



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

For immediate release

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MEDIA RELEASE

**TRANSIT SHEDS FOR CLEARING CARGO ARE PRIVATE FACILITIES,
NOT GOVERNMENT**

The Minister of Finance, Hon. Colm Imbert, has taken note of an article in the Daily Express with the patently erroneous headline “**Gun Theft at Customs**”, which goes on to erroneously state that security systems at a transit shed “at Customs” were found to be non-functional and illegal items have disappeared from sheds “at Customs”.

These misstatements give the false impression that the Minister of Finance said yesterday in Parliament that there is poor security at bonded warehouses or transit sheds owned and operated by the Customs and Excise Division, and, therefore, the Customs and Excise Division has been negligent.

Worse, the article falsely implies that the Customs and Excise Division allows weapons to enter the country through bonded facilities it owns and operates.

The truth is the transit sheds that the Minister of Finance referred to are owned and operated by PRIVATE COMPANIES and it is because the Customs and Excise Division discovered that security systems were non-functional, packages had disappeared, and record-keeping was poor at these PRIVATE facilities, that these PRIVATE transit sheds were closed, temporarily, until their owners remedied the defects in their security systems and records.

This unfortunate situation has contributed to the current congestion in the clearing of cargo at this time of the year since the space for inspection of air cargo, specifically courier cargo, is now very limited due to the closure of these PRIVATE transit sheds.

It is hoped that the Express will quickly correct this erroneous reporting before these false impressions take root.

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The Honourable Colm Imbert M.P.
Minister of Finance