



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Justice Convenes High-Level Strategic Meeting with Sector Leaders to Advance Justice and Correctional Reform

MEDIA RELEASE

August 10, 2026

The Ministry of Justice, on Friday, August 7, 2026, convened a high-level strategic meeting to strengthen inter-agency collaboration aimed at building a more efficient, modern, and responsive approach to justice and correctional reform.

The meeting was led by the Honourable Devesh Maharaj, Minister of Justice and Minister in the Office of the Attorney General, alongside the Ministry's senior executive team.

Minister Maharaj met with:

1. Mr Elvin Scanterbury, Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), and his executives from the Trinidad and Tobago Prison Service (TTPrS);
2. Ms Kerlene Edmund, Assistant Registrar and Deputy Marshal of the Supreme Court, representing the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago;
3. Assistant Superintendent (Ag.) Ramdath Phillip, Head of the Legal Unit of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS);
4. Mr Zaheer Ali, Director, Policy and Community Support Office (PACSO), Ministry of Homeland Security (MHS).

Addressing participants, Minister Maharaj underscored the importance of moving beyond traditional approaches to a system grounded in evidence and measurable outcomes, *"Can people be changed for the better? Yes, but it requires a modernised, evidence-based approach to reform. We need concrete proposals and recommendations on how to improve our rehabilitation systems so that we can determine the resources required to move forward effectively."*

Key strategic areas explored during the engagement included:

- Parole Act, 2026: Advancing preparations for the rollout of the Parole Act, 2026, including the systems, institutional capacity and inter-agency collaboration required to support effective parole administration and the structured, supervised reintegration of persons released from custody into society.
- Evidence-based Rehabilitation and Assessment: Incorporating evidence-based evaluation tools and international best practices, such as cognitive assessment models used in the United Kingdom and Norway, to measure inmate progress and readiness for re-entry into society.



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- Reintegration and Post-Release Support: Strengthening community-based support networks, and post-release monitoring to help persons released from custody navigate employment, housing, and social re-entry challenges.
- Judicial Alignment and Legislative Options: Examining appropriate legislative policy measures and alternative sentencing that can assist judicial officers while addressing facility overcrowding
- Institutional Capacity and Training: Identifying resource requirements and specialised training needs for prison and parole officers to strengthen case management, rehabilitation and reintegration.
- Inter-Agency Collaboration: Strengthening collaboration among the Ministries of Justice and Homeland Security, the TTPrS, the TTPS and the Judiciary to balance public safety with meaningful rehabilitation.

The meeting concluded with Minister Maharaj requesting formal proposals and recommendations from senior officials ahead of their next engagement to guide future policy and funding priorities.

- END -



Photo Caption: The Honourable Devesh Maharaj, Minister of Justice and Minister in the Office of the Attorney General, with senior executives of the MoJ, along with representatives of the MHS, including the TTPrS, the TTPS, the PACSO as well as the Judiciary.





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Photo Caption: The Honourable Devesh Maharaj, Minister of Justice and Minister in the Office of the Attorney General, and Mr Elvin Scanterbury, Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.), at a high-level meeting to promote the reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners.



Photo Caption: The Honourable Devesh Maharaj, Minister of Justice and Minister in the Office of the Attorney General, and senior executives of the Ministry of Justice, along with representatives of the MHS, including the TTPrS, the TTPS, the PACSO, as well as the Judiciary, convene for a high-level meeting to promote the reformation and rehabilitation of prisoners.



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Photo Caption: Justice and Security officials at the MoJ's high-level strategic meeting to advance Justice and Correctional Reform.



Photo Caption: Left to Right - Mr Zaheer Ali, Director, PACSO, MHS; ASP Ramdath Phillip, Head of the TTPS Legal Unit; Mr. Sheldon Thomas, Assistant Commissioner of Prisons (Ag) Offender Management and Corrections.



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Photo Caption: Mr Elvin Scanterbury, Commissioner of Prisons (Ag.) TTPrS at the MoJ's high-level strategic meeting to advance Justice and Correctional Reform.



Photo Caption: ASP Ramdath Phillip, Head of the TTPS Legal Unit at the MoJ's high-level strategic meeting to advance Justice and Correctional Reform.



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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PRISON SERVICE



"TO HOLD AND TO TREAT"

Photo caption: TTPrS logo.



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