



MINISTRY OF NATIONAL SECURITY

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL DISASTER PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS MONTH 2023 LAUNCHED WITH PUBLIC ALERT NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Port of Spain: A Public Alert Notification System (PANS) has been launched as part of this year's National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Month (NDPPM). The NDPPM 2023 initiative was launched on Friday April 28, 2023, at the Alternate National Emergency Operations Centre (ANEOC), Pineapple Drive, Mausica.

The NDPPM is observed annually in the month of May, with a series of activities, to create greater awareness of the various hazards our country faces and promote an increased level of attentiveness, disaster preparation and readiness before the commencement of the Atlantic Hurricane Season, which starts on June 01 and ends on November 30.

Trinidad and Tobago's Public Alert Notification System (PANS) is a mass notification system that allows the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) to provide emergency alert information nationally, to an affected area or a specific group. PANS will inform citizens of and visitors to Trinidad and Tobago of critical information during emergencies and provide timely information to protect lives and property.

Delivering the feature address at the event, Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P., stated, "*As disaster risks and climate change become more of a threat to our society, we must also take a unified and comprehensive approach to managing our response to them, both from a mitigation and adaptation perspective*". He urged members of the public to join with the Multi-sectoral Committee, established to oversee the NDPPM activities, and underscored the importance for everyone to prepare for the commencement of the Wet and Hurricane Seasons. The Minister assured the Multi-sectoral Committee of his continued commitment to champion the need for readiness, mitigation and resilience against natural and man-made hazards.

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Minister Hinds also noted that the Public Alert Notification System (PANS) is an example of Government's digital transformation initiatives, aimed at bringing innovative and lifesaving solutions to our citizens and residents. He further stated that the Government is committed to strengthening the disaster resilience of all segments of our society and indicated that PANS will support persons with disabilities or physical impediments, allowing them to choose their preferred medium of communication.

Also speaking at the Launch was Chief Executive Officer of the ODPM and Chair of the Multi-sectoral Committee, Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart. He said that the Committee comprises over thirty (30) Government Ministries, Divisions and Agencies, including the Tobago Emergency Management Authority (TEMA). The Committee is tasked with ensuring that a national focus is maintained on disaster prevention and preparedness throughout the year, with an increased emphasis during the month of May, prior to the start of the Wet and Hurricane Seasons.

Also present to support the Launch of the National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Month 2023 and Public Alert Notification System (PANS) were Permanent Secretary (Ag.) in the Ministry of National Security, Ms. Nataki Atiba-Dilchan; Vice Chief of Defence Staff, Brigadier General Dexter Francis; Commissioner of Police, Ms. Erla Harewood-Christopher; Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Arnold Bristo; Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), Mr. Deopersad Ramoutar; Director of the Tobago Emergency Management Agency, Mr. Allan Stewart; and Senior Disaster Management Coordinator, of the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government and Deputy Chair of the NDPPM Multi-sectoral Committee, Mr. Jerry David.

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The theme for this year's NDPPM is "*Being Disaster Ready Is My Responsibility*", which encourages a Whole-of-Society Approach by individuals, communities, businesses, the public and private sectors, NGOs, and resident international institutions to become better prepared. This month features a host of activities to guide the national community on how to prepare and reduce overall disaster risk.

To learn more about the Public Alert Notification System (PANS), visit www.odpm.gov.tt/PANS.



Photo and caption:



From left to right: Senior Disaster Management Coordinator, Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government, Mr. Jerry David; Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), Mr. Deopersad Ramoutar; Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Arnold Bristo; Commissioner of Police, Ms. Erla Harewood-Christopher; Permanent Secretary (Ag.) in the Ministry of National Security, Ms. Nataki Atiba-Dilchan; Minister of National Security, the Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds M.P.; Vice Chief of Defence Staff, Brigadier General Dexter Francis; Chief Executive Officer of the ODPM, Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart; and Director of the Tobago Emergency Management Agency, Mr. Allan Stewart, at the Launch of the NDPPM 2023 and the Public Alert Notification System (PANS). The Launch event was held on Friday April 28, 2023 at the ODPM's Alternate National Emergency Operations Centre (ANEOC), Pineapple Drive, Mausica.

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