

Bahamas anticipates modern' energy supply

■ NASSAU

THE Bahamas government says it hopes by this time next year, Bahamians across 14 islands will experience the benefits of modern, reliable, affordable electricity.

In addition, the Phillip Davis administration is hoping that by 2030, at least 32% of the country's electricity needs will be met by solar power, surpassing the global target of 30%.

Prime Minister Davis acknowledged that this is an ambitious undertaking requiring the government to take on multiple Bahamian partners to deliver on its promise of widespread change.

'These partnerships will bring modern, reliable, affordable electricity to islands that have, for too long, endured aging infrastructure, frequent outages, and exorbitant costs. Through these agreements, we will establish solar microgrids combined with advanced LNG (liquefied natural gas) and multigas systems across nine different areas in our Family Islands.'

Abundant sunshine

The prime minister said that this hybrid approach represents the perfect balance for this archipelago chain of islands, adding: 'We are harnessing our abundant sunshine while introducing cleaner fuels to ensure that our power needs are met, regardless of what the weather looks like.'

'All of our partners are Bahamian- owned enterprises with the resources to expedite development to ensure that our people will benefit from these changes as soon as possible.'

'In fact, each one of the PPAs we've signed this year will be initiated before year's end and will be completed in 2026.'

He said one of the agreements being signed is with Family Island Microgrid Co, which will develop and operate new energy systems on five islands, namely Harbour Island, Bimini, Moore's Island, Farmer's Cay, Black Point and Staniel Cay in the Exumas.

Energy revolution

The second partnership is with RenugenPro Co Ltd that is intended to bring the Bahamas' energy revolution to San Salvador, Long Island, and Cat Island, with solar battery energy storage and LNG facilities.

'These islands, each with their own unique energy challenges, will soon enjoy reliable, affordable electricity that should be the right of every Bahamian citizen. The impact of these changes will be felt within months, not years', said Davis, adding that as largescale solar and hybrid facilities spring up throughout the archipelago, Bahamians would benefit immediately from the energy reforms.

'These are not pilot projects. Nor are we talking about vague promises of improvements in the distant future. These projects are large-scale, fully funded, carefully designed systems that will be operational within 18 months.'

'As we reap the immediate benefits of integrating large-scale solar and cleaner fuels, we are simultaneously repairing and modernising our transmission and distribution systems to be even more efficient.'

Davis said that the government is 'comprehensively and holistically taking on every aspect of energy reform all at once, with over US \$1 billion in targeted investments, representing the single greatest investment in energy reform in our nation's history.'

'By this time next year, Bahamians across 14 islands will experience the benefits of modern, reliable, affordable electricity. And by 2030, 32% of our electricity needs will be met by solar power-surpassing the global target of 30%,' promised the Bahamas Prime Minister.

-CMC