



## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

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March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

#### **Over \$254m Worth of Cocaine Seized**

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“I extend my heartfelt commendation to all officers and agencies involved in this exemplary operation, which underscores the power of real-time intelligence sharing and inter-agency collaboration. This seizure not only disrupts the illicit operations of organized crime but also sends a strong message of our unwavering commitment to national security and combatting trans-national organized crime. Our law enforcement teams remain resolute in their efforts to safeguard our nation and dismantle criminal networks that threaten our communities.”

This, from Commissioner of Police Ag Junior Benjamin following an intelligence-driven operation, executed in strategic collaboration with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Port of Spain Office, US JIATF South, the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG), and the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, which culminated in the successful interception and seizure of a substantial quantity of cocaine, valued at over \$250 million. The narcotics were expertly concealed within a deeply sealed compartment aboard a shipping vessel.

DCP Intelligence and Investigations, Suzette Martin coordinated the police operations after an intelligence unit of the TTPS received information which indicated that a shipping vessel, which had journeyed from Guyana to Trinidad, was carrying a substantial quantity of narcotics under the guise of legitimate cargo destined for St. Martin.

The TTPS promptly confirmed the vessel's arrival in Trinidad on February 25, 2025, and in collaboration with the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard, a rigorous surveillance operation was initiated, monitoring the vessel's activities and movements closely.

On Tuesday, March 11, 2025, the vessel was observed receiving large shipments of various goods. Although these appeared routine, the vessel remained under tight observation. Clearance was granted for the vessel's departure to St. Martin that afternoon; however, the crew altered their departure schedule, setting sail during the early hours of Wednesday 12 March, 2025, which aroused the suspicion of the officers.

This unexpected change intensified law enforcement scrutiny. Agencies strategically tracked the vessel's movements, prepared to intervene should any illicit activity be detected. The vessel was eventually intercepted by the TTCG in open waters and escorted to Staubles Bay. Here, the TTPS deployed specialized resources, including a highly trained canine unit, to conduct an exhaustive search.

Over a meticulous two-day inspection, a concealed, sealed compartment was discovered within the vessel. This led to the seizure of 157 packets of cocaine, weighing a combined total of 182.24 kilograms, with an estimated street value of TTD \$254,027,980.80. Five crew members aboard were arrested in connection with the trafficking attempt.

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Investigations are ongoing as the TTPS intensifies efforts to dismantle the criminal network responsible for this illegal operation.

**SEE ACCOMPANYING PHOTOGRAPH**

**Corporate Communications Unit**

March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**END**

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