

Bid to reduce bureaucratic delays...

Cabinet approves Energy Accelerator Hub unit

By Vishanna Phagoo

vishanna.phagoo@trinidadexpress.com

CABINET has approved the creation of an Energy Accelerator Hub within the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, a new oversight unit aimed at speeding up approvals and reducing bureaucratic delays in the energy sector, Minister of Energy Dr Roodal Moonilal has said.

Moonilal made the statement yesterday during a post-Cabinet media briefing held at the Diplomatic Centre, St Anns.

'Today (yesterday) Cabinet approved the establishment in the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries of an oversight committee called the Energy Accelerator Hub. This unit, to be housed in the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries, will interface directly and in real time with all stakeholders in the ministry,' Moonilal said.

He explained that the hub will bring together key decision-makers and regulators involved in the approval process.

These include the line minister, Minister in the ministry Ernesto Kesar, the permanent secretary and head of the legal department, the chairman of the Environmental Management Authority Doolar Ramlal, the chairman of the Work Permit Advisory Committee Videsh Maharaj, the chairman of the Occupational Safety and Health Authority Curt Cadet, the comptroller of Customs, the chief immigration officer, and a representative from the Office of the Attorney General.

'The committee will work in real time to deal with outstanding energy matters as they pertain to fast-tracking the projects that are before us. It has been well received by all stakeholders in the energy sector, and we expect that work will begin as of this month,' Moonilal said.

He said the committee will be responsible for evaluating approval processes and activities under the ministry's jurisdiction, monitoring the processing of requests for approvals, identifying bottlenecks, and providing periodic reports to Cabinet.

'Not a day goes by that (we don't get) a request from our international partners and local companies for some help as it relates to fast-tracking, and we have been able to do this. That is why over the last eight months or so we have shown remarkable progress in terms of several projects, including Manatee and regional collaboration,' Moonilal said.