



SATT WEEKLY

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Stakeholders News

New Linear Accelerator X-Ray Scanner at the Port of Port-of-Spain

Yesterday's commissioning of a \$25 million Linear accelerator X-Ray scanning and detection system from China at the Port of Port-of-Spain (PPoS) is promised to increase - and more efficiently detect - contraband items in cargo containers and trucks.

Trade and Investment Minister Vasant Bharath mentioned "This scanner can produce real-time, high-resolution images (and) can scan 15 containers per hour."

He also added, "This will go a long way towards improving efficiency at the port and therefore, improve our ranking on the 'ease of doing business' index."

In her feature address, Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar also mentioned the benefits of this modern scanner, saying "I see it as a very positive development for the port. This scanner will provide tremendous benefits for us in terms of port efficiency and border security." She also noted that with Christmas a little over three months away, the scanner would be "fully operational in time to handle the usual increase in goods imported for the Christmas period."

Noted also by the Prime Minister, was the increase in the number of containers that can now be inspected. Fifteen containers can now be inspected per hour in comparison to the present situation of only two per hour, due to containers having to be unloaded and reloaded for the inspection process.

Funding for the scanner came from "grant funding", which the Prime Minister said was first available to TT by the Chinese Government back in 2003. However, it wasn't until China's President, Xi Jinping paid a State visit to this country between May 31 to June 2, 2013, that the Persad-Bissessar administration became aware of it. She further confirmed that the grant funding is not a loan.

Transport Minister Stephen Cadiz described the commissioning as "a red letter day" because this was the first such scanner being installed at a port in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Minister of Transport said, "We are not where we're supposed to be in terms of efficiency and moves per hour in order to compete internationally. This scanner will help to improve that. More needs to be done and we are working on that." "Decommissioning old equipment such as, ship-to-shore cranes and ground handling equipment at the port is now in the process. Also, paving works is expected in the near future".

