

Change

Official Newsletter of The Alliance For Change

Unlocking Guyana's Future

Alliance For Change



Newsletter Date: August, 2008

Volume 1, Number 2

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Other News:

AFC Delegation led by Mr. Raphael Trotman and comprising Mrs. Sheila Holder, Latchmin Punalall, Clayton Hall, and Sewnauth Punalall met with Gay Mc Dougall the UN Independent Expert in Minority Issues to discuss ways in which the AFC, and its supporters, as "minorities" are being discriminated against.

AFC Leaders Trotman and Ramjattan paid a courtesy call on the Indian High Commissioner.

The General Secretary, Clayton Hall, shared information and ideas on Guyana's holistic development with Jane Gooding a Senior Planning Officer of USAID.

A team of MP's met with

August- a Month of Change and Emancipation

The month of August is significant in the AFC's calendar as it marks the occasion when we as a newly formed party successfully contested the 2006 General Elections, and established ourselves as a formidable force. Following the elections, the AFC was shown to have convincingly won a seat in the Region 10 constituency of Upper Demerara/Upper Berbice, but GECOM had other ideas, and announced that the seat was going to the PPP/C. We have behaved responsibly by approaching the High Court for justice, and yet today, two years later, the will of the people of Region 10 is being flouted and justice is being blatantly denied. The PPP/C has shamelessly and illegally held onto a seat that they know, was not won by them. What is worse is that they have refused, and failed, to provide representation and relief to the suffering people in the Region from the dust, impassable roads, lack of access to information other than that on NCN television, and joblessness. Shameful!

August is also the month in which we celebrate the emancipation won by our African ancestors. The leadership of the party has begun to warn citizens that the government's new posture is becoming autocratic and the rights of citizens are being eroded and denied at an alarming rate. It was with this concern in mind that our Emancipation Day message was crafted. Below are some extracts:

"Through the last 170 years, though there have been changes in social, economic and political systems, it has not diminished the thirst for power of the ruling class to want to impose their authority over those who have entrusted them with the role of government. Today, some of these features of social, economic, and cultural domination exist around the world, and even here in Guyana. The beating of the drums in celebration should forever remind us that with every beat of our hearts we are called upon to ensure the protection of those rights and freedoms for which were fought for and won at emancipation time. Let us take a moment in quiet contemplation to remember the recently fallen and downtrodden whose rights and freedoms were not safeguarded by the state, and of our own individual failure to give them protection.

Regretfully, the Guyanese society still suffers from other forms of servitude and oppression, including the denial of the right to protection from criminal elements, protection from Human Rights abuses by the State and other blatant forms of disregard for their lives, denial of rights of freedom of speech, expression, and of association, and access to information as in the case of Region #10 where the right to listen to radio and view television other than that provided by the State is continuously being denied. Daily, we are seeing our basic rights being rolled back by draconian laws, regulations and government policies. It is time for a Change. "

3rd Quarterly NEC Meeting: Linden, Region 10

The National Executive Committee and Special Invitees held the third Quarterly Meeting in the mining town of Linden over the period Friday 11th-Sunday 13th, July, 2008. Matters on the Agenda included the reports of the Leader and Regional Representatives. The programme for the upcoming quarter was also finalized. Highlights include the acceleration of the **Seeds of Change Project**, establishing more groups nation-wide, preparing for upcoming elections through Leadership Seminars and workshops, and political work in all 10 Regions.

Seeds of Change

The Seeds of Change project was taken to Region 10 where several thousand seedling plants were shared to happy residents of Linden and Rockview. In the coming months seedlings and seeds will be handed out to residents of Region 1, 9, and parts of Region 6. This is an ongoing AFC project which is scheduled to last until year end at which time the decision as to whether it will be renewed will be made.

the Women's Network to discuss ways in which Members of Parliament can be more effective in responding to the needs of women vulnerable from poverty and violence. A series of questions have been tabled in Parliament by Sheila Holder, M.P as a follow up.

Emancipation Celebrations in Region 5 were supported by MPs David Patterson and Raphael Trotman at the Emancipation Queen Pageant, and Hopetown Soiree.

The "AFC on the Move" TV programme resumed on Saturdays @ 4pm on Channel 9 and is being co-coordinated by Sixtus Edwards.



AFC CARRYING THE FIGHT IN PARLIAMENT

The AFC 5 member team continues to represent the interests of the Guyanese people in the National Assembly by supporting bills and motions which advance their welfare while opposing those which, in our considered opinion, do not. An overseas based Guyanese remarked that we are looking like we are 15 and not 5! Some of the issues recently tackled include:

-In this regard we opposed outrightly the Court of Appeal Bill No. 12 of 2008 which seeks to give the government the right to appeal in criminal matters including, the right to appeal a "not guilty" verdict of a Jury! This right does not exist in any other Commonwealth Country. In opposing the Court of Appeal Bill No. 12 of 2008, AFC Chairman, K. Ramjattan, ably defended the Guyanese people against government's erosion of jury supremacy to fortify their position of power while ignoring their duty to pass laws to improve the lives and lot of citizens. AFC Leader Trotman warned the government that it was pushing the people of Guyana too far and it must stop.

--The Food Crisis Motion was supported by the AFC, and amendments proposed by R. Trotman for the National Assembly to monitor the situation, were accepted by the government. Special mention was made of the difficulties being experienced by farmers on the East Coast, Essequibo, whom K. Ramjattan and S. Holder had met a few weeks earlier in the backlands.

--Ministers were also grilled about the Government's refusal to endorse the European Union's Micro-Credit Programme; and the investigations into the deaths of prisoners Nigel Niles and Nolan Noble

--Raphael Trotman, M.P. wrote to the Commissioner of Police to alleviate the chaos which citizens and road users experienced whenever the National Assembly because of security barricades.

Upcoming Events:

Region 8 Mahadia Visit
August 25th- 29th

Leadership Engagements in
New York and New Jersey

Amerindian Heritage Month
(September)

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"Be the change you want to see in the world". Mahatma Gandhi

In the interest of re-focusing on our objective as a party bringing change to Guyana, it is important that we hold our fundamental principles and beliefs sacred. The Agenda For Change is re-printed below for the knowledge and edification of members and supporters.

Agenda For Change

We Commit to: -

- Establishing a caring Government where the suffering and the plight of the poor, the elderly in particular, youths, the issues of gender and Guyanese in general will be addressed in a timely manner.
- Creating a stable social and political environment where the rule of law is upheld to attract suitable local, regional and foreign direct investments for the creation of jobs, economic development, self reliance, wealth and the alleviation of poverty consistent with the Millennium Development Goals.
- Dealing with the crime situation in the country in a holistic way and returning the country to a satisfactory level of security where our people could once again feel physically secure in their homes, places of work and recreation.
- Working towards the development of trust between government and the people; between local professionals and government; between the private sector and government; between investors and government between all the ethnic groups in Guyana and government.
- Re-establishing a qualified and professionally competent public service and a National Insurance and Social Security Scheme that is relevant to the financial and economic realities of the Guyanese Society.
- Restoring the principle of separation of powers, strengthening the three arms of the state by reforming the Parliamentary System, improving the standards of the judiciary as well as inculcating in government a culture of excellence and Service to the people.
- Developing institutional arrangements for the mutually beneficial utilization of the expertise and financial means of the Diaspora.
- Conserving the natural heritage and the biodiversity of our country in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- Creating a system of education and moral guidance that will unlock the potential of our children in an environment of equal treatment and equal opportunity to give support to the family structure.