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PRESS RELEASE
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Strengthening Jamaica's cybersecurity capacity and resilience is a priority of government - Minister Chang

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, says the government is strengthening Jamaica's cybersecurity capacity and resilience as a matter of priority.

The Minister, who delivered remarks at the opening session of the SheSecures Jamaica Virtual Cyber Competition yesterday (March 20), welcomed the initiative and underscored that the competition is consistent with the government's push to expand and diversify STEM education and professionalization in Jamaica.

"While the government pursues the strengthening of our national cybersecurity infrastructure, and invests in improving the response capabilities of our agencies, we have taken deliberate steps to reduce the gender gap," the Security Minister said.

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He remarked that the SheSecures Competition is a welcomed step towards informing and attracting more young women to the cybersecurity sector.

In addition, he mentioned that the government is committed to transformation and growth across the cyber landscape.

"We will continue to make deliberate efforts to encourage the participation of underrepresented groups, including women, in the cybersecurity sector," said Minister Chang.

It is expected that the global annual cost of cybercrime will reach US$9.5 trillion this year while the rising cost of damages resulting from cybercrime is expected to reach US$10.5 trillion by 2025.

Also speaking at the launch, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of National Security, Ambassador Alison Stone Roofe, mentioned that the cybersecurity workforce currently benefits minimally from the potential talent, innovation, and perspective of females, who often shy away from technical sectors due to the prevailing male-oriented culture and the various reports of discrimination.

She said that the Ministry of National Security continues to urge women to overcome these perspectives and enhance their capacities through investments in education, training, and professional development.

"By doing so, women can break down existing barriers and contribute to fortifying Jamaica's cybersecurity resilience," the Permanent Secretary noted.

In addition, Ms. Kerry-Ann Barrett, Cybersecurity Programme Manager Organisation of American States (OAS), stated that SheSecures is designed not only to bridge the gender gap in cybersecurity but also to foster diversity in the industry, empowering women of diverse backgrounds and ages to explore and excel in this field.

SheSecures is a gender-based cybersecurity competition, developed within the framework of various gender and cybersecurity initiatives promoted by the OAS/CICTE, to foster diversity and encourage more women to pursue careers in the cybersecurity sector.

The competition's sponsors include Citi Foundation, MC Systems, tTech Limited, Royale Computers, and Fortinet. Hackrocks is the event partner.

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