



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Trade and Industry

MEDIA RELEASE

MIC-IT and CFTDI signs MOU to Implement Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme

October 5, 2023: Senator the Honourable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Trade and Industry delivered remarks at a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony between the MIC- Institute of Technology (MIC-IT) and the Caribbean Fisheries Training and Development Institute (CFTDI) to facilitate a Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme at Chaguaramas on October 4th, 2023.

The signing of this MoU between MIC-IT and the CFTDI represented another milestone in Government's agenda to build human resource in targeted sectors of economic activity. Encouraged by the performance of similar programmes for the Manufacturing sector and the Woodworking sector which were launched in Fiscal 2023, the Government expanded its focus on building capacity in the Yachting sector via this new initiative.

In her address, the Minister Gopee-Scoon highlighted that the Government has identified yachting as a priority economic area for the development and expansion of the non-energy sector, as well as the diversification of the economy on account of its potential for foreign exchange earnings and employment creation. Trinidad and Tobago is renowned for the provision of world-class yacht repair and maintenance services and this country's strategic geographical location provides a safe haven for yacht owners during the hurricane season. The Minister pointed out that in order to establish Trinidad and Tobago as a preferred destination for yacht repair and maintenance services, there is a need to further develop our human resources.

"Predicated on this need, Cabinet approved a Yachting Marine Apprenticeship Programme in September 2023 to develop a pool of talented workers who can be employed by local businesses, and new ones as well, based on the existing skill shortages which have been identified in a gap analysis which has been done by the MTI," she said. "Therefore, this Programme is being implemented in collaboration with MIC-IT, and now involving the use of the facilities and other areas of assistance by Caribbean Fisheries and Training Development Institute."

In the first instance, the YMAP Programme will matriculate one cohort of 150 trainees; with 15 trainees placed into one of 10 areas of specialization. The areas of specialization include *inter alia*: Sail Repair; Marine Air-conditioning and refrigeration; Marine Plumbing; Renewable Energy Systems for the Boating Industry; Marine Electrical and Electronics; Wood working for the Marine Industry; and Marine Welding and Fabrication. The Programme will also involve industrial attachment, whereby trainees will be allowed to undertake practical training at an

established company within the sector. Trainees registered in the YMAP will benefit from a stipend of TT \$1,500 per month.

Minister Gopee-Scoon expressed confidence that upon the successful completion of the programme with the first cohort of trainees, a second cohort of similar size will be trained.

The MoU ceremony was also attended by Professor Emeritus, Clément Imbert, Chairman of MIC-IT, and Ms. Nerissa Lucky, Chairman of CFTDI. Ms. Lucky, in her remarks, expressed high hopes for the collaboration between the MIC-IT and the CFTI in the delivery of the YMAP programme.

She stated, "CFTDI is proud to partner with MIC-IT, and under this MoU, we will specifically provide training, training facilities, assist with administration, provide technical advice, conduct research, identify skills gaps, and assist with the provision of primary and secondary trainers for the conduct of the Yachting Marine Apprenticeship training, better known as YMAP. We look forward to a fruitful partnership that benefits, not only each agency, but produces highly skilled and marketable individuals, ready for employment and nation building."

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