

## Assessment says refinery can open in 3 years

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MINISTER of Energy Dr Roodal Moonilal says a basic assessment by people who have worked in the energy industry for years suggests that the Pointe-a-Pierre refinery could be fully operational in about 36 months.

Moonilal said also that he expects to receive the report into the refinery from the committee appointed to look into it.

A preliminary report was received last month from the committee's chair, former minister of energy Kevin Ramnarine.

The refinery was shut down in 2018 by the previous administration and the present Government, earlier this year, set up a 12-member committee to check into the feasibility and cost of resuming the refinery's operations.

Speaking at his constituency office in Debe yesterday, Moonilal said that, 'I expect that, by the end of November which we are approaching now, and at least within the first couple days in December, we will be in a position to receive the report from the start-up committee on the Guaracara refinery. We anticipate that that report will be comprehensive and it will give us an important map as to how we move forward given what they intend to submit.'

Moonilal said that a terms of reference was included and there is expected to be a technical assessment.

'We expect to have some type of financial and commercial discussion on the way forward for the refinery. We have committed ourselves to that, and that is an exciting possibility now that we come to the end of the year, that we will have another promise kept...If we have, in the next few days, some good news as to the way forward for the Guaracara refinery we will be very happy with that because that will tell us how we go forward in terms of proposals, options, partnerships and so on, that we intend to take. So, I'm very excited to get that report and to share with the Honourable Prime Minister and Cabinet colleagues so that collectively we can take a decision as we go forward.'

He added that there are those in the industry who have given a basic evaluation in relation to the refinery.

'The general feeling from persons who have given really what is called a superficial assessment, because they have worked in the industry for many years, is that you can do some products within 12 to 18 months and you can be fully operational in about 36 months.' Moonilal said.

He further stated that this time-frame is on the presumption of some type of capital expenditure and financial outlook, which is currently unknown, and into which the report should give details.

Moonilal added that he was invited by Guyana's Minister of National Resources to the country's energy conference set for February.

He claimed that the former administration did not avail to the opportunities in that country 'given the mega-leap forward that the oil and the gas industry has and will experience in Guyana in the coming months and years'.