

■ OPINION / EDITORIALS

EDITORIAL: Flickers of hope for Cape Town port

Public enterprises minister Pravin Gordhan says more containers are being moved, reflecting an upswing in activity

27 FEBRUARY 2024 - 05:00



The Port of Cape Town. Picture: GCIS

There are encouraging signs of improvements in the operational performance of the Port of Cape Town, which has been beset by shipping delays, endemic inefficiencies and equipment failures.

This has been observed by both public enterprises minister Pravin Gordhan and Western Cape MEC of finance & economic opportunities Mireille Wenger, though Wenger cautions that it is too early to say whether the signs of change are significant or whether they can be sustained.

Improvements in port operations are critical during this time of deciduous fruit harvesting and for the upcoming citrus season.

Replying to a question in parliament, Gordhan noted that in December the Cape Town Container Terminal moved an average of 700 containers per day. This increased to 842 moves per day in January, 1,164 moves per day for the early part of February and to an average daily rate of 1,238 in a week later in the month. He said this reflected an upward trend in operational activity.

“The immediate target is to ramp up to 1,500 container moves per day, with an aspiration to improve further to 1,700 per day,” the minister said.

Major problems affecting the container terminal’s operations were windy conditions and a shortage of equipment.

Gordhan noted that an experienced management team had been put in place and new equipment installed. Also assisting in the improvement, he added, were the acquisition of seven used rubber-tired gantry cranes and the appointment of additional personnel.

We can only hope the improving trend accelerates to ease the export of fruit and other commodities.

