

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Jamaica: No Opening of Bars, Nightclubs and Other Areas Of Entertainment

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JAMAICA — In an effort to reduce and eliminate the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), the government of Jamaica has restricted the opening of all bars, nightclubs and other areas of entertainment, effective March 18.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness made this announcement during a press conference on Monday at Jamaica House.

“I know I am going to be criticised because I don’t drink, but bars are closed. We are restricting the opening of bars, nightclubs and other areas of entertainment,” Mr. Holness said emphasized.

“If we are talking about social distancing, then, clearly, that is one area that we should just act decisively on,” he added.

The prime minister said that markets are other areas of concern, and that the government has treated markets, supermarkets, corner shops and pharmacies as essential for the continuation of life, according to Jamaica's government-run news service.

“They will remain open, but for corner shops, in particular, we ask that they respect the restriction. No gathering of more than 20, and if you have 20 persons, maintain the social distance,” he advised.

“Markets will be subject to a special condition. Markets will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and we ask the market vendors and the higgler to pay close attention to the requirements of social distancing,” Mr. Holness implored.

The government may announce other decisions regarding markets, based on the impact of the COVID-19.

“We don’t want to close the markets, but if things progress to a point where it becomes necessary, then we will, but we are trying to put in place the measures, bearing in mind that it is not the intention of the Government to shut down the economy. We have to keep the economy going,” the prime minister said.