

Welcome!

We are pleased to launch our bi-monthly newsletter to update you on our activities. This edition covers the news in brief for the months of March and April.

Newsletters and more information on the EAB and its activities will be available on our website at www.eab.org.gy. We are presently revamping the website, which should be online shortly.

We welcome comments and recommendations on our work and the information provided.

The Electoral Assistance Bureau will be providing assistance to the General Public during the CLAIMS & OBJECTIONS PERIOD FOR THE 2006 PLE.

Persons wishing to check for their names on the Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) can call the EAB hotline (225-6739 or 225-6799) or check at the EAB's Office. E-mail requests can be sent to eabguyana@yahoo.com.

The Hotline and the EAB's Office will be open from Monday to Friday during the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Operations Re-established for Monitoring 2006 National Elections

The EAB monitors national and regional elections. We establish operations around election events.

Our Programme for the 2006 National Elections was officially launched at a press conference on March 6 with Chairperson, Fr. Malcolm Rodrigues, and other members of the Council of Management. We are receiving financial support from a multi-donor group through the coordinating auspices of the United Nations Development Programme.

At the Press Conference the Chairperson announced that the EAB plans to conduct computerized and field tests of the Preliminary List of Electors (PLE) and Revised List of Electors (RLE) and to field observers at every polling station to monitor the balloting

process. He noted that the EAB will consider other monitoring activities which may arise as the date and context of elections become more certain but he did not foresee a major expansion of election-related activities.

Citizens who are desirous of joining the EAB's efforts, and who are not actively engaged in partisan political activity, are welcome to contact us.

The EAB's office is open by appointment to ordinary citizens, political parties, civil society organisations, donors and other international groups desirous of observing our operations.

Regional Coordinators Trained to Coordinate Field Activities

Regional Coordinators for EAB's activities were trained during the months of March and April. The Coordinators are responsible for overseeing activities at the regional level, including recruiting field workers and volunteer observers, and assisting with training and coordinating field work on the Preliminary and Revised Lists of Electors. They are also responsible for coordinating observers on Election Day. Many of the Coordinators have served in previous elections. The training sessions were designed to reinforce their skills and build the capacity of new Coordinators.



EAB Team and Coordinators at a Training Workshop, March.

EAB Granted Observer Accreditation from GECOM

The EAB has, as an accredited Domestic Observer, monitored and observed the 1992, 1994 (Local Government Elections), 1997 and 2001 National and Regional Elections.

The EAB applied to GECOM and has received official accreditation as a Domestic Observer for the 2006 National & Regional Elections.

Methodology for Testing Voters' Lists Finalised

The EAB benefited from expert advice from the University of Guyana to finalise its methodology for testing the Preliminary and Revised Lists of Electors (PLE & RLE).

The EAB will test both the PLE & RLE when they are formally released by GECOM. The findings will be shared with GECOM and other stakeholders.

The lists will be tested as follows:

- i. A computerized search for duplicates will be conducted.
- ii. A hotline where persons can phone to report discrepancies will be manned for the duration of the Claims and Objections Period.
- iii. The reliability of the lists will be tested by a statistically significant random sample investigation of 1200 voters selected from across all regions.

Meetings Started with Political Parties

The EAB commenced meetings in March with political parties to clarify the EAB's role and discuss its activities related to the upcoming elections.

The EAB requested meetings with the Parliamentary political parties, and has since been able to meet with the Peoples Progressive Party/Civic.

The EAB invited all the non-Parliamentary political parties, on record, to a meeting to discuss the EAB's Programme. The meeting was held on Monday, 24th April. Representatives from the National Democratic Front, National Front Alliance, Alliance for Change, Guyana Action Party/Rise Organise and Rebuild, and the People's Democratic Movement attended.

Mr. Carl Sylvester, EAB Council Member, chaired the meeting. He emphasised that the EAB is an independent body, its Field Workers and Observers are not political activists and its sole role is to monitor elections. Any discrepancies discovered in the period of checking the voters' lists or observed at polling places on Election Day will be noted and reported. It is not the EAB's role to intervene and take corrective action.

The EAB wishes to thank Political Parties for their cooperation.

EAB Commences Training of Field Workers to Test Preliminary and Final Voters' Lists

In April the EAB began training field workers to undertake field testing of the PLE & RLE. Field Workers from Regions 4, 5, 6 and 9 were trained. The training will continue with Field Workers from other regions in early May.



EAB Coordinators & Field Workers at a Training Workshop, April.

Organisation of American States Advance Mission Met with EAB

Three members of the preliminary mission of the Organisation of American States (OAS) Elections Observer team met with the EAB on Saturday April 8. The critical issues affecting the elections' process and the direction of the process towards free and fair elections were discussed. The EAB has customarily been a point of contact for international observer missions in Guyana.

Need for Non-Violent Environment

The EAB is heartened by recent public condemnation of the escalating level of violence and the number of deaths that have resulted.

The EAB wishes to join the call made by stakeholders in the political process and by civil society for a stable, non-violent environment for the period leading up to the elections, Election Day itself, and the post election period.

The EAB wishes to stress the need for a peaceful environment in which free and fair elections and elections free from fear can be conducted.

The Council of Management, Staff and volunteers of the EAB are deeply shocked at the violent killing of Member of Parliament, Minister Satyadeow Sawh and others. We express our deepest sympathies to the surviving members of their families.

Regional Coordinators

The EAB is pleased to announce and thank all of our Regional Coordinators for their efforts in coordinating field activities. Please contact the relevant persons listed below if you wish to volunteer as an Election Observer.

Region	Coordinator	Contact
Region 1 (Mabaruma)	Bernice Pierre	777-5019
Region 1 (Moruka)	Victor Ferreira	771-9284/5
Region 2	Gerald Mahase	619-5791
Region 3 (WCD)	Goolzar Namdar	275-0329 625-6028
Region 3 (WBD)	Syed Bacchus	264-2402
Region 4 (EBD)	Angela Torrezao	265-6507
Region 4 (ECD)	Shelisa Khan	259-3067 626-1895
Region 5	Surindra Doodnauth	642-8278
Region 6	Mark Sawh	333-5376
Region 7	Emory Moonsammy	455-2622 619-6275
Region 8	Tobias Peters	Kurukabaru Village
Region 9	Randy Gilbert	c/o Rockview Lodge, Annai
Region 10	Frank Fyfe	444-4485

(Addresses provided for Coordinators in areas without telephone service.)

Initiative Launched on the Expansion of EAB Focal Areas

The EAB is considering expanding its areas of work in order to further support democratic governance in Guyana. To this end, a Concept Note is in its final stages of development.

The Concept Note outlines the rationale for expanding activities beyond elections' monitoring, proposed areas of work, capacity needed to sustain activities and alterations in governance structure necessary for continuous operations.

The EAB plans to consult with donors, civil society groups and other stakeholders before developing the final Operations and Business Plans.

EAB Project Team in Place for 2006 Elections Monitoring

The EAB is pleased to announce the Project Team responsible for coordinating the monitoring of the 2006 elections.

The team comprises a Project Director, David Yhann, of Greater Georgetown, Project Officer, Samantha Philander, of South Georgetown, Office Manager, Elaine Constantine, of South Georgetown, Project Assistant, Aslin Abrams of Buxton Village and Facilities Assistant, Shineez Yarde of Plaisance Village.

The EAB is engaging independent experts in statistical and computing fields to assist the Project Team.

The Electoral Assistance Bureau of Guyana is an independent, non-partisan, not-for-profit organisation of ordinary citizens who are committed to promoting democracy in Guyana. The EAB is comprised of citizen volunteers from all ethnic, economic and adult age groups within Guyana. Since our establishment in 1991 we have focused on the monitoring of elections. In this regard, EAB has an extensive national observer network. We have fielded several hundred observers in all regions for all national and regional elections since 1992. The organisation is governed by a Council of Management, which is comprised of individuals with a range of skills needed to guide our work. The EAB is sponsored by civil society organisations with constituencies across all major faiths and in other interest areas. Sponsors are consulted on major governance decisions. The EAB has been supported by a number of donors over the years. We are grateful for their support and the continued support of our Sponsors and other fellow Guyanese. For more information visit or website at www.eab.org.gy

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