



**PRESS RELEASE
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Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr Horace Chang cuts the ribbon to officially declare the newly constructed Lacovia Police Station in St. Elizabeth open. Commanding Officer for the Division Superintendent Coleridge Minto (1st left), Police Commissioner Dr Kevin Blake (2nd left), Permanent Secretary Ambassador Alison Stone Roofe and North East St. Elizabeth Member of Parliament Delroy Slowley, were also on hand to participate in the exercise.

‘No growth without public order and security’ says Minister Chang

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, has emphasized the importance of public order and security for Jamaica's growth.

Speaking against the backdrop of a remarkable 19 per cent decline in murders in 2024, Dr. Chang attributed this success to the government's ongoing investment in police infrastructure through the Ministry's Rebuild, Overhaul, and Construct Programme (ROC).

The programme focuses on upgrading police stations, providing modern equipment and enhancing training for law enforcement personnel.



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"It takes significant funding to develop an effective law enforcement agency capable of tackling organized crime in this country," Dr. Chang stated during the opening ceremony of the newly constructed Lacovia Police Station in St. Elizabeth on Tuesday, February 26.

He emphasized the critical role of financial resources in building a robust police force that can effectively counter the well-financed and organized criminal networks.

"Criminals are well-financed, intelligent, and armed. They will go to great lengths to undermine society, earn more money, create chaos, and harm our people," Dr. Chang explained, pointing out that the fight against crime requires a multifaceted approach, including community engagement, intelligence gathering, and strategic interventions.

Dr Chang highlighted the government's decision to invest heavily in modernizing the constabulary force in response to the growing threat of criminality.

"We are committed to the necessary planning and investment to strengthen our police force and equip them to combat criminals effectively," he said. He mentioned that the ROC Programme is just one aspect of a broader strategy to improve public safety and order.

The Minister noted that better intelligence, improved equipment, and increased police visibility would naturally lead to more engagement with criminals. He also clarified that 50 fatal shootings do not equate to extra-judicial killings but rather reflect the police's increased efforts to restore order in a society long plagued by ruthless criminals.

Dr Chang emphasized the importance of upholding human rights while ensuring that law enforcement officers can perform their duties effectively.

The Lacovia Police Station, constructed at a cost of approximately \$200 million, stands as a testament to the government's unwavering support for the transformation of the Jamaica Constabulary Force.

The new facility is equipped with state-of-the-art technology, improved working conditions for officers and enhanced community spaces to foster better relationships between the police and residents.

Dr Chang concluded his remarks by reaffirming the government's commitment to creating a safer Jamaica.

"Our investment in security and public order is essential for the country's growth and development. We will continue to prioritize the safety and well-being of our citizens as we work towards a brighter future," he said.