

ICJ orders Venezuela to halt elections in Essequibo

■ GEORGETOWN

THE International Court of Justice (ICJ) yesterday unanimously reaffirmed provisional measures granted in December 2023 and told Venezuela that it shall refrain from conducting, or preparing to conduct, elections in Guyana's Essequibo region.

The reaffirmation of the provisional measures is part of the substantive case before the ICJ regarding the long-standing Arbitral Award of October 3, 1899.

Yesterday, the Court said, 'Pending a final decision in the case, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela shall refrain from conducting elections, or preparing to conduct elections, in the territory in dispute, which the Cooperative Republic of Guyana currently administers and over which it exercises control.'

Venezuela had announced that it intends to hold elections in Guyana's Essequibo for which it has administered for over 100 years, a territory that has been claimed by Venezuela.

Over the past few days, the Bolivarian Republic has been issuing notices on the candidates for these elections.

Guyana maintains that Essequibo is an integral part of its sovereign territory-a position upheld by the ICJ in its December 2023 ruling.

Based on this, Venezuela's election plan, scheduled for May 25, 2025, is seen by Guyana as a direct violation of the Court's Order and international law.

In a Facebook post yesterday, Guyana's President, Dr Irfaan Ali, welcomed the decision from the Court.

'Once again, Guyana's position has prevailed. Once again, it has been demonstrated that Guyana's position accords with international law. The Government of Guyana welcomes this decision,' he said.

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