



## Public Relations Unit

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BAHAMAS IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE 18/21

**\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\***

### **Migrants Arraigned In a Freeport Magistrate Court for Infractions of Immigration Laws**

On the 28th April, 2021, Haitian national Ismanie Joseph was arraigned in Freeport Magistrate's Court #1 before Deputy Chief Magistrate Debbye Ferguson charged with Illegal Landing. Upon pleading guilty to the offence, Joseph was subsequently convicted and fined \$300.00 or in default of payment serve three (3) months at the Bahamas Department of Correctional Services (BDOCS).

Reports indicate that on the 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2021, acting on information received, a team of Immigration Officers proceeded to a location in the Holmes Rock area. Here, a search of nearby bushes was conducted which resulted in the apprehension of Ms. Joseph who admitted to illegally entering The Bahamas via boat in 2019; she was cautioned and taken into custody. An additional check of immigration records confirmed that Joseph had no legal status in the country and was again cautioned and charged reference to Illegal Landing.

Also appearing before Magistrate Ferguson was Jamaican national Everton Denis Simms. Simms who was charged with Possession of Forged Bahamas Immigration Landing Stamps and Overstaying, pled guilty to both charges. He was convicted and fined \$1,000.00 on each count or in default of payment; serve one (1) year per count consecutively at BDOCS.

On the 27th April, 2021, acting on information received, a team of Immigration Officers proceeded to a residence in the Holmes Rock area. Upon arrival, officers were invited in by the owner of the home to search the residence. During the search, Mr. Simms was discovered in one of the bedrooms and asked to produce proof of legal status in the country. He produced his Jamaican passport which on the surface showed major inconsistencies as it relates to standard border entry processing. As a result, he was arrested and cautioned reference to Possession of Forged Bahamas Immigration Landing Stamps and Overstaying.

Both defendants were ordered deported after payment of fines or serving of custodial sentences.

The public is reminded that the Department is committed to executing the mandates of our agency by effectively coordinating efforts with other Law Enforcement agencies to ensure compliance with the Statute Laws of our Country. We further wish to remind members of the public that it is a criminal offence punishable by law to harbor illegal migrants in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

For more information please contact the Department of Immigration's Public Relations Unit or visit our website: [www.immigration.gov.bs](http://www.immigration.gov.bs) or follow us on Facebook @immdept Bahamas Department of Immigration.

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**Mission Statement:** *To regulate the movement of people across the borders of The Bahamas so as to ensure the security, facilitate economic advancement and promote the harmonious social development of The Bahamas through the collaborative efforts of responsible government and non-government agencies both nationally and internationally*