



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
**Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services**

**The Honourable Vandana Mohit  
Minister of the People, Social Development and  
Family Services**

**Disaster Relief and Home Repairs Grant Distribution**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026  
11:00AM**

**Centrum Auditorium, Centre Point Mall, Chaguanas**

## **SALUTATIONS**

- Senator Dr. Natalie Chaitan-Maharaj, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services
- His Worship the Mayor of the Borough of Chaguanas, Mr. Faaiq Mohammed
- Mr. Ryan Ramcharan, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services
- Mr. Ryan Rampersad, Chairman Couva, Tabaquite, Talparo Regional Corporation
- Councillors of the Borough of Chaguanas
- Councillors of the Couva, Tabaquite, Talparo Regional Corporation
- Ms. Vera Deonanan Balkaran, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services

- Mr. Ashmead Mohammed, Adviser to the Minister of the People, Social Development and Family Services
- Ms Patricia De Leon - Henry, National Director, National Social Development Program
- Staff of the Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services
- Esteemed grant recipients
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning.

I want to acknowledge the families gathered here today from the Chaguanas Region and the Couva, Tabaquite, Talparo Region. Your presence is important, because today is about recognising the disruption you have faced, the resilience you have shown, and the responsibility of this Government to respond in a meaningful, timely and empathetic way.

Disasters do not affect households in a single way. For some families, the immediate challenge is loss of basic household items, clothing, or school supplies.

For others, the damage runs deeper, affecting the very structure of the home, its plumbing, its wiring, and its safety.

That reality is why this Ministry's work is deliberately structured around two distinct but complementary forms of support: the Disaster General Assistance Grant or Disaster Relief Grant and the Home Repair Grant.

The Disaster General Assistance Grant is designed to respond to the realities families face in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. It recognises that recovery is not one-dimensional, and that support must be practical, timely, and humane.

This assistance may include support for essential household items, clothing, and school supplies, ensuring that families can regain a sense of normalcy and that children are able to return to school with confidence and dignity.

In addition, disaster relief support extends to temporary food assistance, recognising that access to basic nutrition is critical in the days and weeks following disruption.

Importantly, disaster response is not limited to material support alone. Families may also receive psychosocial support through the National Family Services Division, including counselling and referral services, because recovery is not only about repairing what is lost, but also about supporting emotional wellbeing during and after difficult times.

The Home Repair Grant, however, serves a different purpose.

It does not arise from a disaster event, however, it is a structured social intervention under the National Social Development Programme, intended to improve the habitability, safety, and dignity of homes for vulnerable households.

Through assistance for minor structural repairs, sanitary plumbing, and electrical wiring, this programme addresses conditions that directly affect health, safety, and quality of life.

In many cases, families have endured wiring challenges, inadequate plumbing facilities, or deteriorating housing conditions for years. The Home Repair Grant allows Government to intervene in a practical and meaningful way, ensuring that citizens are not forced to live in sub-par conditions that compromise their wellbeing and dignity.

Together, these two forms of assistance reflect the Ministry's broader mandate of responding when crisis occurs, while also addressing long-standing vulnerability and need.

Today, through the distribution of Disaster Relief Grants and Home Repair Grants, the Ministry is providing support to **sixty-seven (67) households**, benefitting **two hundred and twenty-eight (228) individuals**, with total assistance amounting to **one million, one hundred and seventy-one thousand, seven hundred and ten dollars (\$1,171,710.50)**.

But this engagement is about far more than figures.

It is about restoring stability and purpose where life has been unfortunately disrupted.

It is about ensuring safety where risk once existed.

And it is about reaffirming that Government has a duty to stand with its people more so its vulnerable people, not only in moments of crisis, but in the everyday realities that affect how families live.

The Ministry of the People, Social Development and Family Services serves as a second responder in times of disaster, and as a constant support system for vulnerable households across the country.

Once assessments are completed and needs are verified, our responsibility is to ensure that assistance reaches families fairly, transparently, and without unnecessary delay thus aiming for seamless transition.

I am keenly aware that waiting for support can be difficult. Repairs cannot always be postponed. Living conditions cannot always be endured. That is why we continue to strengthen our systems, improve coordination, and streamline processes so that assistance can reach families as efficiently as possible.

None of this work happens by accident.

I want to take this opportunity to express sincere appreciation to the staff of the Ministry, Social Welfare officials, assessors, administrative and finance teams, and regional personnel.

You are the ones who enter communities, listen to families' stories, conduct assessments, and ensure that support is delivered responsibly and compassionately.

Your work requires both technical accuracy and human understanding. You serve people at some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives, and you do so with professionalism and care. For that, I thank you.

To the families receiving support today, I want you to hear this clearly, this support is not an act of generosity, nor is it a special exception.

It is the fulfilment of a solemn responsibility, the duty of Government to stand with its people when hardship disrupts lives, whether that hardship comes without warning or builds quietly over time.

Recovery is not only about fixing what is broken. It is about restoring confidence, dignity, and hope. It is about ensuring that families can move forward without being permanently set back by circumstances beyond their control.

Our Government, we remain committed to building a social protection system that is people-centred, responsive, and fair, one that recognises both urgent need and long-standing vulnerability. To date since this administration has entered office, we have diligently erased the backlog and unnecessary delays in providing these essential relief.

Today represents an important step in that ongoing work.

I close by saying to every household represented here, and to the wider population looking on:

- You are seen,
- You are supported,
- And you are not alone.

May this assistance bring comfort to your homes, stability to your families, and renewed confidence as you continue forward.

Thank you.