



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Friday, October 18, 2024



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, Deputy Commissioner of Police Clifford Blake and other senior members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force met at the Mandeville Police Station ahead of a tour of the Mandeville market and the communities of Albion and May Day in the parish yesterday (October 17). The visit sought to reassure residents that the security forces are working assiduously to maintain and restore peace and public order in the parish.

Minister Chang reaffirms curfews as key tool in managing crime in Manchester

“The quicker you can control the space, the quicker you can prevent perpetrators from coming in or leaving,” said Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, the Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, during his visit yesterday (October 17) to Mandeville, which has seen a surge in violent crimes.

He pointed to the statistics that indicate, **“Curfews have worked, and it is a big part of why today we can say that Manchester is seeing results.”**

Minister Chang, who visited the communities of Albion and May Day to address the situation first hand, assured residents that the curfews and enhanced police operations are part of a strategic approach aimed at curbing violence and restoring public safety.

The rise in crime in the parish, which traditionally enjoys a reputation for calm and peace, is largely attributed to internal gang conflicts over financial disputes, exacerbated by the involvement of overseas players.

The Security Minister noted that the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) has made significant progress, having apprehended a number of key players during this period and resolved 76 per cent of the crimes reported in the parish this year.

Despite the successes, the Minister emphasised the necessity of continuing curfews, stating **“In these instances, we have to initiate curfews to quiet down the space and find the perpetrators.”**

He further emphasised that the government **“has no interest in locking down businesses or interfering with the entertainment industry, but we must prioritise the protection of lives.”**

The Minister urged community members to play their part in helping to reduce crime.

He specifically addressed those involved in hosting events and those connected to individuals engaged in criminal activities, advising, **“Tell them to stop the violence, and we will not have to interfere with your parties or other activities.”**

He added, **“There is no value in retaliation, and the police will have no choice but to take all necessary action to protect the community as crime increases.”**

In addition to the curfews, the Ministry of National Security is bolstering police efforts through a number of initiatives.

These include the development of the JCF’s Command, Communications, Computation, Control, Coordination (C5) Centre, which will enhance police operations, and an increase in the number of vehicles allocated to boost mobility and improve police response times.

The Ministry is also in the process of restoring and expanding the parish’s CCTV network, a critical tool in monitoring and preventing criminal activities.

Minister Chang’s visit included a tour of the Mandeville market, the site of a shooting that claimed two lives on October 4. There, he reassured vendors that the government is committed to ensuring the safety of all citizens.

As Manchester grapples with the recent wave of violence, Dr. Chang reaffirmed that the government views crime as a priority issue and is committed to restoring peace in the parish.

“When a parish has a history of being peaceful and quiet, any murder sends shivers through the entire community. We are at that phase with Manchester, and it therefore needs the attention of the police,” he said.

The Ministry of National Security remains steadfast in its support of the police force, ensuring they have the resources and backing needed to maintain public order and continue their crime-fighting efforts in the parish and beyond.

-30-