

## ODA urges action over Republic US\$ limit cut

■ Kim Boodram

[kim.boodram@trinidadexpress.com](mailto:kim.boodram@trinidadexpress.com)

THE Owners Dealers Association (ODA) is urging the Government to intervene after Republic Bank lowered its US dollar credit card limit to US\$2,500, a move the group says could disrupt drivers and commuters.

ODA president Reval Chattergoon said members are already under pressure to cover operational costs requiring foreign exchange, and the new limit will increase that strain, particularly for purchasing equipment and paying fees to maintain online services, including pay-at-the-pump systems.

'With Republic Bank's latest announcement reducing credit card limits to US\$2,500 per billing cycle, the ODA is seeking Government intervention before this mandate takes effect,' Chattergoon said.

The association emphasised that 'convenience to the travelling public will be negatively impacted when dealer-owners must manage their spending according to available US dollars to maintain pay-at-the-pump services, station software, and equipment.'

Chattergoon noted that while ODA members are local investors, 'we are yet to be recognised as such and are often overshadowed by fuel distributors in industry decision-making.' He stressed that independent operators 'bear all expenses, except for distributor-branded signage such as Unipet or NP.'

'Our maintenance costs extend beyond the borders of this country,' Chattergoon added. 'Pay-at-the-pump equipment, software, and monthly subscriptions range from US\$250 per month to a US\$2,000 annual fee, depending on the number of terminals and routers required. The new credit limit is simply insufficient to cover these payments, let alone replacement parts like filters, nozzles, hoses, and card readers.'

The ODA reported that some local suppliers in Trinidad are now insisting on payments in US dollars, possibly because they themselves cannot source sufficient US dollars to maintain inventory.