



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Wednesday, December 16, 2020

MNS brings joy to over 170 Wards of the State

Over 170 wards in state care received gifts courtesy of the Ministry of National Security's We Transform Youth Empowerment Programme (WTYEP). The gift drive was coordinated under its "Connect with love this Christmas" initiative.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang who assisted with handing over gifts to the ward, pointed out that **"the Christmas gift drive is a means of rehabilitation that aids with the transformation process of the wards in state care. It also demonstrates our compassion and care for them."**

Meanwhile, Minister without Portfolio, Senator the Hon. Matthew Samuda reiterated that the tokens signify a silver-lining despite the numerous challenges faced this year.

"With all that has taken place with COVID-19 and the impact from the lack of visitations, we want to give you these tokens to lift your spirits and to make things a little easier. The Ministry's mandate seeks to ensure that there is real transformation in our juvenile centres," he said.

Minister Samuda encouraged the wards to take responsibility and remain committed to other programmes that will help them to achieve their goals.

In expressing gratitude to the MNS staff, mentors, private sector organizations and friends for partnering with WTYEP to provide the wards with Christmas gifts, Director of WTYEP, Ella Ghartey said, **"we believe an essential part of the rehabilitation process for these young people is knowing that they are important and cared for. Even something as a small gift and a message of encouragement can go a long way to inspire them to become better individuals".**

The gifts which were donated to the Metcalfe Street Secure Juvenile Centre, South Camp Juvenile Correctional and Remand Centre and Rio Cobre Juvenile Correctional Centre included: personal care items, educational materials and school bags. The wards at the Hill Top Juvenile Correctional Centre will receive their gifts in the coming weeks.

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The Christmas gift drive is part of a broader project which seeks to provide the juvenile centres with the technological equipment that will enable them to connect virtually with their families and mentors this Christmas and onwards.

The WTYEP operates within the four juvenile centres across the island with over 200 mentors. The Programme is geared towards reducing offending and re-offending among at-risk youth age 12 to 17.

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