



Media Release

LAUNCH OF THE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME FOR THE WOOD AND WOOD RELATED PRODUCTS

October 21, 2022:- Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry in delivering her feature address at the launch of the Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Related Products Manufacturing Sub-sector on Friday 21st October, 2022, highlighted the many opportunities for Apprentices. Minister Gopee-Scoon stated ***“by enrolling in this Programme, you have made a critical step toward expanding your knowledge and skillsets, increasing your employability and earning potential. You are a crucial spoke in the wheel to driving competitiveness, productivity and innovation in the Manufacturing Sector.”***

Minister Gopee-Scoon further indicated that the Wood and Wood Related Products is an important Manufacturing Sub-sector. The Sub-sector employs approximately four thousand (4000) persons and its exports was an estimated TT\$27.6 million in 2021. She expressed that this Apprentice Programme is expected to further ***“strengthen the wood and wood products value chain and facilitate Trinidad and Tobago’s integration as a higher value added wood processor”***.

Ms. Tricia Coosal, President, Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers’ Association (TTMA), underscored the importance of building of capacity of the Human Resource for the achievement of the TTMA’s major goal of doubling the country’s non-energy exports in five years. She reaffirmed TTMA’s commitment to encourage its members to become Industry Partner sites and take advantage of the Programme.

In elaborating on TTMA’S partnership, Minister Gopee-Scoon confirmed that there are approximately twenty-five (25) firms and other commercial entities, which provide this platform for practical training to be done and will also create opportunities for employment for graduates.

Director, Board of MIC-IT, Mr. Winston Boodoo said ***“the MIC-IT is proud to continue our mandate to provide quality Technical Vocational Education and Training throughout Trinidad and Tobago” and “is very pleased to partner with the Ministry of Trade and Industry; the Ministry of Youth, Development and National Service; the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturing Association and the National Training Agency, to deliver this Woodworking Apprenticeship programme.”***

The two-year Apprenticeship Programme aims to fill existing vacancies and skills gaps within the wood and wood related products manufacturing sub-sector. The Programme will be administered in three (3) phases. It covers the occupational areas of; Carpentry; Woodworking and Joinery Technology and will be delivered using a 1:3 ratio of theory to practical. Apprentices will be required to specialize in one of the following areas; Furniture Production; Upholstering in Woodworking; Cabinet-Making; and Antique Furniture Production and placed at an industry partner site aligned with their chosen specialization. A total fifty (50) apprentices will be trained at the St. Bede Technology and Pleasantville Technology Centres. Apprentices will receive a monthly stipend of TT\$2,000 for the duration of the Programme. Graduates will receive an Apprenticeship Programme for the Wood and Wood Products Manufacturing Sub-sector Diploma upon completion.

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