



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence

## **FEATURE ADDRESS**

**BY**

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**DEPUTY PERMANENT SECRETARY**

**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ARTIFICIAL  
INTELLIGENCE**

**ON BEHALF OF SENATOR THE HONOURABLE DOMINIC SMITH  
MINISTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND ARTIFICIAL  
INTELLIGENCE**

**AT THE**

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS AUTHORITY OF TRINIDAD AND  
TOBAGO'S BURSARY DISTRIBUTION CEREMONY**

***FRIDAY 22ND AUGUST, 2025***

## SALUTATIONS

- Mr. Kurleigh Prescod, Chief Executive Officer of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
- Professor Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Campus Principal, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine- TBC
- Professor Stephen Joseph, President of the University of Trinidad and Tobago
- Dr. Helen Cumberbatch, Vice-President, Student Affairs at the College of Science Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago
- Bursary recipients
- Executive Officers of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago.
- Distinguished Guests.
- Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good morning,

I am honoured to join you today for the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago's Bursary Distribution Ceremony. I bring you warm greetings on behalf of the Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence.

Senator the Honourable Dominic Smith, Minister of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence has asked me to convey his sincere regrets that he is unable to join you today due to urgent matters of national importance requiring his attention.

It is my honour, as Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence, to deliver the feature address on his behalf for this occasion – The Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago's Bursary Distribution Ceremony.

### **Significance TATT's Bursary Programme**

The TATT Bursary Programme is an initiative which fosters gender equality within the ICT sector and develops our ICT workforce in Trinidad and Tobago. The programme provides much needed financial assistance to male and female students who are chosen from our tertiary learning institutions such as COSTAATT, UTT and The UWI (St Augustine) to pursue ICT-related studies.

This initiative directly supports national development by fostering a more inclusive and capable pool of ICT professionals, and is a powerful testament to the investment we continue to make in our country's ICT future.

Through this initiative, TATT has reaffirmed its commitment to providing financial support as well as promoting digital inclusivity in ICTs – a field that was once male-dominated. This initiative is about eradicating financial barriers so that talent, not circumstance, determines the opportunities available to our young people.

Today, we recognise twelve exceptional students, from each of our three partner universities – The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, the University of Trinidad and Tobago and the College of Science Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago. These students have shown us, firsthand, their dedication and potential to lead. Their success is not only a personal milestone but also a shared victory, helping to advance our national digital thrust.

## **National Perspective- Building the ICT Future of Trinidad and Tobago**

This bursary programme represents far more than academic support - it is a strategic investment in our nation's human capital. By equipping bright, determined young people with the tools and opportunities they need to excel, we are strengthening the very foundation of our digital society and digital economy.

In a world where ICT drives innovation, productivity, and competitiveness, our ability to develop and retain skilled professionals is vital. Each recipient of this bursary programme represents a future innovator, entrepreneur, researcher, or policymaker whose contributions will directly shape Trinidad and Tobago's digital advancement and growth. This vision aligns with the commitment of our Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, who firmly believes in nurturing the education of our bright young professionals as a cornerstone of national progress.

This programme champions digital equity, ensuring that our nation's digital transformation is enriched by the perspectives, talents, and leadership of both men and women. The impact extends far beyond today, for the Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence, it strengthens our local ICT workforce, fuels our capacity for innovation, reduces our reliance on imported expertise, and builds a sustainable talent pipeline to serve government, industry, and communities well into the future.

Through the bursary programme, the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago is not only supporting individuals but also helping to shape a future where Trinidad and Tobago leads and innovates in the global digital economy.

## **Artificial Intelligence Perspective (to include further alignment)**

Artificial intelligence, big data, automation, and cloud computing are no longer distant concepts, they are here, actively shaping the way we work, live, and govern. Rather than seeing these advancements as intimidating, we must see them as opportunities to innovate, connect and grow.

In government, AI is already helping us deliver services faster, cut through bureaucracy, and respond more effectively to citizens' needs. On 5th August 2025,

the Ministry of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence, through iGovTT, proudly launched *Anansi* - our new national digital assistant designed to transform the way citizens access public service information.

In the tradition of Anansi, the wise keeper of stories, this tool is built to untangle the complex web of government information, making it simple, clear, and accessible for all. Anansi is seamless, instant, and empowering, using artificial intelligence to understand your questions in natural, everyday language.

This innovation is anchored in the principle of AI+HI, meaning, Artificial Intelligence plus Human Intelligence. This is not about replacing our dedicated public servants, but about providing tools that can make citizens' lives easier returning to you the valuable time once spent in long queues or waiting inside government offices

This is just one example of how embracing digital tools can make everyday life simpler, more efficient, and more empowering for all.

Across sectors, AI holds immense promise:

- In healthcare, AI can introduce predictive diagnostics and telemedicine to even our most remote communities.
- In education, it enables personalised learning and upskilling to prepare a workforce for tomorrow's demands.
- In agriculture, it helps model climate patterns and advance precision farming for stronger food security.

By the time this group of bursary recipients graduate, AI and other emerging technologies will likely be even more deeply embedded in the public and private sectors of Trinidad and Tobago. Harnessing these technologies effectively and ensuring their benefits will require collective effort and responsible stewardship from current and future generations.

## **Opportunities & Responsibilities of the Bursary Recipients**

Every new opportunity brings its own set of challenges. As we move forward, professionals will need to be equipped to tackle pressing issues like misinformation,

deepfakes, and cyber threats, while also navigating the complex ethical landscape of AI-driven decision-making.

As we celebrate the technical skills of these bursary recipients, equal emphasis will be placed on their creativity, adaptability, and strong ethical foundation. As ICT professionals, they will play a critical role in ensuring our digital advancements are transparent, accessible and inclusive.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, today's event marks a significant milestone for these young leaders as they embark on their journey to shape Trinidad and Tobago's digital future.

On behalf of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, I offer warmest congratulations to the bursary recipients and their families. We reaffirm our steadfast commitment to fostering and supporting ICT talent nationwide, empowering our next generation of digital leaders. The message is clear – the future is ours to shape, and our young innovators will drive the creation of a safer, more connected, and inclusive society for all our citizens. Thank you.