



ADDRESS BY : **Senator the Honourable,
Paula Gopee-Scoon
Minister of Trade and Industry**
Ministry of Trade and Industry

EVENT : Jetsam Awards Ceremony 2020

TIME : 7:00 p.m.

DATE : Friday 28th February, 2020

VENUE : **Century Ballroom
Queens Park Oval
Port of Spain**

Salutations

- Mr. Robert Bernard, President, Arima Race Club
- Dr. David Kangaloo, Chairman, Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority
- Mr. Linford Carrabon, Chairman, Betting Levy Board
- Members of the Arima Race Club
- Members of the Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority
- Members of the Betting Levy Board
- Mr. Michael Bernard, President of Supreme Ventures of Jamaica
- Award Recipients
- Other Specially Invited Guests
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and gentlemen

Good Evening

It is a pleasure to join you today and deliver remarks at this year's Jetsam Awards Ceremony held in honour of the annual achievers of horseracing.

Congratulations are extended to all the champions of racing we are gathered to celebrate.

Ladies and gentlemen, this annual event affords horse racing stakeholders the opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments and progress made by the industry's exemplars, as well as embrace possible opportunities for the advancement of the sport.

As you are aware, in addition to bringing enjoyment to many, the sector has meaningfully contributed to the national economy, directly and indirectly, through employment of trainers and assistant trainers; grooms; farriers; stable lads; jockeys and apprentice jockeys; veterinarians; security personnel and administrative staff.

However, the current state of racing requires visionary leadership, commitment and a collaborative effort by all industry stakeholders to address the challenges which may negatively impact the long term sustainability of the sport.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry, while focused on attracting investments, improving the country's competitiveness and diversifying our export markets, also has a mandate to develop the horse racing industry through its entities, the Betting Levy Board (BLB) and the Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority (TTRA).

The Ministry has been engaging in consistent consultations with the Betting Levy Board, Arima Race Club (ARC) and the Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority to ensure the effective implementation of initiatives focused on generating additional income by diversifying the revenue streams, improving local horse racing facilities, fostering better partnerships to attract private sector investment and increasing the horse population to allow for more frequent races. The Ministry recognises the efforts of the Trinidad and Tobago Racing Authority as the organization continues to work to improve the integrity of the sport through numerous activities. Notably, the TTRA has conducted initiatives focused on improving testing services, the enforcement of the rules and conditions of racing and updating the racing rules. These are all positive steps in a desirable direction.

The Government is aware that legislation including the enactment of the Gambling (Gaming and Betting Control) Bill, will contribute to stakeholders' ongoing intention to grow racing locally. As an administration we are committed to creating a modern legal and regulatory framework for gaming, gambling and betting. This important legislation is currently before the Parliament for consideration.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry recognizes that a properly regulated gambling industry would provide the opportunity for more reasonable levels of certainty about the competitive environment and as such, allow horse racing stakeholders to make informed long-term decisions. In this regard, the Ministry and the Government will continue to support the development of the gambling legislative framework. The big question will be – will the Opposition support?

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to assure you that the Ministry of Trade and Industry stands ready to support the industry's efforts to further develop racing in Trinidad and Tobago.

This, however, can only be accomplished with the unwavering commitment and effort from all the industry stakeholders and those who invest in the sport of horse racing. You are therefore encouraged to each do your part but you must be united in your endeavours.

In closing, I again extend, my warm congratulations to all the winners this evening.

I thank you.