

Energy Chamber warns of shutdown's impact on jobs, exports, revenue



Greater San Fernando Chamber of Commerce president Kiran Singh

Nutrien's decision to indefinitely shut down its nitrogen operations at Point Lisas is expected to have far-reaching economic consequences, with the Energy Chamber of Trinidad and Tobago warning of losses in jobs, export earnings, foreign exchange and government revenue.

In a statement issued to Guardian Media yesterday, the chamber voiced concern over the closure, which follows the controlled shutdown of Nutrien's operations in late 2025.

Nutrien's local operations included four ammonia plants with a combined production capacity of 1.8 million tonnes annually and a urea plant capable of producing 600,000 tonnes a year.

The chamber said the impact will extend beyond the plant itself, affecting contractors, suppliers and service providers in Point Lisas and neighbouring communities.

It warned that Trinidad and Tobago stands to lose valuable export earnings and foreign exchange at a time when both are already under pressure.

Government tax revenues are also expected to decline.

The shutdown could carry longer-term costs as skilled workers leave the sector, eroding specialised expertise that may prove difficult to replace when natural gas supplies improve.

The chamber further cautioned that the closure could undermine investor confidence, influencing how T&T is viewed as a destination for future petrochemical investment.

While encouraged by projections of an improved natural gas outlook from 2028, the chamber said the period leading up to that recovery will be challenging and warned that any further idling of industrial capacity could have serious repercussions.

It urged Government to continue working closely with upstream and downstream operators to secure reliable natural gas supplies at globally competitive prices. Maintaining operations at existing plants and ensuring idled facilities are positioned for a restart when gas availability improves should remain a priority, it said.

The chamber also welcomed recent efforts by the National Gas Company to secure additional gas volumes from EOG's Coconut field for domestic use, as well as its investment in the Manakin project.

Meanwhile, Greater San Fernando Area Chamber of Commerce president Kiran Singh said the shutdown is likely to ripple through South Trinidad's business community.

"It's a worrying situation that has arisen for us in South Trinidad. It will affect small businesses.

All these workers, they tend to support the retail sector in particular," Singh told Guardian Media.

He called on Government to provide reassurance to workers, businesses and the wider public about its plans for the Point Lisas Industrial Estate and the future direction of the energy sector.

Nutrien began a controlled shutdown of its Point Lisas facility on October 23, 2025, citing restricted access to port facilities and the lack of a reliable and economically priced natural gas supply. Within days, approximately 350

contract workers were sent home, although permanent employees remained on the job.