



As the hurricane season enters the peak period, Director General of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM), Ronald Jackson, is urging Jamaicans to intensify their preparedness activities.

On Tuesday (August 21) the **ninth Tropical Depression (TD) of the season was formed east of the Lesser Antilles, and is** projected to move through the southern Leeward Islands and northern Windward Islands on Wednesday afternoon (April 22) and emerge over the eastern Caribbean Sea by Thursday morning (Aug. 23).

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Speaking with JIS News, Mr. Jackson said although the season has been fairly quiet so far for Jamaica, “we were approaching the historically active part of the season and so Jamaicans now need to pursue their preparedness regime with some vigour.”

“The activities, we know, tend to pick up in late August into September. This year, we had an out of season storm to start off the season and we could see the storms coming late in the season. If we are to face any at all, we are hoping it is low level, so we’re promoting vigilance because the season really ends in November,” he stated.

The 2012 season saw an early burst of activity, with Tropical Storms Alberto and Beryl developing several days before the official start of the season, an occurrence not seen since 1908.

When Tropical Storm Debby formed on June 23, it was the first time that four storms had formed before July, since record keeping began in 1851.

Despite the early start, no further storms formed through all of July, until the development of four tropical systems in August, including Hurricanes Ernesto, Gordon and now TD-9.

Mr. Jackson stressed that while the country has not been impacted, Jamaicans should not be lulled into inaction, but should use the opportunity to continue reinforcing the preparedness regime so that if a hurricane does strike, persons would be adequately prepared.