

TTMA backs export growth push

THE Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA) says it fully supports Government's objective of doubling exports from the non-energy manufacturing sector. In a release yesterday, the TTMA described the target as closely aligned with the Association's own strategic priorities for growth, competitiveness and foreign exchange generation.

The association pointed to the sector's significant contribution to the national economy, noting that manufacturing accounts for 18% of gross domestic product and has repatriated 40% of all Exim Bank support.

Export growth has averaged 18% year-on-year, with the second half of 2025 showing 'tangible progress in export growth, supply chain resilience, and innovation-driven growth'.

The manufacturing sector is also the country's second-largest employer after Government, with more than 50,000 permanent employees and an additional 10,000 casual workers.

TTMA president Dale Parson said the sector's progress must be matched by decisive Government action to improve the business environment.

'TTMA has led the charge in increasing the value of exports from the non-energy manufacturing sector, and we stand ready to continue doing so for the next five years and beyond. This progress, however, must be supported by the Government meeting its commitments to improving the ease of doing business-particularly through accelerated customs digitisation and electronic payments, improved trade facilitation efficiencies, and the implementation of long-discussed administrative and regulatory reforms: Food & Drug, Customs, TTBS, etc,' he said.

Parson also addressed recent social media commentary suggesting possible misconduct within business organisations, urging the public to rely on established legal and investigative mechanisms.

'Unsubstantiated or negative generalisations are counterproductive. The manufacturing sector is a proven 70-year-old engine of growth and a key pillar in the diversification of our economy. Undermining confidence in the sector does a disservice to national development at a time when collaboration is most needed,' he said.

While welcoming Government initiatives to revitalise the energy sector, TTMA cautioned against allowing non-energy manufacturing to lose momentum.

'Our manufacturers have demonstrated resilience, innovation, and the ability to compete globally. We must ensure that the momentum behind non-energy manufacturing is not pushed into the background, but rather continues to be supported as part of a balanced and sustainable

growth strategy for Trinidad and Tobago. We regard this year's challenges as temporary, as manufacturers possess remarkable resilience in their pursuit of success-a passion that invariably perseveres and yields positive outcomes,' he said.

TTMA reaffirmed its commitment to partnering with Government and other stakeholders to enhance industrial competitiveness, expand export capabilities and secure long-term economic prosperity.

'We are aligned and are on the same team as Government,' Parson said.