

business



Gopee-Scoon at Bureau of Standards: Some LED lights not meeting standards

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Minister of Trade and Industry Paula Gopee-Scoon said yesterday the Government remains committed to improving energy efficiency and strengthening national energy policies and regulatory frameworks.

She made the comment at the Quality for Sustainable Energy in the Caribbean (QSEC) Project Closure event, hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) in Macoya, yesterday.

Gopee-Scoon said this can be seen through the energy efficiency laboratory where testing continues to take place.

To date, the minister noted, the TTBS has tested 22 batches of LED (light-emitting diode) lighting samples and two batches of Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFL) lighting samples locally and four batches of LEDs and one batch of CFLs from the region.

However, Gopee-Scoon explained that there have been some challenges when it comes to labelling.

"What is alarming is that after conducting labelling tests on some local CFL and LED samples, they failed to meet the standard, indicating a deficiency in labelling practices. Furthermore, the performance testing showed that LED samples failed to meet the requirements of international standards," said Gopee-Scoon.

In the regional piloting countries of Jamaica and Barbados, the minister said similar trends in testing outcomes were observed.

"In Jamaica, all tested LED and CFL samples failed to meet both labelling and performance standards. In Barbados, while there was an improvement in LED labelling compliance, with 50 per cent passing, all LED samples failed performance testing," she detailed.

These statistics Gopee-Scoon identified are indicative of a need to implement rigorous quality control procedures to en-

Minister of Trade and Industry Paula Gopee-Scoon chats with T&T Bureau of Standards executive director Jose Trejo, centre, and TTBS chairman Lawford Dupres during the closing ceremony of the Caricom Energy Efficiency Labelling Programme yesterday at the T&T Bureau of Standards auditorium in Macoya, Tunapuna.

PICTURE
SHIRLEY BAHADUR



sure greater adherence to international standards for lighting products.

"To overcome these challenges, concerted efforts are required to strengthen regulatory frameworks, enhance product testing and certification processes, and foster greater collaboration among stakeholders to create a more resilient and sustainable energy environment in the region," she outlined.

In response, she said her ministry-through the Bureau-intends to enforce the National Standard for LEDs and CFLs with the new Energy Efficiency Lab testing all models of bulbs on sale in the local market for conformance, as this will reduce the supply of sub-standard and non-conforming LED and CFL products on the market.

Also speaking was TTBS chairman Lawford Dupres the Quality for Sustainable Energy in the Caribbean (QSEC) project, who said this is a game-changer, not only for T&T but for the entire region, as the way is paved for sustainable energy solutions. "The QSEC Project has been laser-focused on expanding and enhancing Quality Infrastructure (QI) services, particularly in standardisation, inspection, and testing. The goal is to provide a solid technical foundation for the use of ener-

gy-efficient devices and renewable energy technologies," Dupres said.

He said the bureau plays a vital role in the development of the energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors, and the level of awareness around these issues has been steadily growing since 2007.

"We've seen a notable increase in energy efficiency awareness, and consumers are becoming more discerning. They want products that deliver on their promises, and rightly so. This heightened awareness has made it essential for consumer protection agencies to step up their game and for importers, retailers, and consumers to stay informed," Dupres highlighted.

The TTBS chairman noted that consumer protection is a top priority, and the Energy Efficiency Laboratory plays a crucial role in ensuring that consumers have access to quality products.

"By testing lamps (CFLs and LEDs) to international standards and applying regional minimum energy performance standards (MEPS), the lab is helping to level the playing field for retailers and importers, who often find themselves competing against inferior products that undercut their efforts to provide quality goods," he added.



Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne

Browne: CDB's process flawed

Antigua and Barbuda Prime Minister Gaston Browne yesterday said concerns have been raised about the method used to send the President of the Barbados-based Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Dr Hyginus "Gene" Leon, on administrative leave since January.

Browne attended the 46th regular meeting of Caribbean Community (Caricom) leaders in Georgetown.

Speaking to reporters, Browne said, "Well it is a process that is taking place and there were concerns about the procedure that led to that process and at some point we will have to address the issue of the procedures and the fact that subordinates within an institution can literally take disciplinary action against their superior without even consulting with the directors or the governors of the bank.

"I mean there is something fundamentally flawed about that and you would have seen two developments, not only the sending on leave or the institution of disciplinary action against the president but even prior to that when the race for the candidature was taking place between Leon and Professor Avinash (D Persaud of Barbados) I recall that same whistleblower system was activated"

Prime Minister Browne told reporters by virtue of that "they practically would have eliminated Professor Avinash" and that the process "could be abused," adding "we don't know for a fact that it is being abused currently, but we have concerns it may have been abused and in that case we will have to make some changes.

"But I imagine that the investigation that is taking place will confirm whether or not the ...suspended president is guilty of any malpractice within the bank or if he would have breached whatever rules and regulations.

"So I think we have to await the outcome of that investigation before we start to make the adjustments," Browne said, noting "making too strident arguments about making adjustments against a system that may not be broken.

"On first blush I think the whole process is somewhat flawed and I am of the view that even if it may be applicable to lower members of staff, certainly when it comes to the president there has to be some, at least notification, even out of decency to the directors and the governors".

He said based on the issue "there could be some form of intervention at the level of the governors.

"So it is a process we will be hopefully reviewing in the future to ensure that we do not have a system that potentially can be abused and could be weaponised against future presidents of the bank or senior members of the bank," Browne told reporters.

Leon is the sixth president of the regional development finance institution. He was elected at a special meeting of the CDB Board of Governors held on January 19, 2021, for a five-year term, and assumed office on May 4, 2021. (CMC)

US ambassador tours Point Lisas piers

United States Ambassador to T&T Candace Bond, participated in an oceanside tour of National Energy's assets participated at Point Lisas on Tuesday.

In a news release yesterday, National Energy said Ambassador Bond toured the Iscott dock and Savonetta Piers 1, 2, 3, and 4-company assets that facilitate the export of all petrochemicals and iron and steel products produced on the Point Lisas Industrial Estate.

National Energy said the dock and piers are ISPS-certified, meaning they adhere to the highest international standards for security and safety.

"Also owned by National Energy, the National Energy Resilience, is IMO Tier III-certified with technologies that reduce its nitrous oxides emissions by 80

per cent, making it the "cleanest" tug-boat operating in Trinidad and Tobago, and the second of its kind in the region. The National Energy Resilience therefore represents a significant step towards the decarbonisation of National Energy's maritime operations," the release explained.

It noted that Ambassador Bond's visit to National Energy, a state-owned company, reinforces the existing collaboration between the United States and TT in addressing environmental challenges.

During the tour, the Ambassador Bond stated, "I am here to grow our partnership with National Energy in support of the Biden-Harris Administration's US-Caribbean Partnership to Address the Climate Crisis 2030, or PAOC2030. We are

really excited to be here to see and support National Energy's initiatives, now and in the future," said Bond.

The news release said her statement underscored the shared commitment to a cleaner and sustainable future by both nations.

Earlier National Energy's president, Dr Vernon Paltoo, delivered a presentation to Bond on the various aspects of the company's activities, including national sustainable energy and low-carbon projects being advanced by the company to support T&T's decarbonisation goals.

"These projects are also part of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's ongoing efforts to transition the energy sector towards a low-carbon future," Paltoo added.