

## Kesar backs Touchstone's onshore gas expansion

MINISTER in the Energy Ministry Ernesto Kesar has urged Touchstone Exploration to maintain its momentum in advancing exploration and production activities in Trinidad and Tobago.

Kesar delivered the message during a meeting with Touchstone's executive team, led by president and chief executive officer Paul Baay, as the company continues to ramp up its onshore work programme.

Earlier this month, Touchstone announced that development drilling targeting natural gas reserves in the Central Block has resumed with the Carapal Ridge-3 well, the first drilling activity in the area in 19 years.

Touchstone operates Central Block under an Exploration and Production Licence following a successful transfer from Shell Trinidad Central Block Limited on 16 May 2025 and produces approximately 21 mmscf/d. Since acquiring the block, Touchstone has evaluated the remaining resources resulting in their plans to drill four development wells. Production from Carapal Ridge-3, the first well of this campaign, is expected in February 2026. Should all four (4) wells in this campaign be successful, production from Central Block is forecasted to exceed 50 mmscf/d.

Kesar met with Touchstone's leadership at the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries' head office at the International Waterfront Complex in Port of Spain. He was joined by acting permanent secretary Karinsa Tulsie and acting deputy permanent secretary Marc Rudder.

Touchstone's delegation included Baay, director Dr Priya Marajh, and exploration manager Xavier Moonan. 'At the meeting, Touchstone updated the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries (MEEI) executives on the company's ongoing operations and future plans in Trinidad and Tobago. This meeting allowed for both parties to reaffirm their shared commitment to sustainable development of the country's onshore resources and processing facilities,' the Ministry stated in a release.

'Touchstone provided a brief update on its activities across the acreage it operates, acknowledging the progress achieved since first production from the Ortoire Block and reiterating the company's focus on responsible development, operational efficiency, and long-term investment,' it stated.

According to the release, Kesar reaffirmed the Government's commitment to keeping open lines of communication with industry stakeholders and to maintaining a regulatory environment that supports investment, innovation, and competitive performance in the energy sector.

'Minister Kesar commended Touchstone for its continuing contribution to the development of the sector and encouraged the company to maintain its momentum in advancing exploration and production work,' it stated.

'The Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries together with Touchstone Exploration remain committed to continuing to work together to enhance value from the energy sector through continued exploration and production, particularly in the onshore areas of the country,' the release stated.