

Chief Justice congratulates Drug Treatment Court graduates

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Court Management Services

Fifteen participants enrolled in the Drug Treatment Court Programme in the Parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew, St. Catherine, St. Thomas and St. James, successfully completed the programme and were recognized in a graduation ceremony held recently at the Cardiff Hotel in Runaway Bay. The graduation exercise was held under the theme “Recovery is not an event, but a journey”.

The Drug Treatment Court (DTC) is designed to provide judicial supervision to drug dependent offenders who have consented to participate in the programme. Participants benefit from treatment for drug addiction and/or dependency and regular monitoring by the court. The programme is designed to provide rehabilitation of drug dependent offenders as an alternative to incarceration. The programme requires the offender to abstain from drugs and this is monitored by frequent drug testing. Participants are required to be drug free for a period of at least nine months before they can graduate.

Chief Justice Zaila McCalla OJ, in her remarks, encouraged the graduates to “be strong and resist the temptation to return to substance abuse. Remain drug free and do not let your supporters down”. She went on to emphasise that everyone benefits when citizens turn from a life of crime and become productive members of society.

Additionally, the Chief Justice expressed gratitude to the many partners who have worked to make the programme a success; they include USAID/ COMET II and the Organization of American States (OAS). Mission Director for USAID/ COMET II, Denise Herbol, commended Jamaica for being one of the first Countries to accept this model for drug treatment.

At present, the courts operate in the Parishes previously named and Chief Justice McCalla announced that there are plans to establish a Drug Treatment court in Manchester shortly, as well as in other parishes. She also announced that a special Children’s Drug Treatment Programme has already been established at the Kingston and St. Andrew Family Court to assist children who are dependent on drugs.

Posted By :Leighton Beckles

Company Name : Court Management Services

Election spending: a serious task for the DPP



DPP Paula Llewellyn

THE Electoral Office of Jamaica (EOJ) says it will submit to the director of public prosecutions (DPP) a list of 41 candidates who contested the February 25, 2016

General Election but have not yet filed their expense returns with their respective returning officers, as ordered by law.

The 41 candidates have failed to honour their commitment to meet the statutory deadline of April 6, 2016, under Section 10 of the Representation of the People Act (ROPA), and could face fines of between \$20,000 and \$80,000, or imprisonment for a term not less than three years.

Furthermore, any candidate found in breach by the Circuit Court can be barred from holding any position as an election officer for a period not less than seven years. It would seem that the 41 have no fear of punishment.

Even though it is their statutory responsibility, we commend the remaining 111 candidates who have done what was necessary to comply with the law. It is crucial that a strong signal be sent to those who have not that they cannot thumb their noses at the law with impunity.

A total of 49 Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) candidates have filed, as well as 44 People's National Party (PNP) candidates, and 18 independents. This means that 14 JLP candidates, 19 PNP candidates, and eight independent candidates could find themselves in trouble with the law.

Those in breach of the laws governing elections include Member of Parliament for Kingston Central Rev Ronald Thwaites; MP for St Andrew Western Anthony Hylton; St James Southern MP Derrick Kellier; and MP for Clarendon South Western Noel Arscott; PNP's MP for St Catherine Eastern Denise Dailey; Jolyan Silvera, who lost his St Mary Western seat; Sharon Ffolkes-Abrahams, who was defeated in her bid to retain St James West Central; as well as the JLP's Delano Seiveright, who was defeated in the contest for St Thomas Eastern.

St James North Western MP Dr Horace Chang, the JLP general secretary; Kerensia Morrison, now a senator, who lost in her bid to take the St Catherine North Central constituency; and Alando Terrelonge, who won the St Catherine East Central seat, are also missing from the list of those who filed, according to the EOJ.

Still, we submit, mere compliance with the law is not enough. And we hope that the DPP, a usually very thorough and meticulous individual, will be combing through the figures to determine if the amounts declared make a mockery of the exercise.

Some of the figures given by the EOJ are, to say the least, astounding, given the exorbitant cost of material and services in today's price-heavy economy.

We obviously are in no position to cast aspersions about the veracity of the figures submitted by any candidate. But simple arithmetic suggests that some of them are miraculously low. For

example, we see one candidate declaring to have spent \$20,000 and another \$50,000, while their opponents spent \$2.7 million and \$4.8 million respectively.

Could these expense figures be a typographical error on the part of the EOJ? Or could it be that those candidates, who include a winner of a seat, were so fortunate as to receive almost everything free of cost?

Politicians, especially those who become parliamentarians, must set an example of integrity for the rest of the country. It is important that no doubt be left in the mind of the public about the accuracy of these expense returns.

Letter Of The Day: Choked Mandela Merits Lawsuit Claim

The Gleaner



Norman Grindley

Traffic was bumper to bumper on Monday morning as motor vehicles exiting Highway 2000 merge with a choked Mandela Highway in St Catherine.

THE EDITOR, Sir:

I note the photo on Page A3 of The Gleaner of April 12, 2016, of a solid line of cars along Mandela Highway being joined by an equally solid line exiting Highway 2000.

It was, and is, more recently, blatantly obvious that the carrying capacity of the highway has been exceeded. In the years just after Highway 2000 was opened to traffic, during the Jamaica Institution of Engineers' Engineers Week, the current chairman of the National Road Operating and Constructing Company, Ivan Anderson, was expounding on the benefits of Highway 2000. During the question-and-answer period afterwards, I asked him what percentage of the capacity of Mandela Highway was in use just prior to the opening of the new highway. He replied that it was 80 per cent.

It would be obvious to anyone that steady growth in traffic over the years, exacerbated by the fact that Mandela Highway is a practical choke point for all traffic from the west, including Portmore, would shortly lead to the exceeding of the rated capacity of Mandela.

The previous government saw fit to enter into contracts with the French to create a toll highway from the west and then a short toll road between Portmore and Kingston, with clauses in the Highway 2000 to prevent the upgrading of the capacity of Mandela Highway. That was idiotic. Furthermore, the French built an overpass for traffic exiting the toll road right up to the four-lane free to traffic, Mandela Highway, so that later expansion by widening of the roadway could not occur. Madness.

There is a way out, and it is this: Given that the Mandela Highway is the 'alternative' route to the Portmore, people who do not wish to use the toll road to Kingston must bring a lawsuit. Legally,

'alternative' must mean 'viable alternative', and if the capacity of Mandela is exceeded (as is obvious, and verifiable), the 'no upgrade' clauses come into conflict with the 'alternative' route clause of the contract.

This contract cannot contradict itself, and if the people of Portmore bring a lawsuit, I am sure that the courts will void the 'no upgrade' clauses and permit measures to improve the capacity of Mandela until it again becomes the viable 'alternative' route. Mr Shaw was right to say that it was a bad agreement.

HOWARD CHIN

Member, Jamaica Institution of Engineers

The End