

Gopee-Scoon to traders: Maintain alternate suppliers, markets



Minister of Trade and Industry Paula Gopee-Scoon

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As global trade wars continue, Minister of Trade and Industry Paula Gopee-Scoon is advising the private sector to remain vigilant regarding the overall trade landscape.

Speaking to members of the media following the unveiling of two new, state-of-the-art machines by the National Flour Mills Ltd (NFM) on Tuesday, Gopee-Scoon said this country is currently not experiencing any trade issues apart from the fact that there is a need to ensure that the private sector looks at all the possibilities with regard to its imports and the ability to source imports from diverse markets.

The minister also said her ministry is also “looking very keenly” at what is happening in the overall marketplace.

However, she urged, “Our exporters, in the interest of ensuring that they would always have markets for their goods, would need to look at alternative markets and ensuring that they will not be impacted by any trade issue that may arise.

“So again it’s about remaining alert, being vigilant and, of course, always ensuring that the materials and goods are sourced from a diverse range of countries,” Gopee-Scoon added.

On the local front, she said advancements have been made, noting that the Ministry of Agriculture is on an advanced programme to increase food production.

“And it means, therefore, that most families can in fact have a meal based on goods that are produced in Trinidad and Tobago. Whether it’s your vegetable requirements or your chicken and your fish and your flour, etc, all of those are produced in Trinidad and Tobago,” Gopee-Scoon explained.

She said while she is pleased about this progress about growing local thus far, there’s still much work to be done. But at the same time, she noted the Ministry of Agriculture continues to work with other territories in the region to ensure the food import bill is not only reduced but the public continues to be encouraged to grow what it eats.