

'No quick fix to crime'



CO-DIRECTOR of the Caribbean Safety Agency and president of the Caribbean Law Enforcement Foundation, Antonio Leacock, believes the country's criminal situation can be resolved with the right approach.
(GP)

Right approach is key, says head of agency

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THE PROBLEM OF CRIME in Barbados and the region is manageable given the right approach.

The view is shared by directors of the Caribbean Safety Agency (CSA), a training initiative primarily owned by Barbadians who served in law enforcement and militaries in the United Kingdom and United States.

In an interview with the **DAILY NATION**, co-director of the agency, Anthony Leacock, said the path towards resolving criminal elements does not come with "a quick fix" and requires the right equipment, resources and mindset.

"I see the situation as not impossible to deal with; you can get ahead of it but we

need the right people, the right mindset, equipment, resources," he said.

"It's not going to be a quick fix. They're going to have to be meticulous. They need guidance and leadership as well as leaders that know what they're doing and are trained to investigate these types of offences because they're going to have to guide the officers into the next step," he added.

A retired member of the London Metropolitan Police, Barbadian-born Leacock draws on his experience as a top-level criminal investigator with more than 20 years' experience, managing investigations on anti-corruption, counter-terrorism, terrorism security, organised crime, sexual offences, child abuse and online sexual exploitation.

As a member of the newly founded CSA, he seeks to bring law enforcement training

to the Caribbean. The agency has been in the background supplying training to the Regional Security System for more than ten years.

In October, the veteran lawmen created the formal entity with an aim to provide more consistent and specialised training across the Caribbean and here in Barbados.

"We are a relatively new initiative . . . So we're now trying to get ourselves out there and get ourselves known so we can get started and bring law enforcement to the standard that we know Barbadian officers and other Caribbean officers are capable of getting there," he said.

Expanding on the agency's training methods, Leacock noted that the

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programme is about training officers from the ground up, leading them in basic detective training, advanced detective training, training in sex crimes and sexual offences and teaching officers to be more victim-focused than suspect-focused.

"Our focus on the victim is about the delivery of the service," he said.

"We're looking at suspect interviews because often you tend to view all suspects in the same way – teaching that kind of strategic way to interview suspects depending on the level of crime that they're committing.

"We're looking at teaching officers how to investigate online sex crimes,

online child abuse crimes. So, we're looking at dealing with indecent images of children, distribution, sharing, uploading, downloading, viewing, that sort of stuff," he added.

The veteran lawman said he kept a close eye on the crime situation in Barbados, and in the process shared some of his insight into the criminal elements in the country.

Urgent action

Drawing on his experience, he expressed an urgency for more proactive action and the use of technology on behalf of police, a focus on community policing and human resources intelligence.

"I would like to see the police being more proactive in getting out ahead of these types of crimes, because Barbados is small and you know word travels really quickly, so we would invest more in community policing.

"The Barbados Police (Service) also needs to look at developing source units like human intelligence. We're looking at developing, properly and correctly, human sources of intelligence, so if word gets out that someone is going to get caught or that there's a hit on him, we just need to go and grab him off the street and bring them into protective custody for their own safety," he said.

Leacock also touched on the propagation of illegal firearms,

and stressed the need for border reinforcement and deeper investigations into personnel at key access points.

"Again, we need the right resources. It's all going to be down to resources – human intelligence, and equipment, and having the right people in the right places. We know firearms are coming into the island. We know they're coming illegally. We just need to identify where the hot spots are and who the people are – start developing proactive investigations against these people. But again, to do that, we need resources – manpower, and equipment. Again, that's what it's going to come down to – investment," he added.