



**PRESS RELEASE
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Friday, June 13, 2025



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang engages in discussion with Director of Public Prosecutions, Ms. Paula Llewellyn and Chief Justice, Mr. Bryan Sykes, after touring the newly dedicated Forensic Pathology Autopsy Suite at 149 Orange Street, downtown Kingston on Thursday (June 12). Accompanying the Minister were Local Government Minister and Member of Parliament for Western Kingston, the Hon. Desmond McKenzie, Permanent Secretary, Ambassador Alison Stone Roofe and Chief Technical Director, Mr. Delroy Simpson.

Government unveils state-of-the-art Pathology Autopsy Suite to strengthen criminal justice system

The Government of Jamaica has taken a significant step toward strengthening the nation's criminal justice system with the opening of a state-of-the-art Pathology Autopsy Suite in downtown Kingston.

Located at 149 Orange Street, the newly constructed facility is designed to enhance forensic investigations and improve the integrity of legal proceedings.



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Speaking at the opening ceremony on Thursday (June 12), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang emphasized the government's commitment to leveraging science, data and technology in law enforcement.

“The Autopsy Suite is a critical unit in the criminal justice system. I have learnt not only the value of having a credible system but how it operates,” Minister Chang stated.

Constructed and retrofitted at a cost of JMD\$680 million, the new facility is not just a public morgue but also a purpose-built forensic center staffed by highly trained professionals. These experts will conduct medico-legal autopsies, ensure accurate post-mortem investigations and preserve vital evidence for court proceedings.

The opening of the suite marks the end of a 40-year gap following the destruction of Jamaica’s previous public morgue in the early 1970s.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr Horace Chang pays close attention as Property Officer from the Ministry of National Security, Mr. Ricardo McKay points out the technical capabilities of the state-of-the-art Forensic Pathology Autopsy Suite at Thursday’s official opening.

Currently, most forensic autopsies are performed in private funeral homes, posing significant risks to the integrity of criminal investigations. The new facility aims to eliminate these vulnerabilities and uphold the credibility of judicial processes.

Minister Chang expressed confidence in the facility’s ability to reduce the backlog of approximately 300 autopsy cases and significantly improve service delivery.

“This facility can accommodate approximately 150 bodies, allowing for efficient operations and ending scattered forensic functions across the island,” he noted.



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Among the suite's key advantages are conducting post-mortems seven days a week, eliminating delays and long wait times, reducing reliance on expatriate forensic specialists through local pathology internships and the phasing out of the unregulated practice of autopsies in private funeral homes, ensuring greater oversight and professionalism.

“This groundbreaking initiative reinforces the government’s commitment to modernizing forensic science and bolstering criminal investigations, ensuring justice is served effectively and efficiently,” Minister Chang said.

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