

## ANANSI MEDIA LAUNCH

### Feature Address

by **Senator the Honourable Dominic Alexander Smith**  
**Minister of Public Administration and Artificial Intelligence**

**Tuesday, 29th July 2025 10:00 a.m.**

**THEME: A Covenant of Service: A Vision for a Citizen-First Digital Trinidad and Tobago**

### (Salutations)

A very good morning to you all.

We stand, this morning, at the threshold of transformation. Not merely the launch of a digital solution, but the dawn of a new social contract between government and citizen – a promise that reshapes how the Government of Trinidad and Tobago serves its people.

This moment represents more than innovation. It embodies our unwavering commitment to a truth as old as democracy itself: **Government exists not for its own convenience, but in service to its people.**

For generations, the relationship between citizen and state has been defined by barriers – physical, bureaucratic, and informational. Citizens have navigated lengthy processes, waited in endless queues, and struggled to access the very services their taxes fund.

In every aspect of our daily lives, technology has revolutionised how we connect, learn, shop, and communicate. We navigate a digital world that is at our command, and which facilitates the best use of our time. As we know, government has lagged behind. Our citizens have, rightfully, demanded better from their government.

Today, we answer that call with a step forward in innovation, and with an unshakeable commitment to placing citizens at the very heart of everything we do.

This Government's agenda as it relates to digital evolution is not about technology for technology's sake. It is about reimagining the fundamental relationship between state and citizen – creating a government that is accessible at any hour, responsive to every need, and designed around the citizen's journey, not our convenience.

We envision a Trinidad and Tobago where a working mother can renew her driver's license during her lunch break, where a small business owner [can](#) access permits without taking a

day off work, where our elderly citizens can get answers to their questions without leaving their homes, and where every person – regardless of their technological literacy, economic status, or physical ability – can access government services with dignity and ease.

Today we take one step forward toward that dream.

In choosing the name for this transformative initiative, we turn to the wellspring of our shared cultural heritage. Anansi – the spider of West African tradition, carried across oceans and woven into the very fabric of Caribbean identity – is far more than folklore. Anansi represents the triumph of intelligence over brute force, wisdom over power, and ingenuity over impossibility.

Our ancestors understood that Anansi was never truly a trickster who deceived, but a clever guide who revealed hidden truths and made the impossible possible. In their stories, Anansi gathered the scattered wisdom of the world and made it accessible to all people. He untangled the most complex webs and transformed confusion into clarity.

**This is exactly what our digital Anansi will do for Trinidad and Tobago.**

Just as the mythical Anansi collected stories and wisdom, our digital assistant will gather the vast knowledge of government – spanning ministries, departments, agencies – and present it clearly, accurately, and instantly to every citizen who seeks it.

Our Anansi will be the bridge between citizen and state, the translator of complexity into simplicity, the guide who ensures that every person can navigate government services with confidence and ease.

Trust is the cornerstone of democracy, and transparency is trust made visible. In an age of information overload and digital skepticism, citizens need more than promises – they need proof. They need a single, authoritative voice they can rely on for accurate, official information.

**This is why Anansi represents our commitment to AI+HI – a fusion of Artificial Intelligence and Human Intelligence.**

This is not about replacing human judgment with algorithmic responses. This is about creating a seamless partnership where technology handles the routine so that our people can focus on the exceptional. Where artificial intelligence provides instant access to information, while human intelligence provides context, empathy, and the nuanced understanding that complex situations demand.

No more conflicting information from different sources. No more uncertainty about which website to trust. No more wondering if the guidance you received is current or

correct. Anansi will be the definitive first point of contact – powered by cutting-edge AI, backed by the full authority of government, and seamlessly connected to human expertise when deeper assistance is needed.

When our citizens asked us what they needed most, their answer was clear and unanimous: reliable, accurate information delivered in a way that respects their time and intelligence. A remarkable 95% of respondents in our national survey identified this as their top priority, while 88% expressed enthusiasm for adopting AI-powered government services.

We listened. We acted. We delivered.

Anansi represents a revolutionary approach that pairs AI with HI – Artificial Intelligence plus Human Intelligence. This is not merely artificial intelligence applied to government – it is artificial intelligence amplified by human wisdom, guided by human values, and enhanced by human insight.

We embrace a hybrid model where artificial intelligence handles routine inquiries instantly and accurately, while human intelligence remains at the center of complex decisions, policy guidance, and the nuanced understanding that only comes from lived experience. By removing the friction that has long frustrated our citizens, we are creating space for more meaningful human interactions, deeper engagement, and stronger democratic participation. Our civil servants are not being replaced – they are being empowered to focus on what humans do best: solve complex problems, show empathy, and exercise judgment.

As we launch Anansi today, we are not merely introducing a new service. We are writing a new chapter in the story of Trinidad and Tobago - a chapter where government truly works for the people, where access to information is a right rather than a privilege, and where technology serves to strengthen rather than replace the human connections that make democracy meaningful.

Anansi will be there as your first point of contact, ready to help 24 hours a day, seven days a week, speaking your language and understanding your needs. And when your situation requires the nuanced understanding that only comes from human experience, Anansi will seamlessly connect you to the right person who can provide that deeper level of service.

This is AI+HI in action – artificial intelligence as the gateway, human intelligence as the guide.

Let me be clear about what we are promising today. This is not a pilot program or an experiment. This is a fundamental commitment to a new way of governing – one that is:

- **Citizen-first** in every decision we make
- **Digital-first** in every service we design
- **Security-first** in every system we build
- **Transparency-first** in every interaction we have

**This is our covenant with you: We will build a government worthy of your trust, deserving of your engagement, and capable of your highest aspirations.**

We commit to continuous improvement, guided by your feedback and shaped by your needs. We commit to never forgetting that behind every question asked is a citizen seeking help, and behind every answer given is a government honored to serve.

As we stand together on this historic day, I am filled with profound optimism for the future we are building together. The thread that Anansi weaves today will connect every citizen to their government, every question to its answer, every need to its solution. In doing so, we are not just transforming public service – we are strengthening the very fabric of our democracy.

Let us move forward together into this new era with shared purpose, collective determination, and unwavering faith in what we can achieve when government truly serves its people.

The future of citizen-first governance begins now. The covenant is renewed. The promise is kept.

Thank you.