



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, October 11, 2023



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang participates in a ribbon cutting with Chief Executive Officer of COURTS Jamaica, Mr. Mario Siman which signifies the opening of its newest outlet in Portmore Pines, St. Catherine on Wednesday, October 11, 2023. Looking on is Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Hon. Alando Terrelonge. The COURTS Portmore Pines marks the 29th outlet to be opened in Jamaica.

The Inter-Ministerial School Strategy is mechanism with which to disrupt youth crime involvement – Minister Chang

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr Horace Chang, says the Inter-Ministerial School Strategy (IMSS), the government’s social investment transformation effort, is a mechanism with which to disrupt youth crime involvement and effect meaningful and sustainable change.

The Minister made the remarks during the keynote address at the Private Launch Event of the newest Courts store, located at Parkway Square (Portmore Pines), St. Catherine on Wednesday, October 11.

He said that the IMSS is being implemented where the most vulnerable students and their families have access to a holistic, wrap-around suite of services to reduce truancy and to disrupt their involvement in crime.

“Essentially, we are seeking to restore hope to these individuals and improve their social and economic life outcomes,” Minister Chang said.



All of this is being done, the Minister said, against the backdrop of the 2021 Education Transformation Commission Report, which underscored the underperformance of students at the secondary level.

“The government is advancing our agenda for the long-term improvement of our human capital. We are achieving this through strategic partnerships with the private sector (Project Star), and with our bilateral and International Partners,” Minister Chang said.

The IMSS aims to provide support for students who display anti-social behaviour in school and forms part of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Security’s targeted interventions focused on eradicating violence in schools. The strategy initially targeted thirty four (34) schools located in seven (7) Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs).

The Security Minister then lauded the launch of Courts' newest outlet, stating that they have been a mainstay contributor to the economic development of Jamaica and her people for over half a century.

He remarked that Courts is symbolic not only as a longstanding investor in Jamaica but noted that it reflects Courts’ commitment to improving the lives of the people of Jamaica through its services.

“Although the Courts’ footprint in Jamaica pre-dates our independence, your sustained innovation, quality service delivery, and investment in Jamaica, and Jamaicans, supports the growth and stability of our economy,” Minister Chang said.

The Courts Portmore Pines marks the 29th outlet to be opened in Jamaica.

