

Duty-free access to lithium-ion batteries until 2027

THE Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism (MTIT) has announced a two-year extension of the suspension of the Common External Tariff (CET) on lithium-ion batteries, a move meant to bolster Trinidad and Tobago's transition to renewable energy.

'The Ministry of Trade, Investment and Tourism is pleased to advise importers and other users of lithium-ion batteries of the suspension of the Common External Tariff (CET) and reduction in the rate of duty to zero percent (0%) on lithium-ion batteries classified under Harmonized System (H.S.) 8507.60.00, for the period 1 July, 2025 to 30 June, 2027,' a release stated yesterday.

The trade ministry stated that this extension builds on the previous duty suspension enacted through Legal Notice No 194 of 2023, which will expire on June 30, 2025.

It confirmed that the new zero-rated duty will be formalised through the imminent publication of a new legal order.

'The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago views the continued suspension as critical to supporting the country's transition to renewable energy. Lithium-ion batteries are in growing demand due to their efficiency, versatility, and environmentally sustainable applications, especially when compared to lead-acid alternatives. The relief thus supports wider access to energy storage technologies and complements national efforts to achieve 30% renewable energy generation by 2030,' it stated.

The ministry stated that the suspension of the duty also signals potential opportunities for local or regional manufacturing, as lithium-ion batteries are not currently produced within the Caribbean Community, thereby presenting a clear gap in the market.