

Change

Official Newsletter of The Alliance For Change

Unlocking Guyana's Future

Alliance For Change



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NOTICE

DEMOCRACY IS YOUR BUSINESS SO PLAY YOUR PART BY ENSURING THAT YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE, HAVE UPLIFTED YOUR ID CARD, AND ARE READY TO GO OUT TO MAKE THE CHANGE YOU DREAM OF A REALITY. BEGIN TO ORGANIZE YOURSELF AND OTHERS NOW!

Other News:

New Groups have been formed on Diamond, EBD. and in West Coast Berbice. Members are urged to visit and provide support and encouragement.

The Party's "technos" are working to release a new look website in early May and to attract and relate better with the growing youth support, through Facebook and other social media.

Youth Will Make It Happen On May 8th!

Finally, the anxiously awaited AFC Youth Convention is here, and will be declared open on May 8, 2010 at the Ocean View Convention Centre. The theme for the convention is "Making it happen now!" and in the words of one youth leader, "it amply demonstrates the drive and commitment that we youths have towards seeing Guyana developed in a peaceful and cohesive manner; not in the future, but now." This Convention will be different in that it will be devoid of heavy political content as we focus on youth issues and how to fix them.

Youth, from all across Guyana will gather for one day to discuss issues that are common to them such as job creation, opportunities, health, moral uplift and education. Showcasing the event will be Jamaican Senator, Basil Waite, who is the Opposition PNP's Shadow Minister of Education, and a former President of his Party's youth arm, and Dr. Tarron Khemraj, who is quickly making a name for himself as a Economist for the future through his Stabroek News columns. These two, along with other youth leaders being drawn from throughout Guyana, will seek to further develop the AFC's vision and strategy for youth development by pulling strands of thought and data together from the visionary minds of youth in Guyana and internationally. An invitation is extended to one and all to participate.



Dr. T. Khemraj



Senator B. Waite

AFC Lending Critical Support to Diamond Sugar Workers

For the past several weeks, members of the AFC's executive have been in contact with workers of the Diamond Sugar Estate, and their families, with a view to providing advice and expertise as they sought to negotiate with GuySuCo on the issue of the closing of the Diamond Estate fields. The suffering that is already arising from the displacement should be enough to move anyone to want to bring relief. As has been the case recently with Bauxite workers at Aroaima, we believe that the obvious injustice being suffered by hundreds of workers at Diamond, and their families, cannot go unanswered. We must be involved.

We had hoped that the GuySuCo board, comprising mainly of PPP/C "big shots", would have seen it as both practical and humane to offer the workers there, the option of being declared redundant and therefore entitled to Severance benefits, or of being transferred to another Estate in East Demerara. Unfortunately, this was not to be and so the recalcitrance, callousness and insensitivity that has been meted out to the working people of Guyana elsewhere, is now being adopted to deny the workers at Diamond their basic and just entitlements and rights. We have seen the high-handedness in dealing with bauxite workers and sugar workers in the past even as a select, cloistered few enjoy super salaries and benefits. This nonsense has to stop.

Local Government Elections

The Alliance for Change is on record as stating that as a party *"The AFC will participate in Local Government Elections only when the legislative reforms mandated by the Local Government Task force and agreed on by all parties and the International Community has been put in place"*.

Upcoming Events:

Region 1, North West District, is slated for outreach visits at Mabaruma, Port Kaituma from May 14-17 and Moruca for Moruca Day observances. Visits will also continue apace in East Berbice, Essequibo, and Linden for the month of May.

An Independence anniversary "Back in Time" Party is being planned by the Fundraising Committee. Details to follow.

The Quarterly meeting of the National Executive Committee is to be held in June, 2010. The date will be announced.

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"Growth means change and change involves risk, stepping from the known to the unknown."

In a direct response to the AFC's position, His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo has committed his Government and the PPP/C to *"A last ditch effort to conclude the outstanding Local Government Reforms"*, however over three weeks have passed and the Special Select Parliamentary Committee on Local Government Reform has not been reconvened.

The AFC believes that if the PPP/C Government is serious and fully committed to the holding of Local Government Elections under a reformed governance system, this committee has to be reactivated immediately to conclude agreement on the outstanding Bills. Any further delays will be deemed undemocratic and will continue to deny the people of Guyana their desire to take control of the management of their communities, free from the direction of Central Government.

The AFC remains committed to doing whatever is necessary to ensure that all outstanding legislations are agreed between stakeholders and passed in the National Assembly.

Parliamentary Round-Up

Sexual Offences Bill passed and Speaker Disallows question on Acting Chief Education Officer.

- The AFC was pleased to be associated with the long-overdue Sexual Offences Bill that was passed in the National Assembly in April 2010. This Bill could not have come a day later as we strongly believe that the sexual depravity that is gripping the country has to be "stamped out" indeed. Sexual Offences of any kind are deplorable and even more so, those who make our children the victims of perverts. The AFC will hold the feet of the Government and the Guyana Police Force to the fire to ensure that the law is not allowed to gather dust, but is used like a mighty sword to cut away the cancer which sucks on the souls of the innocent.
- The Speaker declined to allow a Question relating to the confirmation of the Acting of the Chief Education Officer who has been acting for a number of years without being confirmed by the PPP/C. Mrs. Whyte-Nedd deserves to be substantively appointed before she retires in the near future. This good and faithful public servant has presided over the education of thousands of children both at home and in the Caribbean but is deliberately being punished and unrecognized in our own home. The government must explain why Mrs. Whyte-Nedd is good enough to Act in the position for many years and to oversee education policy, but not good enough to be confirmed.

LABOUR DAY MESSAGE

The Party takes the opportunity to extend Labour Day greetings to all workers. The first day of May is an auspicious day on the calendar for all workers worldwide. In Guyana, our workers continue to be disadvantaged and trampled on. The PPP/C, which once boasted that it was a "working people's party" has now abandoned workers leaving them to be sacrificed at the altar of profiteering. This year, the plight of the worker is more acute as we see major dislocation within the Sugar and Bauxite sectors.

ARRIVAL DAY MESSAGE

We honour the contribution of our ancestors who travelled across the seas to labour in Guyana and to build a new nation. East Indians, Chinese, Europeans, and even Africans, came after slavery was abolished to toil and develop the green land of Guyana. They have bequeathed to us a rich inheritance of cultures, which have been woven into a uniquely Guyanese tapestry. Today, we must preserve our identity and continue to reject and fight against the scourge of racism. We must proclaim and promote our birthright as proud Guyanese; different yes, but all still the same.