



# MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT

## Corporate Communication Unit

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Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

### MEDIA RELEASE

#### Ministry of Works and Transport Addresses Barrackpore Protest Action

The Ministry of Works and Transport notes with great concern, recent protest action in the Barrackpore area on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Burning debris was placed at various points along Rochard Douglas Road, Papourie Road, Kanhai Road, St. Croix Road and Oropouche River Road, which serve as major connectors into the Barrackpore area.

It is critical to note that over the past year, the Highways Division has undertaken routine road maintenance in the Barrackpore area which included the patching of over 1,770 square meters of roadway with asphalt. A recent assessment indicated that the Rochard Douglas Road is generally good, despite localized failures caused by the Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA). However, the condition of the Papourie and St. Croix Road is of concern to the Ministry. We are currently working to address landslips on St. Croix Road and the rehabilitation of Papourie Road in the shortest possible time. In addition, design works have been approved to address localized landslips in the area.

Additionally, the Programme for Upgrading Roads Efficiency (PURE) has undertaken considerable works in the Moruga/Tableland Constituency with approximately 70 ongoing and completed projects, including slope stabilization, bridge construction, road and drainage works.

While the Ministry acknowledges the challenges residents and motorists face in this community, the damage and inconvenience caused by such counterproductive action are irresponsible and unpatriotic.

The Ministry is currently treating with the challenge of maintaining and rehabilitating aged and ageing infrastructure which is an expensive undertaking. Therefore, such actions only serve to undermine the work being done by the Highways Division, given our current financial constraints. Today's protest action affected seven locations along the Barrackpore connector roads. It came with an unnecessary cost of \$375,000.00 to repair the asphalt surface that was damaged due to the protest fires ignited today. The funding now required for repair works could have been utilized for other critical road rehabilitation works in the community.

While the Ministry understands the need for the public to legitimately voice their displeasure, it should not be done at the cost of destroying the same infrastructure placed for their benefit. The Ministry of Works and Transport would like to reiterate that the intentional damage of Government property is an offence punishable under law. As such, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service will investigate this matter, and all appropriate legal action will be taken.

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