

National Hero Gets 24-Hour Security At UWI After Being Vandalised

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Shorn Hector

The bust of National Hero Marcus Garvey at the University of the West Indies, Mona campus, is once again spotless after it was defaced by vandals last month. Pictured is security guard Denhue Johnson.

In defiance of strong dissenting voices, administrators of the University of the West Indies, Mona campus, have restored the controversial bust of National Hero Marcus Garvey at its Faculty of Humanities. It is now under 24-hour guard, *The Gleaner* has been told.

For weeks, the bust of the national hero was bagged and condemned after being vandalised in the shadows of the night on October 17.

The Raymond Watson-sculpted bust was splashed with yellow paint and plastered with feathers, forcing the university administration to use several black bags to hide the disfigured bust.

On High Alert

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However, since that incident and following high-level meetings of the university's top brass, guards have been on high alert and security on the campus has been heightened.

The Gleaner understands that the **UWI** has installed security cameras and positioned a guard in the vicinity of the bust.

Multiple sources, including **UWI** officials, who did not want to be identified in this story, confirmed with **The Gleaner** that the Garvey bust is under 24-hour guard, and strict instructions have been given that at no time should it be left unsecured.

A security officer close to the developments warned yesterday that it will not be business as usual as it relates to protecting the bust.

He said that those who threaten the security of the bust should think twice about attempting to vandalise it again.

"Anybody we catch a try #\$\$% 'round it - man woman or child - it nah go nice for them. Dem think a **UWI** dem a hurt when dem keep up them f#\$&ry No, a security get the bad name," one member of the security team said.

... Use the money to get a proper bust

The new measure to secure the bust of National Hero Marcus Garvey at the University of the West Indies (**UWI**) has had the tongues of some security personnel on the campus wagging. They are arguing that the measure is a waste of resources.

One security officer, in particular, mentioned that the university is about to spend close to a million dollars to protect the bust, disclosing the daily wage of security officers.

"Security on campus get \$3,500 a day to protect that and two [men are] needed. Waste a time and money. Plus, the security company going to collect more than the \$3,500 for each man... seven grand a day dat.

"Better them use the money to fix up something proper that everybody can accept instead of going the expensive way of doing things," the personnel said.

This is the latest development in a tussle between the **UWI** and Garvey enthusiasts and fanatics.

The **UWI** was forced to replace a previous bust of Garvey following public outrage that it bore no resemblance to the national hero.

Efforts yesterday to contact Dr Carol Edwards, the university's communications director, proved futile.