



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
**Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts**

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**Minister Mitchell Welcomes the Extension of Beach Hours to 6pm**

Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell is welcoming the extended opening hours of beaches. Therefore, beach facilities under the direct purview of the Ministry located at Maracas, Las Cuevas and Vessigny are now open from 5am to 6pm starting on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. In addition, these new extended hours also include tours at the Caroni Swamp and Bird Sanctuary, Buccoo Reef and other similar types of activities which can now operate at 50% capacity.

Minister Mitchell says, “This Ministry began engaging with the Ministry of Health late last year and presented a strong case for the restart of these tours as they are critical to an enriching visitor experience. We are grateful that our proposals were favourably considered and eventually accepted, as this is an important step in the recovery of the tourism sector.”

In December 2021, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts made representation to the Ministry of Health on behalf of tour boat operators to get this part of the tourism industry restarted. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, these attractions were initially allowed until 2pm and this extension to 6pm will bring a welcome relief to these operators particularly at Caroni Bird Sanctuary.

The Caroni Swamp and Bird Sanctuary is home to Trinidad and Tobago’s national bird the Scarlet Ibis, as well as a rich array of diverse flora and fauna. The site attracts some users throughout the day for research and educational tours and activities, but it is the Scarlet Ibis nesting period during the hours of 4pm and 6pm that is the main draw for visitors.

Minister Mitchell reminds citizens and visitors alike, that even as access to beaches and tour boat activities are now extended to 6pm, all citizens are

reminded to continue observing the three W's which are, to wash your hands, wear your mask and watch your distance.

**\*\*\*End\*\*\***