# Hurricane Beryl Strengthens to Category 4 and Nears Caribbean, Islands Brace for Impact



**Hurricane Beryl Intensifies to Category 4, Threatens Caribbean Islands**

Hurricane Beryl has escalated to Category 4 as it moves toward the Caribbean, marking it as the first major hurricane of the 2024 season. As of 11 a.m. EDT on Sunday, Beryl exhibited sustained winds of at least 130 mph. Initially formed as a tropical depression over the Atlantic Ocean, it attained hurricane status within 24 hours and rapidly intensified.

The Meteorological Service of Barbados issued a hurricane warning on Saturday afternoon, with subsequent warnings extended to St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and Tobago. The storm is expected to maintain its strength as it moves through the southeastern Caribbean, bringing life-threatening winds and a significant storm surge early Monday.

In anticipation, additional Defence Force personnel have been deployed to Tobago. The Ministry of National Security, led by Fitzgerald Hinds, has mobilized all security forces and activated shelters, sandbag distribution, and parking facilities in Trinidad. Courts will operate with limited staff and remote support, while all schools and some private sector operations have been advised to remain closed.

Border agencies in Trinidad and Tobago are prepared to accommodate marine vessels seeking refuge from the storm, with over 100 already en route. The Inter-Island Transportation Company halted ferry and cargo services for July 1, while Caribbean Airlines canceled regional and domestic flights, offering fee waivers for rebookings until July 28.