



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE SERVICE CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

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MEDIA RELEASE

CoP: Adhere to Protocols for Easter, Shouter Baptist Celebrations

With the increase in Covid-19 cases, Commissioner of Police, Gary Griffith, is advising both the Christian and the Shouter Baptist Communities to ensure that they adhere to the Public Health Ordinance Regulations with their upcoming events next week.

The Spiritual Shouter Baptist Liberation Day will be celebrated on March 30th, while the Christian Community will commemorate Easter celebrations beginning with the Good Friday processions on April 2nd.

The CoP is asking the organisers to be more innovative, and instead of gathering in their hundreds, to have virtual events, including the Stations of the Cross processions.

The CoP says that every year, thousands participate in Shouter Baptist Day celebrations and the Easter Vigils. He added, "But we are not in normal times. This month marked one year since the virus has been with us. So far, 141 persons have died as a result of the virus and thousands were affected. The borders have been closed and there are restrictions in place to protect the country. We have noticed over the past year, some events with large gatherings caused a spike in cases. The TTPS has been on the front line ensuring that people observe the restrictions and adhere to the protocols. I know these upcoming events always attracted thousands of people, but this time, we have to be careful. I am asking the organisers of these events to ensure that their followers do the right thing.

The CoP said that in recent weeks, he had been very accommodating to persons and groups who requested permission to hold vigils, protests, meetings, and marches.

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Commissioner Griffith said he agreed to grant permission across the board because of the issues highlighted across the country, and more particular, in light of the recent deaths of several women.

But the CoP said he noted with concern that some of these requests for gatherings turned out to be in contravention of the Public Health Ordinance Regulations, Section 3 (1), which states, that a person shall not, without reasonable justification be found at any public place where the number of persons gathered, at any time, exceeds ten.

Commissioner Griffith noticed recent gatherings accounted for hundreds of persons even though the organisers of these events tried their very best to control the crowd which had gathered. As a result, the CoP says he would not be entertaining any requests at this time for hold vigils and marches

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