

# Khan rejects OWTU claims

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Energy and Energy Industries Minister Franklin Khan makes a statement to the House of Representatives on Government's LNG agreements on June 10. PHOTO BY ANGELO MARCELLE

ENERGY Minister Franklin Khan has rejected claims from the Oilfields Workers Trade Union (OWTU) that he indicated the Petrotrin refinery in Pointe-a-Pierre could be operated by a foreign entity. In a statement on Sunday, Khan said OWTU president Ancil Roget attempted to create an issue where none exists.

Khan indicated that at no time, was any specific company indicated or vaguely referred to, when he spoke at a People's National Movement meeting in Pt Fortin last Thursday. He also indicated that he never said the preferred bidder is known to the Government. Khan said both the Prime Minister and himself have dealt extensively and in detail with the justification for the restructuring of Petrotrin, in particular, the need to get out of the refining business.

"We articulated the rationale to the nation for the new companies (Heritage Petroleum Company Ltd., Guaracara Refining Company Ltd, Paria Fuel Trading Company Ltd. and Trinidad Petroleum Holdings Ltd.). We outlined the optimistic and sustainable future ahead for the new company." Khan said both he and Dr Rowley indicated there was great interest from several entities about the refinery, provided an update as per the status of the bidding process and approximately when a preferred bidder would be identified. He said the meeting discussed purely policy issues.

Khan explained the divestment of Petrotrin refinery's assets is complex and part of a sophisticated process. He gave the assurance that this process " is being conducted in the most transparent and ethical way possible and the final decision will redound to the benefit of the people of TT."

Ken Chee Hing