APNU hits the streets

Feb 23, 2026 News

…says budget ignores the people

Kaieteur News – In his first public appearance following his electoral defeat at the September 1, 2025 polls, leader of the People's National Congress Reform (PNCR) Aubrey Norton led his team of A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) parliamentarians to the Stabroek Market Square, where they commenced what the coalition has dubbed its "street parliament."

APNU leader Aubrey Norton

The initiative was a direct effort to take the national budget debate to the people, allowing coalition members to criticise this year's $1.558 trillion budget, which they said has failed to address the everyday struggles of Guyanese citizens.

Norton expressed confidence in the coalition's MPs, who he said dissected the government's spending plan in the recently concluded budget debate.

The party leader was particularly critical of the budget's allocation to infrastructure, arguing that it fails to benefit the people. "When you allocate all of that money to infrastructure, 20 per cent will go to corruption. If we had saved that 40 per cent, you could have gotten your cash transfers and transportation to take your children to school," he said.

He emphasised the need for a reallocation of resources, urging the government to prioritise the needs of ordinary Guyanese.

"The budget should have included a minimum 25 per cent salary increase for public servants. You claim there's no money, but you have $900 million for 'Men on Mission.' Meanwhile, funds are allocated to areas that don't require the amount they're being given," Norton continued. "This budget shows no place for the people."

Turning his focus to the upcoming local government elections, Norton vowed that APNU would work tirelessly to secure control of the municipalities in Georgetown, Linden, and New Amsterdam. "It's critical that we beat them in these towns. If they take control, they'll control the land, and you will be further marginalised," he warned.

The 2026 budget, Guyana's largest ever, was passed on February 13 after five days of debates and another five days of committee reviews. Titled "Putting People First," the budget was the first presented by the administration since its re-election in 2025. It includes provisions such as a $5,000 increase in old age pensions, an additional $3,000 for public assistance recipients, and a $100,000 cash grant for all adults aged 18 and over. Other initiatives focus on promoting home and vehicle ownership, business startups, and economic diversification.

APNU MPs, along with other party members, highlighted that many of the budget allocations do not adequately address critical issues affecting the public. This "street parliament" is just the beginning of a series of similar gatherings the party plans to hold in communities across the country.

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Auditor: $140.1 billion. Other significant allocations include the Ministry of Health ($135 billion), Ministry of Finance ($116.9 billion), Ministry of Education ($100.2 billion), and the Office of the Prime Minister ($111.4 billion).

Additional allocations include the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security ($78 billion), Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development ($36.7 billion), and Ministry of Agriculture ($67.6 billion), among others.

Despite the significant figures, opposition parties like APNU remain vocal in questioning whether these allocations will genuinely benefit the everyday Guyanese.

Norton's address followed those of APNU Parliamentary Lead Dr. Terrence Campbell, MPs Sherod Duncan, Nima Flue-Bess and Ganesh Mahipaul.

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