



Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management
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MEDIA RELEASE #5

Thursday 23rd August, 2018

12:05 p.m.

CONTINUED INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

SUBSEQUENT TO SEISMIC ACTIVITY

On behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) is currently coordinating assessments of primarily all critical infrastructure, government buildings, and roadways, subsequent to the 6.9 magnitude earthquake felt across Trinidad and Tobago on **Tuesday 21st August, 2018 at 5:31 p.m.** and the **6.0** magnitude aftershock on **Wednesday 22nd August, 2018 at 9:28 a.m.**

UWI Seismic Research Centre confirmed that further to the earthquake event there were 32 aftershocks. These were evenly distributed from Tuesday 21st August 2018 into Wednesday 22nd August 2018. The magnitude of the felt aftershock was upgraded from 5.8 to 6.0 by the UWI Seismic Research Centre.

At this time, there are no reports of serious injury, loss of life or significant damage to critical infrastructure.

Aftershocks will continue and some may be at a magnitude large enough to be felt. Citizens are reminded to STAY CALM.

The NEOC warns against the creation and circulation of fake content (i.e. news, photographs and memes) which can cause unnecessary panic or concern to citizens and visitors. As citizens, we must continue to display patriotism by looking out for one another.

Priority has been given to the completion of the Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) and Damage and Needs Analysis (DANA) across all sectors, with the focus being directed to governmental/government-used critical facilities, and other building stock. The **Ministry of Works and Transport (MOWT)** has actively initiated inspection of critical facilities. Additionally, the MOWT is coordinating and implementing a national response team consisting of qualified and experienced personnel in building infrastructure. This team was dispatched across all municipalities on a priority basis to determine the structural safety of government buildings for occupancy.

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Requests were made for inspections on sixty-five (65) buildings which included twenty (20) schools. Of the sixty-five (65), twenty-two (22) inspections were completed with three (3) ongoing. All facilities inspected were found to be suitable for occupation. The MOWT will continue assessments today.

The **Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government (MRDLG)** has confirmed that Initial Damage Assessments (IDAs) were conducted by personnel from the fourteen (14) Municipal Corporations. Damage and Needs Assessments (DANAs) will continue in municipalities. One hundred and ninety-three (193) reports were received, and of these reports, one hundred and sixteen (116) were completed.

The Geological Society of Trinidad and Tobago (GSTT) has confirmed activity at the **Devil's Woodyard Mud Volcano** in **New Grant, Princes Town**. To maintain public safety and security, the Hindustan Road in New Grant remains closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic except to persons who reside in the area. Citizens and visitors are advised to avoid visiting the area at this time.

Activity has also been reported at the **Piparo Mud Volcano**. There are no road closures at this time.

The **Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA)** has confirmed that damage assessments in Tobago are now eighty percent (80%) completed.

Representatives from various **National Security Agencies** continue to be stationed at the National Emergency Operations Centre to coordinate and verify information for public updates.

The **Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS)** will continue the inspection of government/government-used facilities, inclusive of schools.

The **Traffic Management Branch** of the Ministry of Works and Transport has **reopened** the roadway on Independence Square (North) between George Street Extension and Nelson Street, Port of Spain, (outside Catholic Cathedral).

The **Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service (TTPS)**, and **Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS)** are reporting no major structural damage to facilities.

The **Mayaro Fire Station** was reported to be affected by the earthquake. The MOWT has inspected the facility and the building was found to be safe.

The **Housing Development Corporation (HDC)** dispatched a cross-functional team yesterday to conduct structural damage assessments at all HDC communities. The team includes officers from the Project Development and Oversight Division, Construction Management and Operations Division, Health and Safety Unit, Estate Management Division and Social and Community Services Unit. The team will continue to assess all units and provide assistance to residents who may have been affected.

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The **Ministry of Health** has confirmed that all health facilities across Trinidad and Tobago are operational.

The **North West Regional Health Authority** decanted the 4th and 5th Floors of the Central Block in the Port-of-Spain General Hospital. This measure was taken out of an abundance of caution to ensure the continued safety of our staff, patients and visitors. Movement from the other floors will continue on a phased basis.

Patients were relocated to other areas within the hospital where they will receive the required care. The North West Regional Health Authority Ministry received assistance from the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force and the North Central Regional Health Authority and the South West Regional Health Authority as required.

The **Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries** (MEEI) has reported that there is no structural damage to the energy sector facilities.

The **Ministry of Education** has confirmed that inspections are being conducted by the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS) of the nation's school and school laboratories.

The **Water and Sewerage Authority** (WASA) conducted water quality testing on all major water treatment plants. Results revealed that water quality was standard. There has been no compromise to water quality. The Authority will continue to conduct inspections of all their facilities for damage.

The **Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission** (T&TEC) has confirmed that the following areas are still experiencing power (electrical) outages: Mt Catharine, Port of Spain; Erthig Road, Belmont; Pashley Street, Laventille. T&TEC is working diligently on restoring services in affected areas.

The **Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago** (TSTT) has confirmed no service impact has been reported. TSTT has confirmed that Diego Martin Industrial Estate was restored. However, the Toco Main Road Rampanalgas site is still being addressed by T&TEC, this is expected to be resolved today.

The financial/banking sector has reported no major damage to facilities.

Damage and Needs Assessments (DANA) and subsequent conduct of Damage and Loss Assessments (DALA) will continue across Trinidad and Tobago.

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Citizens impacted that require assistance with conducting inspections following the development of cracks or signs of damage have been advised to contact their respective Municipal Corporation or TEMA through its toll-free hotline number (*please see the attached contact listing*).

All first responder agencies are on alert to provide assistance in the event of aftershocks.

The ODPM continues to remind citizens of the following in the event of aftershocks:

- **STAY CALM. DO NOT PANIC. BE ALERT.**
- If inside stay inside, do not run out of the building as you may be injured by falling debris.
- If inside, **DROP, COVER** and **HOLD ON** until the shaking stops.
- Get under a sturdy desk, table or bed and hold on or stand in a strong doorway.
- **DO NOT USE ELEVATORS OR STAIRS.**
- Move away from windows, mirrors, glass doors, pictures, bookcases, hanging plants and heavy objects.
- If outside and there are no obvious signs of danger nearby, stay there.
- If outside, stay away from glass buildings, electricity poles and bridges.
- If in a vehicle, do not stop on or under a bridge.
- Always look out for falling plaster, bricks, lighting fixtures and other objects.

The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM), first responders and other support agencies remain committed to the people of Trinidad and Tobago and continue to support the coordination of various stakeholders to ensure assistance can be provided to affected persons in a timely manner.

WE WISH TO UNDERSCORE THAT TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO IS NOT CURRENTLY UNDER ANY TSUNAMI WATCH OR WARNING.

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EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Corporation/Agency	Hotline Numbers
Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management	511
Trinidad and Tobago Police Service	999
Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service	990
Ambulance (Global Medical Response of Trinidad and Tobago)	811
Tobago Emergency Management Agency	211
Arima Borough Corporation	800-2ABC (2222)
Chaguanas Borough Corporation	800-DCBC (3222)
Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation	800-CTTC (2882)
Diego Martin Regional Corporation	800-DMRC (3672)
Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation	800-4MRC (4672)
Penal/Debe Regional Corporation	800-PDRC (7372)
Point Fortin Borough Corporation	800-PFCB (7322)
Port-of-Spain City Corporation	800-PSCC (7722)
Princes Town Regional Corporation	800-PTRC (7872)
San Fernando City Corporation	800-SCDU (7238)
Sangre Grande Regional Corporation	800-SGRC (7472)
San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation	800-SLRC (7572)
Siparia Regional Corporation	800-4SRC (4772)
Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation	800-TPRC (8272)

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Issued by:

Public Information, Education and Community Outreach Unit
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For further information, please Call:

ODPM's Customer Call Centre 511/ TEMA's Hotline 211