

Ali concerned about US tariffs on Chinese ships

■ GEORGETOWN

PRESIDENT Irfaan Ali has voiced concern over US President Donald Trump's plan to impose tariffs on ships/vessels, made in China, saying this could impact trade in Guyana and the region.

In a statement Saturday, Ali said Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago would need to assess the implications for tankers and other vessels transporting oil and gas.

'That of course can have effects on the cost of goods coming into the region, the cost of transport coming into the region,' Ali stated.

'This is a policy that was alluded to, so there are some discussions that will have to occur so all of these things are key regional issues that we are discussing together.'

Some of these challenges were raised by the Regional Private Sector Organisation during a recent emergency virtual meeting held by Caricom heads.

'The US is our partner, the region recognises that the US is an important partner and the Regional Private Sector will be having some conversations with the US. We will also be having conversations with various actors in the US, Secretary of State for example and also the Chair of Caricom will be seeking to have a meeting with the White House to go through some of these challenges that we may face and to have a better understanding of each other positions,' Ali said.

He noted while the policy is not yet implemented, 'we have to have early conversations to mitigate or minimise the impact.'

Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio will embark on his first official visit to the Caribbean this week, with a tour of three nations, including Guyana, Jamaica, and Suriname.

Rubio will meet with regional leaders to discuss several pressing issues.

The visit will begin in Jamaica, where Rubio is set to meet with Prime Minister Andrew Holness for talks.

T& T Prime Minister Stuart Young will travel to Jamaica on Wednesday to meet Rubio.

Rubio will then travel to Guyana and Suriname to engage with their respective presidents, Presidents Irfaan Ali and Chandrikapersad Santokhi.

Rubio's trip follows a regional summit in Barbados last month, where Caricom chairwoman, Prime Minister Mia Mottley of Barbados, extended an invitation to President Donald Trump to visit the Caribbean.