



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

# *Commissioning Ceremony*

**ETECK POINT FORTIN  
BUSINESS PARK**

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REMARKS

**SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE-SCOON  
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

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23 NOVEMBER 2015  
POINT FORTIN

It is my pleasure to address you today at the commissioning of this Business Park. This new Park signifies our commitment to create new economic spaces for local companies to develop and grow; and we are delighted, as a new Government to do this in Point Fortin.

Evolving TecKnologies Enterprise Development Company Limited (eTeck) was set up to be the agent of change for Trinidad and Tobago through the provision of land space and infrastructure, particularly augmenting the production capacity of non-energy companies.

Today, eTeck owns and operate nineteen (17) **fully occupied** light industrial Parks within almost every region of the country. Point Fortin is the 18th. This is expected to expand to nineteen (19) when eTeck takes possession of the Piarco AeroPark Project – though incomplete. Our 20th is the Tamana Intech Park, with just the flagship building operational at this time.

This Park and other economic spaces operating in Trinidad and Tobago are an integral part of the Government's economic recovery strategies to build out the manufacturing sector, diversify the economy and encourage and retain investment.

For any of these activities to flourish, there **MUST** be the availability of suitable and modern economic spaces.

As you know, our national economy is not in a preferred state and energy prices may not fully recover to recent levels in the short to medium term; therefore we, as a responsible Government, is committed to acting appropriately and expeditiously in pursuing suitable economic policies to create alternative revenue streams and possibilities for increased business activities.

The Government has recognized that to continue strengthening the manufacturing industry and more importantly, our local businesses, upgrades are required, both infrastructural and regulatory. We must therefore establish the framework to encourage further expansion, and monitor to ensure full utilization, in the ways intended.

You may wish to note that a recent survey conducted by eTeck has found that there is a significant demand for additional economic spaces, especially in light of the fact that over the last five years, NO new industrial parks were developed.

Regrettably, Point Fortin was a victim of the last Government's inaction and lack of commitment to the development of this area.

As far back as May 2007, under the last PNM Administration, eTeck commenced the development of fifty six (56) acres, on this very site, aimed at providing thirty two (32) fully developed plots of land for light industrial use.

However, in May 2012, the former Cabinet approved the transfer of most of these lands to the Ministry of Health for the construction of the Point Fortin Hospital.

By October 2014, perhaps for a particular purpose, the Cabinet subsequently agreed to recommence the development of the Point Fortin Park on a smaller scale. Very little was done.

I am pleased that this Government, through eTecK, has intervened to ensure that this much needed and long overdue infrastructure project is delivered to you - the business people of Point Fortin.

Our Government's interest and support for this Park is leveraged on the knowledge that this space will play a critical role, not only in the development of the immediate Point Fortin/La Brea community, but the wider Southwest Peninsula, as residents will be given opportunities to access employment in close proximity to their homes. We estimate a minimum of 245 permanent jobs, with some 185 persons being employed during the build-out phase, redounding to an improvement in the standard of living of many.

Our drive is not solely focused on providing infrastructure but also in ensuring societal welfare gains and improving the social conditions of our citizens.

I should alert you that we are already looking at nearby lands to expand this Park. This focus will extend nationwide.

In this regard, allow me to elaborate on a few of the other Business Parks which this Government intends to aggressively roll out.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry has been assigned responsibility to realise the Piarco AeroPark Project which will create an Aerotropolis of five (5) zones on over 160 acres of land.

An aerotropolis is a metropolitan subregion where the layout, infrastructure, and economy are centered on an airport which serves as a multimodal "airport city" commercial core. It is similar in form to a traditional metropolis, which contains a central city commercial core and commuter-linked suburbs.

It will allow for investment opportunities in hotels/conferences centres, an airport transport hub, bonded industrial complexes, aircraft maintenance repair and overhaul facility, as well as meteorological services, fuelling facility and a Free Trade Zone.

The Piarco Aero Park was born out of the Strategic Land Use Plan (SLP), under the last PNM administration; and approved by Cabinet on January 15th 2009.

The Park is intended and will emerge as a vibrant contributor to our economic development by attracting investment and creating new jobs in a new logistics cluster.

This Government also intends to complete and populate the first phase of the Tamana InTech Park during fiscal 2016. I have been assured by eTecK's Management Team that over the next six months 21 completed lots will be available to investors and entrepreneurs in the area of ICT (specifically software design and applications) and high value manufacturing.

Even before that, eTecK is likely to start the development of a new site to be determined very soon, but which will be actioned almost immediately.

As a Government, we will pursue a programme of job creation and enterprise development, as employment, especially among the youth, remains a major responsibility as we develop as a nation.

Opportunities through entities like the Point Fortin Business Park will encourage entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity amongst our young people, in particular.

I am certain that this is an intention for collaboration by the Ministry of Education to allow for specific training programmes at the post secondary level upwards and curriculum development that focus on the specific needs of sectors in the SouthWestern peninsula.

To the new leases, as you begin to build out your spaces, a call is made to you the private sector to adopt less risk averse practices and also to invest in research and development to ensure that more innovative products are offered to consumers.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry is ready to hear the concerns of the business community.

We are ready to engage in honest and purposeful dialogue to find solutions to your issues.

It is the responsibility of each and everyone here, including eTecK and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, to fully understand each other's role and take responsibility for it; and to ensure that we not only think about the goals and objectives of the institutions we represent, but how we are all interlinked and interdependent; we need to reinforce those linkages.

We invite you the private sector to partner with us to intensify our efforts to grow our country's economy and to further develop the social and economic circumstances of our citizens.

I am sure you will all agree with me that the strengthening of our Parks cannot be left to the Government alone. Support, for and from local business and industries, is needed more than ever.

Assistance from the Regulatory and supporting Agencies to ensure that all works are done at the highest quality standards and all queries facilitated with expediency, is a must.

We need everyone on board, both public and private sector.

I thank you.