



Opposition, gov't rolling out election year campaign promises

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New Year 2025 broke on Wednesday with both the opposition and the government unveiling promises to Guyanese who will be voting in general and regional elections in another 10 months.

Leader of the People's National Congress Reform (PNCR)-led A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), Aubrey Norton announced that the opposition would this year unveil its promises for the 2025 general and regional elections.

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Mr Norton indicated that many of the "oil-driven" plans would be aimed at tackling poverty, improving education and health and supporting small and large businesses.

"In 2025, we in the PNCR/APNU will intensify our efforts to publicize our alternative plan of development for individuals, families, and the nation. We will more widely spread the word on how we will put oil money in your hands where it belongs by right," he said in his New Year's Day message.

Over the past three years, APNU had been promising a liveable monthly income through large increases in wages and pensions, subsidies on rent, mortgage and utilities payments, child allowances, increased tax-free threshold to GY\$400,000 per month, a student stipend for university and other post-secondary students, and direct cash grants.

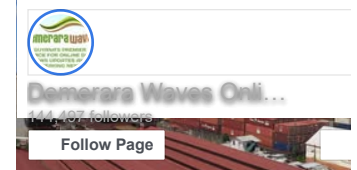
Mr Norton on Wednesday also promised an expanded scheme of small business loans and grants, through the creation of a development and investment bank for large enterprises, reduced red tape and corruption, and new infrastructure targeted at increasing productive capacity, and reducing the costs of production.

President Irfaan Ali, in his New Year's address, said during 2025, Guyanese would get more money in their pockets. "For those in receipt or eligible for pensions, social assistance, and disability grants, you can expect further increases to these essential supports. Public servants, teachers and members of the Disciplined Services are assured of further salary increases this year," he said. The President did not say whether those would be in addition to what had been already agreed to with the Guyana Teachers' Union and the Guyana Public Service Union (GPSU).

The President also said that during 2025, Guyanese would get more cash grants. "This process will continue in the months ahead. And let me signal that this cash grant is not intended to be a one-time payment. We are committed to ensuring that our people benefit from the proceeds derived from the exploitation of their natural resource wealth, and as such, we are committed to making future direct cash transfers to our citizens," he said. Dr Ali also said that during 2025 there would be more technologically driven intelligence-led policing and improved solid waste collection and disposal.

Amid frequent concerns about the quality of infrastructural works and alleged corruption in the award of government contracts in exchange for kickbacks, the PNCR-led APNU and the Alliance For Change (AFC) also promised to tackle graft. "We will be taking the message countrywide on reducing corruption and wasteful government spending through such measures as revamping the public procurement system and increasing transparency and accountability in government," Mr Norton said. He also pledged that PNCR-

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APNU would propose ideas to improve race relations and inclusive politics, ensure good governance, provide better social services, increase happiness, prosperity, and satisfaction, and lift the quality of life of all citizens.

Guyanese are expected to go to the polls in either October or November, 2025 to elect a government of their choice, but for Mr Norton and AFC Leader, Nigel Hughes, those elections must be held only after a number of conditions are put in place.

“The Alliance For Change has made it abundantly clear that a revised voters list and biometrics are no mere technicalities. They are the non-negotiable cornerstones of a free and fair election,” AFC Leader Nigel Hughes said in his message.



“Let us ensure that the election and other systems through which we can exercise that power are up to the required standard of accuracy and credibility. In this regard, we, in the opposition, will be redoubling our efforts to ensure the voters list and the verification of the identities of voters can win your confidence and trust. We will continue to press for biometrics and a clean voters list,” Mr Norton said.

For his part, President Ali stopped short of openly blaming the APNU+AFC again for attempting to retain power in the 2020 elections by manipulating the results in the Statements of Poll especially for Region/District Four. A national vote recount later showed that the results mirrored those on the Statements of Poll. “Democracy is our ally, not our foe—it must always be a source of strength, never a weakness. It’s the foundation upon which we build a just and inclusive society. We must protect it fiercely. This is why we must stand firm in rejecting any return to the sordid past of electoral rascality,” he said. He highlighted the importance of fairness, transparency, and the trust of Guyanese in ensuring democracy prevails.

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