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Exclusive Newsday Story: Lindquist report on Piarco Airport: FRAUD!

Posted By: [Newsday](#)

Date: 30, November 01, at 11:02 a.m.

In Response To: [THE LINDQUIST REPORT ON THE PIARCO AIRPORT - Editorial](#) (Newsday)

The Robert Lindquist forensic interim report into the award of contracts for the \$1.426 billion Piarco airport development project has found that the project was a fraud on the public of Trinidad and Tobago, and a clear abuse of public funds.

The report, extracts of which were obtained by Newsday yesterday, said its findings were consistent with a conspiracy to corrupt the contract selection process beginning in 1996 and carried on throughout the contracting period.

Lindquist said that the ranking of Northern Construction as the top contractor for the construction of Package 6, the selection of Northern for a new contract following the suspension of Construction Package 6, as well as the selection of Northern following the bid process on two other contracts were all the result of an original conspiracy to corrupt the contract selection process for the benefit of Northern. Newsday understands that the Lindquist report has been in the hands of Prime Minister Basdeo Panday since early December 2000, but no follow-up action was taken which would have enabled the investigation to continue leading to charges against a number of people.

The Lindquist report stated that there was a conspiracy to "corrupt the contract selection process for the unjust enrichment of the 'players' and of defrauding the various state agencies of considerable sums." It stated in part: "From all information received and from the examination of available records and documents, we have reasonable grounds to believe that fraudulent schemes were developed and promoted by the various parties throughout the entire contracting period." It listed 11 schemes which were uncovered as (1) price fixing and bid rigging, (2) duplicate contract payments, (3) false invoicing, (4) defective pricing, (5) co-mingling of contracts, (6) conflict of interest, (7) false representation, 8. improper release of confidential information, (9) product substitutes, (10) tailored specifications, (11) time limitations.

It stated that a group of individuals and companies conspired together to control the award of contracts on the airport project, and in one instance, two days before a contract was to be awarded the requirements were changed and only two companies of which Northern Construction was one could meet the requirements on time.

The project which began with six contracts, was expanded to 13 contracts and questions have arisen as to whether there was duplication in the contracts leading to the work being paid for twice.



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