

Guyanese gov't defends slogan printed on new passport

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G EORGETOWN, Guyana (CMC) – The Government of Guyana says it will make “no apology” as it defended the decision to include the slogan “One Guyana” on the newly launched 10-year passports, saying it is not a political slogan.



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“The ‘One Guyana’ slogan is not a political slogan. It is a unifying concept. It is a principle that denotes our national objective – one people, one nation, one common destiny. It is a rallying cry to bring the diverse cultures and races of our country together,” Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs, Anil Nandlall, said in a statement.



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Nandlall was responding to a letter sent to the media by opposition legislator, Amanza Walton Desir, who said that the inclusion of the slogan is an attempt to replace national identity with political allegiance.



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decision as “a dangerous overreach” and an effort to embed political propaganda into a national document that belongs to all Guyanese, regardless of political affiliation.

“A passport is not a party manifesto, it is a sovereign document of our nation. It belongs to ‘we the people’ and is issued in our name by the state. It therefore ought to be neutral and free from partisan contamination.

“By embedding political propaganda onto a passport that belongs to all Guyanese – regardless of their political affiliation, Irfaan Ali has once again shown his complete disregard for democratic norms and institutional integrity,” the opposition legislator wrote.

“It must be understood, Guyanese brothers and sisters that this is a part of a broader, more sinister agenda. The PPP government has long sought to dismantle our democratic institutions, erode checks and balances, and manipulate our national identity to serve its own interests.”

Desir said that the use of state resources for political branding “is a classic sign of democratic backslide and authoritarianism and blurs the line of distinction between party and state”.

“It is quite interesting that the PPP which was relentlessly loud in its accusation of the PNC (People’s National Congress) for allegedly practicing party paramountcy is now openly, unashamedly doing just that,” she wrote.

But in his statement, Nandlall defended the government’s decision, noting that the

He said that President Ali had been using the slogan in numerous speeches as part of his broader effort to create a cohesive force for national unity.

Nandlall said that the slogan has been incorporated into various government initiatives, and its inclusion in national documents like the passport is consistent with the government's ongoing efforts to promote national unity.

"This government has every right to formulate a logo or slogan that captures its ethos. The ethos of this government is national unity, and we want to project that in every one of our policies and programmes. We make no apology for that."

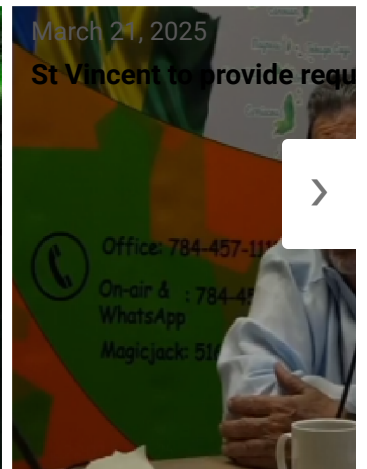
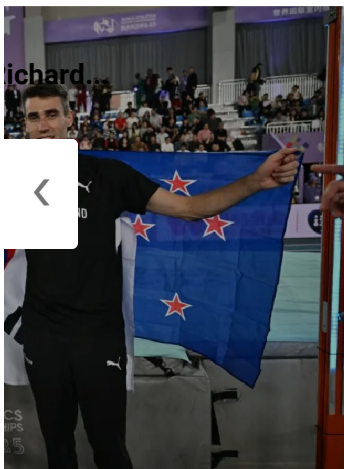
Responding directly to Desir's criticism, Nandlall said he has "never seen this slogan emanate from Freedom House (the headquarters of the ruling party)".

"It is not a concept promoted by the PPP as a political slogan, but as a policy that reflects the values of the government," he said, adding that "it is ironic that the person accusing us of using a political slogan seems to forget the history of their own party".

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