



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

The Launch of the Port Health Office in Chaguaramas

Feature Address

Dr. Colin Neil Gosine

Parliamentary Secretary

Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism

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Salutations

- Dr. Rishad Seecharan – Minister in the Ministry of Health
- Ms. Erica Fortune - Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health
- Mrs. Calise Narinesingh-Martin - Chairman - Chaguaramas Development Authority (CDA)
- Mr. Jesse James – President, Marine Services Association of Trinidad and Tobago
- Ms. Vashti Guyadeen – Chief Executive Officer – Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce
- Mr. Kelvin Mahabir – Chief Executive Officer – Private Sector Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr. Milton Awing – Chief Executive Officer – Crews Inn
- Mr. Ackenaton Isaac – Commanding Officer – Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard (TTCG)
- Dr. Mark Dookeran – Chief Public Health Inspector – Ministry of Health
- Mr. Ronnie Rampalard – Assistant Superintendent Of Police – Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS)
- Distinguished Guests
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon.

It is a pleasure to join you for the launch of this Port Health Office in Chaguaramas—an initiative that reflects the kind of country we are building: more efficient, more coordinated, and more competitive.

This facility is part of a broader effort to modernise border services, strengthen public health oversight, and improve the ease of doing business. For too long, the maritime sector has faced slow and fragmented processes. Today marks a clear shift toward a system that is faster, more practical, and aligned with a modern maritime economy. Chaguaramas is one of our most valuable maritime assets—strategically located, regionally respected, and critical to the yachting and marine services sector. As we position it as a premier destination, our systems must match its potential.

Unlike most Caribbean destinations, Trinidad and Tobago sits outside the hurricane belt—giving us a year-round operational advantage. This positions us strongly to become the yachting capital of the hemisphere, and that is precisely our focus.

The opening of this Port Health Office is a vital step toward that goal. By bringing services closer to the point of arrival, alongside Customs and Immigration, we are reducing delays, improving coordination, and transforming processes that once took hours into minutes through digitised approvals—strengthening both service delivery and competitiveness.

This is also part of a wider transformation. With the implementation of SailClear in May 2026, Trinidad and Tobago will move toward a fully digital clearance system. Together, these improvements mean faster processing, better compliance, and a more professional experience for visitors.

Across the Caribbean, countries like Barbados, The Bahamas, and Antigua and Barbuda compete not just on geography, but on efficiency, clarity, and service quality. Trinidad and Tobago has the natural advantage—now we are strengthening execution.

I commend the Ministry of Health for its leadership, and thank MSATT and CrewsInn for their partnership. This initiative demonstrates what can be achieved when government and industry work together with purpose.

The maritime sector is a key part of our diversification strategy. It generates foreign exchange, supports small businesses, and drives activity across multiple industries—from repairs and provisioning to hospitality and transport.

Faster clearance is not just administrative—it translates into more time spent in our marinas, businesses, and communities. Efficiency at the border is economic strategy. The Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism remains committed to reducing bottlenecks, improving coordination, and supporting sustainable growth in this sector. To the officers who will operate this facility—you are not just public servants, you are ambassadors. The experience you provide will shape how Trinidad and Tobago is perceived.

This initiative reflects our vision of a diversified, resilient, and competitive economy built on strong institutions and collaboration.

Let us see today not just as the opening of an office, but as a step forward in positioning Trinidad and Tobago as a leading maritime hub.

Thank you.