

## Minister rejects Guyana's corruption ranking

■ GEORGETOWN

MINISTER of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance in Guyana, Gail Teixeira, has questioned the methodology used by Transparency International (TI) in its 2024 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), stressing that the index does not measure actual corruption levels.

Responding to TI, a global anti-corruption watchdog, giving Guyana a score of 39 for public sector corruption, Teixeira said that while corruption is a concern, non-empirical, non-scientific data cannot be the standard by which such a serious issue is measured by any organisation.

'The CPI is not an empirical nor a scientific measure of corruption levels globally but one of perceived public sector corruption globally,' she stated.

The minister highlighted that the CPI is a perception-based index that aggregates views from 13 sources provided by 12 institutions deemed appropriate by TI. It relies on subjective assessments from undisclosed individuals, who she argued could be influenced by isolated incidents, personal and business biases, and sociological and political worldviews.

In the case of Guyana, five sources were used, dating from 2022 to 2024, in which the country's scores ranged from 38 to 44 among the different sources.

'These sources assess perceptions of corruption in the public sector and apply a standardised methodology to produce comparable scores over time. However, as Transparency International explicitly states, 'the CPI does not measure actual corruption levels',' Teixeira said.

Regarding the methodology, the minister noted that the CPI uses multiple data sources, each with its own methodological framework, and while these sources are standardised to fit the CPI scale (0-100), aggregation processes of this nature inherently introduce variability and uncertainty in data.

'Guyana's CPI score change of one point falls within the standard margin of error, as outlined in the CPI Technical Methodology, and should not be wilfully misinterpreted and opportunistically used as evidence of systemic deterioration by any means,' she contended.

Despite Guyana's modest score, Teixeira underscored that the CPI itself acknowledged the country as a 'significant improver' over the past decade due to its strengthened governance and anti-corruption initiatives. She reiterated that the government has implemented legislative reforms, enhanced oversight mechanisms, and increased transparency in public procurement.

The minister also contended that Guyana remains ahead of several regional peers and has consistently demonstrated progress over the past decade.

Teixeira also raised questions of ethics surrounding the CPI. She pointed out that the 14 countries funding Transparency International all scored above 60/90, while many developing nations in the Global South scored poorly.

-CMC