

Tobago Chamber hopes crime won't spike when SoE ends



Tobago chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce Curtis Williams

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Tobago's business community is hopeful that crime will stay under control once the state of emergency (SoE) is lifted.

Curtis Williams, chairman of the Tobago Division of the T&T Chamber of Industry and Commerce, is worried that progress in restoring security and reducing crime might not hold. However, he is optimistic that strong coordination among the police, army, and other security forces will be key in maintaining the low crime levels.

Recent figures show that Tobago's crime rate dropped significantly, with murders down by 66.67 per cent.

Last year, the island recorded six murders by March and ended the year with 26—the highest in its history. So far this year, there have been two murders, both of which have been solved.

Williams praised the police and other security forces for their teamwork, saying it is the first time he has witnessed such a unified effort on the island.

“Tourism is our main thing and we want the island and the visitors to be safe and I’m happy and I say thanks to the TTPS and law enforcement.

“I know the SoE is going to come to an end ... we hope that at the end of the SoE we don’t see crimes spiking again and we can keep crime, especially in Tobago, down to a bare minimum,” he said.

Beyond crime control, Williams, an outspoken advocate for a stronger relationship between the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) and the central government, believes the current political divide is hurting Tobago’s residents and hindering progress.

“Let’s put aside all the election and let’s meet again meaningfully and have that conversation. I’d like to see the THA having conversation with the central government and the central government having conversation with the THA that would tell us that something positive is happening on the island,” he said.