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Competition on October 11, Joseph is cognisant of the vital role of the schools. The registered schools hail from the west, the east up to El Dorado West Secondary School, and three are from south Trinidad. He is adamant that neither location nor cost is a hindrance to any school participating in the sport.

Beyond the schools, the appeal of the sport extends to the cultural connection with China, which enables the continuation of traditions. The symbolic dragon heads, tails, and drums are usually reserved for formal races - they remain powerful cultural emblems, connecting local athletes to the sport's Chinese origins.

Another attraction, as Joseph argues, extends beyond competition. "It's a full-body workout-core, back, legs, everything," he says. "It's also about coordination and learning to work as a team."

Training typically takes place on weekends, with students sharing the \$300 boat rental fee at the Chaguaramas

Centre, making the sport affordable. Depending on the vessel size teams may comprise either 14 members, including the helmsman and drummer and two substitutes, or 26 members, including a drummer, helmsman, and four substitutes. Substitutes are needed for competitions.

With the sport already attracting schools from across the country and fostering camaraderie across age groups, Joseph's goals may be closer to reality than they appear. As the rhythmic beat of the drum sets the pace for each race, so too does his leadership set the tone for dragon boating's future in Trinidad and Tobago—a future defined by growth, recognition, and unity.

