



**Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**  
Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Pioneering a Rural Development Policy in Trinidad and Tobago**

*Kent House, Maraval. March 02, 2016:* The Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government has announced its plan to roll out a three-pronged rural development policy focused on rural transportation, rural banking and rural housing.

Minister of Rural Development and Local Government, Senator the Honourable Franklin Khan said, "There is a spatial imbalance in development in Trinidad and Tobago. In order to satisfy the rural agenda, we have decided that direct policy intervention is needed."

Cabinet this week approved a framework for rural development. A multi-sectorial committee comprising eleven (11) Ministries has been mandated to develop a rural development policy, agenda and defined programmes.

"The challenge we face is that there is no prototype for a Ministry of Rural Development in the Caribbean or even in the Commonwealth. There is a Ministry of Rural Development in India but their notion of rural is completely different to ours. We do not have that type of intense rural community living 200 to 400 miles away from the closest city centre. However, we certainly have rural communities that are lagging behind and we are about to change this," explained Minister Khan.

The immediate priority is to provide a rural transportation service that is reliable, well-functioning and sustainable. Minister Khan explained, "Transport is all about commuters. Rural transportation must meet the needs of residents in isolated villages. This may not be a viable venture for the private sector but it must be provided as a basic public service to allow access to a range of services and economic opportunities."

The Honourable Fitzgerald Hinds, Minister of Works and Transport, gave his assurance of support to Senator the Honourable Franklin Khan during a meeting held yesterday at the offices of the Ministry of Works and Transport, Tower D, International Waterfront Complex.

It is expected that this new and improved rural transportation service will hit the road by June 2016.

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