

JCF Establishing Special Anti-Gang Task Force

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PHOTO: DONALD DE LA HAYE

Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, tables the report of the Joint Select Committee established to review and report on the Criminal Justice (Suppression of Criminal Organizations) Act, 2014, commonly called anti-gang legislation, in the House of Representatives on May 19.

Story Highlights

Dr. Chang said that as the Government seeks to create a safe, secure and prosperous society, the pervasive presence of criminal gangs and networks in communities, along with their criminal activities, pose a clear and imminent danger.

Dr. Chang informed that

The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) is advanced in establishing a special multi-agency, anti-gang task force, focused on guns, gangs and dons and their proceeds.

This was disclosed by Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, as he tabled the report of the Joint Select Committee established to review and report on the Criminal Justice (Suppression of Criminal Organisations) Act, 2014, commonly called anti-gang legislation, in the House of Representatives on May 19.

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In addition, Area 5, which comprises St. Catherine North, St. Catherine South, St. Andrew North, and St. Thomas, accounts for the second highest number of gangs in the country, with 57 gangs or 14.7 per cent.

the divisional level for greater effectiveness in targeting criminal gangs.

Dr. Chang said that as the Government seeks to create a safe, secure and prosperous society, the pervasive presence of criminal gangs and networks in communities, along with the criminal activities, pose a clear and imminent danger.

He noted that based on the latest assessment carried out by the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB) of the JCF, at the end of 2019, there were 389 criminal gangs operating in Jamaica.

Of the total, 250 or 64 per cent were deemed to be active, while the remaining 139 or 36 per cent were classified as dormant.

Minister Chang noted that 323 or 83 per cent of the total criminal gangs in operation were classified as “first generation” gangs by virtue of their loose and unsophisticated leadership.

“These gangs are also identified by the fact that their main focus was on turf protection and control for financial gains,” Dr. Chang said.

He noted that the remaining 66 gangs or 17 per cent were classified as “second generation” gangs, which exhibited more centralised leadership and focused primarily on organised crime.

Dr. Chang informed that consistent with historical trends, the Corporate Area continues to account for the largest proportion of gangs.

He said that Area Four, which comprises the Kingston Western, Kingston Central, Kingston Eastern, St. Andrew Central and St. Andrew South Police Divisions accounted for 249 or 64 per cent of the total number of known gangs islandwide.

“Of note, at the Divisional level, 78 of the gangs identified across the island, or 20.1 per cent, were resident within the St. Andrew South Police Division.

This was followed by the Kingston Central and Kingston Western Police Divisions with 13.1 per cent and 12.3 per cent, respectively, the National Security Minister said.

In addition, Area 5, which comprises St. Catherine North, St. Catherine South, St. Andrew North, and St. Thomas, accounts for the second highest number of gangs in the country, with 57 gangs or 14.7 per cent.

They were followed by Area One (St. James, Westmoreland, Hanover, and Trelawny) with 51 gangs or 13.1 per cent.

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