



CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

March 21, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSURES
PREPAREDNESS AMID HEIGHTENED VOLCANO ACTIVITY**

The Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government (RDLG), in collaboration with the Office of Disaster Preparedness Management (ODPM) and The University of the West Indies Seismic Unit have conducted thorough assessments and monitoring of heightened volcanic activity at Piparo. The Princes Town Regional Corporation (PTRC) and Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation (CTTRC) Disaster Management Units and the Trinidad and Tobago Municipal Police Service (TTMPS) were present to lend assistance.

Recent assessments indicate an increase in gas emissions, accompanied by the release of mud approximately every 70 seconds. The volume of gas being emitted is notably higher than usual, raising concerns for public safety.

Key Findings:

- The main vent has visibly grown in size and height, presenting unprecedented dimensions.
- New active faults and fractures, predominantly located in the northwestern and northeastern quadrants of the volcano, have been observed. These fractures, trending at 20, 70, 80, and 300 degrees, exhibit slight variations from those observed during the 2019 activity.
- Heightened activity has been noted at four small vents, with one in the northeastern quadrant emitting oily mud and three in the northwestern quadrant releasing gas vigorously. Skins of oil have been detected in the mud flows associated with these vents.

Possible Triggers and Response:

- Recent seismic events, including an earthquake occurring a day ago and several others in the preceding weeks, may have contributed to increased pressure along fault lines.
- The formation of fresh fractures suggests that pressure is being released as faults subside.

Safety Precautions:

- As a precautionary measure, the area surrounding the volcano has been cordoned off until gas emissions decrease to safer levels. Public safety remains paramount, and we urge citizens to adhere to safety directives issued by local authorities.



RDLG along with PTRC and CTTRC Disaster Management Units, TTMPs and other relevant agencies, remain committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all citizens. The volcanic activity will be monitored closely and updates will be provided as necessary.

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