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PRESS RELEASE  
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**Bolstering security in town centers is vital for business retention and growth – Minister Chang**

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr Horace Chang has indicated his support to enhance security in and around three of the major towns in St Catherine in response to concerns raised by business leaders.

He noted that bolstering security in town centres is vital for the retention of business as well as its growth prospects.

Minister Chang, on Wednesday (June 21, 2023), met with members of the St Catherine Chamber of Commerce, headed by Mr Dennis Robotham and a group of core business leaders to discuss the security challenges facing the business community.

They pointed out that extortion, traffic snarls and public disorder in Spanish Town, Bog Walk and Linstead are posing a serious concern and are harming prospects for the development of these spaces.

In response, Minister Chang said that the police are taking a closer look at what can be done to fix the problem.

**“These communities have a known crime factor. The police are aware of this and are doing their best to deal with the matter, but what I can tell you is that we will be doubling our efforts through the use of digital technology to get these criminals,”** Minister Chang said.

He pointed out that criminals are evolving at a rapid rate due to the use of technology which is making their transition that much easier, but noted, however, that the police will be given the necessary tools to quell all types of crimes and disorder in these towns.

**“The police are also evolving and your government is making sure the use of digital technology is advanced to the point where the police will have a significant advantage in tackling organised crime of all kinds,”** stated the Minister

Key to this, according to Minister Chang, would be the installation of additional cameras on the JamaicaEye Network, increased manpower (assigning more police personnel to these areas) and procurement of additional vehicles and motorbikes for the police.

He cautioned that the measures would not be a panacea but are actions that can be taken in the meantime to help cauterize the crime situation plaguing the town centres. He further stated that bolstering security in these communities will be a welcomed ease for business owners and operators.

The Security Minister was accompanied by the Minister of State, Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn, the Deputy Commissioner of Police in charge of Strategic Operations, Clifford Blake, as well as other senior officers from the Division.