



**NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANISATION (NEMO)
MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
WEST INDIES**

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PRESS STATEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) is aware of statements circulating on social media in which accusations of the hoarding of bed mattresses have been leveled at the organization.

This follows the visit by the Governor General Her Excellency Dame Susan Dougan to the NEMO Warehouse at Campden Park on Monday, 3rd May, 2021. During her visit, photographs of mattresses being stored at the warehouse were taken and disseminated by local media who had accompanied Her Excellency on her tour of the facility. This display has resulted in widespread social media allegations that NEMO is engaging in the hoarding of bed mattresses and supplies meant for evacuees throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

NEMO categorically deny these allegations and present the facts as follows.

- Distribution of mattresses is an ongoing process.
- To date, some fifteen hundred (1500) mattresses have been delivered to the eighty-six (86) shelters that have been activated. Initially, cots were supplied, but most of these have now been replaced.
- Five hundred and fifty (550) mattresses were delivered to families over the past few days.
- A 40ft container of mattresses bought through the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning was received on Friday, April 30, off loaded on Saturday, May 1 and delivered mainly to persons in private shelters.
- The mattresses seen in the photos being circulated with the Governor General in the background were received late on Saturday, May 1 and are single mattresses which are being distributed upon request.
- Today's delivery of mattresses was hampered by the inclement weather but efforts to distribute mattresses to those in need continues in earnest.

NEMO wishes to assure the public that it has no interest in withholding supplies necessary for the comfort of those who have been displaced due to the eruption of the La Soufrière Volcano. NEMO and its stakeholders will continue to coordinate the response to this national emergency in accordance with humanitarian principles.