cannot be reversed overnight. We are committed however, to tackle the root causes of crime, and not the symptoms as have been done in the past.
