



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

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MEDIA RELEASE

TTPS and Educators Unite to Address Gang Violence, Immediate Solutions Already Underway

Senior officers from the Port of Spain Division and the Community Oriented Policing Section held discussions with principals and representatives from over 20 primary schools located in East Port of Spain, during a priority meeting today, Tuesday 27 February, 2024. The meeting, held at the Ministry of Education's regional office on Jerningham Avenue, Belmont was in response to the recent increase in gang violence around schools in the area, including the senseless murder of 11-year-old Ezekiel Paria, who was killed by a stray bullet last week.

Senior Superintendent Harripersad Ramnarine, Ag. Inspector Brathwaite, Sgt Parris and Corporal Thomas met with the educators to discuss intensifying efforts to protect students as well as staff. During the discussions, the principals expressed serious concerns over the safety of their schools, students, and staff who must commute daily through high-risk areas. Snr. Supt. Ramnarine assured the principals that the TTPS will intensify strategies to address the violence plaguing surrounding communities. He noted that some of these measures would be implemented from today, while additional proposed measures will be forwarded to the Commissioner of Police, Erla Christopher for her approval.

“The safety of our schools, staff and students remains the top priority,” said Snr. Supt. Ramnarine. “We are taking swift action using every resource available to contain the violence spilling into school zones, to

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ensure the safety of our dedicated educators and to secure the future for our beloved and vulnerable children.”

The principals praised the TTPS’ commitment to the safety of the students in the area and recognized the challenges they face in tackling this issue. Also in attendance were Ministry of Education officials Ms. Tuitt, School Supervisor II and Mr. Wade Griffith, who oversees school safety. Snr. Supt. Ramnarine agreed to continue to collaborate further and a follow-up meeting with more stakeholders to develop solutions is scheduled for the upcoming weeks.

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END