

## JMMB Lowlands Mall officially opens today

■ Elizabeth Williams

JMMB Bank's newest branch, located at Lowlands Mall in Tobago, officially opens for business today.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony, held last Thursday, marked what the bank described as a continued commitment to deepening its footprint across Trinidad and Tobago and delivering personalised financial solutions to the people of Tobago.

CEO of JMMB Group Trinidad and Tobago Shawn Moses said the country must appreciate the scale and significance of the institution, noting that its local operations now manage \$4.5 billion in assets. Delivering remarks at the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Moses emphasised the bank's growing presence and underscored the importance of recognising JMMB's contribution to the financial landscape in Trinidad and Tobago.

'Trinidad, based on those financial numbers, would have contributed 27% of the group's total revenue and to be fair if we go back ten years ago that number was about 5%,' Moses said.

Tobago House of Assembly Chief Secretary Farley Augustine in his remarks said the opening of the branch was timely in light of Tobago's budget to be read next Monday.

'I am happy that this is happening just under a week when we have our Tobago budget being read and a week and a half or so from when the Secretary of Finance Petal-Ann Roberts would also be launching for the first time next week Tuesday our loan guarantee programme for businesses here in Tobago, so you are coming at a time when quite a lot is actually happening in the economic space that is Tobago,' Augustine said.

Augustine noted that the opening of the Tobago branch comes at a time when many businesses are still recovering from the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic, with several remaining closed and others grappling with lingering credit challenges.

'We welcome the fact that you are willing to work with people who might be coming from a place with bad credit because not too long ago we were enduring an issue called Covid and given that we have an economy that is so heavily reliant on tourism inputs and the tertiary sector the service sector it meant that very many people lost incomes during Covid and I wonder whether or not the financial institutions generally recognises the uniqueness of the Tobago position, the Tobago business that just could not bounce back just because the Prime Minister said we are now open for business,' he said. General manager corporate and retail Jason Baptiste said the moment is more than symbolic but is a clear and strategic step forward in the group's commitment to deepen its presence in service to the people of Tobago.

'It's never a car loan it's a means for someone to get home, it's never simply a mortgage it is generational wealth, it is safety and security. At JMMB we don't just offer financial solutions we deliver them through partnerships. Every account, every loan, every transaction is anchored in trust, respect and genuine desire to see our clients win because if our clients win we win. With 100% financing for vehicles for any age,' Baptiste said.