

## Forex challenges close another business

The ongoing foreign exchange shortage has led to the downsizing of clothing store chain K Squared Fashions.

In a notice posted to the company's social media pages, the business announced that on January 31, it will be closing its Aboutique and Gulf City Mall branches as a result of scarce foreign exchange.

The post on Sunday said, however, that its other locations at C3 Center, The Falls at West Mall, Brentwood Mall, Princes Town Mall, East Gates Mall and online platforms will remain open for business.

The establishment thanked the customers for their continuing support during these challenging times.

On the company's Facebook page, followers commented that those K Squared Fashions branches will be missed for their customer service.

Others opined that many more businesses will close their doors as the forex situation is worsening by the month. The business community, especially the SME sector, has been complaining bitterly about the lack of foreign exchange.

Last week, CIBC announced it would decrease the foreign exchange usage limit for its debit card holders in Trinidad and Tobago from February 10.

This followed announcements by RBC and Scotiabank that foreign exchange limits for credit card users would be adjusted down earlier this year. Republic Bank introduced a lower cap of US\$2,000 for all of its new credit card customers in December.

In a news release on November 10 last year, Minister of Finance Colm Imbert said, with regard to the Government getting "more involved in the distribution of foreign exchange," he would be holding consultations over the next month with various interest groups to determine the best way forward.

"The present PNM Government has consistently stated since 2015 that it maintains our fixed exchange rate to control inflation, which is now almost the lowest in the world, and it will not impose hardship on the poor and vulnerable by giving into the irrational demands ... of provocateurs that we devalue the dollar," said Imbert.