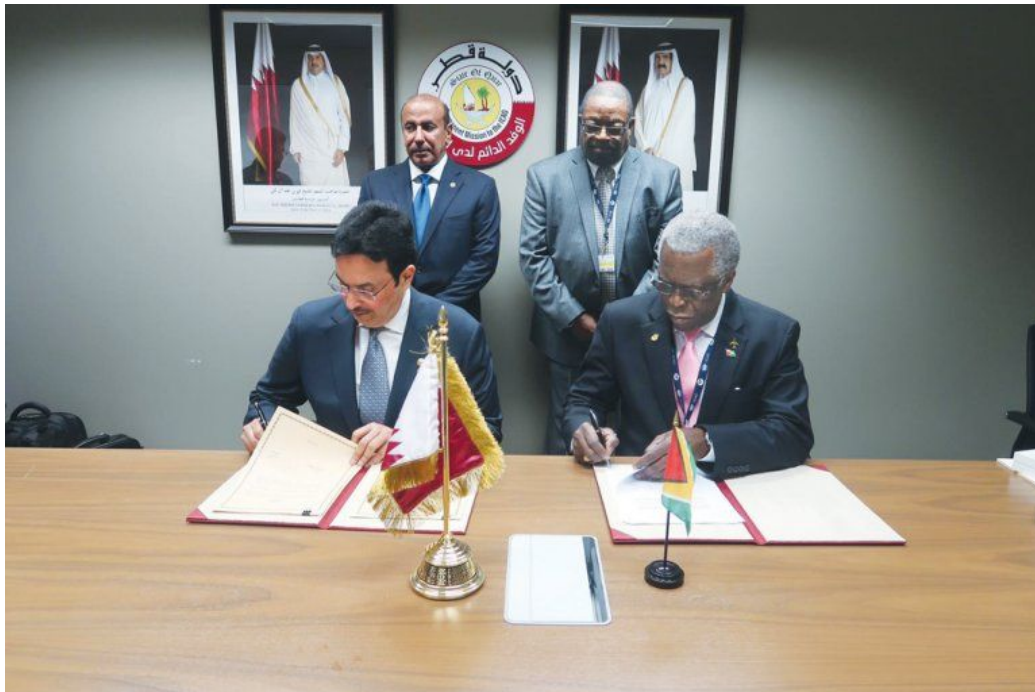


Guyana Qatar Air Agreement to create regional hub as oil and gas sores by Ray Chickrie

On Thursday, Qatar and Guyana signed a liberal air-agreement in Doha which will pave the way for cooperation between the two countries in the aviation sector. This development comes at the heels of Guyana's emerging oil and gas sector. The agreement paves the way for Qatar Airways, to open a regional hub in Georgetown, Guyana.

"In the coming months, a delegation from Qatar will be visiting Guyana to explore business opportunities in the aviation sector to establish a presence in Guyana and to strengthen the Caribbean and Latin America network," Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) said in a press release on Thursday.



Minister of Transport and Communications, H E Jassim bin Saif Al Sulaiti, and Chairman of the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) Board, Lawrence London, witnessing the signing of the agreement.

The agreement was signed by Qatar Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Chairman Abdulla bin Nasser Turki Al Subaey and Director General of GCAA Egbert Field, according to the Qatar News Agency (QNA).

Recent oil discoveries in Guyana by ExxonMObil and Tullow are estimated at about 7 billion barrels. American Airline and Jetblue have entered the Guyana market. KLM is also connecting

passengers to Amsterdam and Europe via Paramaribo with an air agreement it sealed with a local airline Guyana.

A release from GCAA, said, "Guyana signed an Air Services Agreement with the State of Qatar to promote and facilitate airlines of Guyana and Qatar to operate any number of services between both countries as well as beyond to any third country, with no restrictions on capacity, frequency, aircraft type and routing. This Agreement will create new opportunities for air carriers, enable greater movement of people and goods between the two countries, and benefit the economies and businesses."

Guyana welcomed the agreement and said, "It is a closer step in the realization of a strong and reliable gulf carrier operating flights to Georgetown."

This very liberal air agreement will permit Qatar's national carrier Qatar Airways to operate any number of passenger and cargo flights as well as cooperation between other airlines.

Significantly, the agreement permits, "Qatar Airways to have an operation center in Guyana to fly to any country in the region and other regions as well." Basically, Guyana is inviting this mega airline with 200 planes, to open a hub in Guyana. Guyana borders Brazil and South America to the South; it's about 6 hours from Dakar, Senegal, and 5 hours to New York. Guyana has no national carrier.

With a fleet of over 250 very new planes, Qatar Airways flies to 172 international destinations across the world, and ranks the world's best airline.

Meanwhile, Qatar Petroleum has acquired a 40% stake in the French energy giant Total in two oil and gas blocks offshore Guyana.