

The Media Association Jamaica Limited (MAJ) will consult on Monday on its approach to what appears to be a misguided or underhand approach by the government to continue to pursue the offensive incursion against freedom of the media that was started several months ago when the administration moved to change how it used government reserved time on radio and television.

The attempt had included the introduction of government's own newscasts more than ten times a day on all radio and television stations.

The MAJ notes the Notice given by government senator Dennis Meadows to move a motion to push the MAJ to accept changes "...across radio and television as proposed by the (JLP) administration and being not only in their own interest but being first and foremost in the interest of the people of Jamaica".

The MAJ wishes to indicate that "we are not sure if Senator Meadows is aware of the present status of those discussions and that having met and further discussed the matter, that for three weeks now, the MAJ is waiting to hear back from the government on the revisions made by both the government and the media. In fact, some of the elements of the motion he has tabled, suggests that he is not clear on what some of the issues really are", the MAJ said.

"If the senator is doing this with the support of those in the administration with whom they are in discussion and from whom the MAJ is awaiting a response, then the approach would be underhand and offensive in any type of negotiation or consultation process" the MAJ contends, adding that it must immediately consider how it further engages on the matter.

The MAJ notes that the senator has positioned his motion to suggest that media are acting in self interest and not in the interest of the country and the people of Jamaica. "We reject that argument as baseless, as it is the best interest of the people of Jamaica in having a free and independent media, without impinging on editorial independence and programming format that the MAJ has sought to defend", a release from the MAJ statement on Sunday.