



GUYANA NEWS

Norton hints at APNU's participation in upcoming local gov't polls





Aubrey Norton

By [Stabroek News](#) November 16, 2022



Leader of the Opposition and Chairman of A Part-nership For National Unity (APNU), Aubrey Norton has hinted at his party's likely participation in the upcoming Local Government Elections (LGE) vowing to prevent the government from attempting to "dominate and control this entire society."

Since the announcement of LGE last month, APNU has not sent a clear



APNU's coalition partner, the Alliance For Change (AFC), on Sunday announced that it will not be contesting the local government polls with the present list come March 13, 2023. The AFC's National Executive Committee (NEC), in a statement, said that no election should be held on the existing list of electors because it is "bloated, illegitimate and a source of electoral fraud".

It said that on the face of it, the current list contains the names of the deceased, migrated and duplicates. The NEC said it believes that participating in these elections with a list proven deficient and containing widespread discrepancies would perpetrate a fraud on the Guyanese people and undermine our democratic system.

At his weekly press conference yesterday, Norton was asked about the announcement and whether the APNU will follow suit. He said that AFC is a separate political entity and is entitled to make decisions it deems fit adding that APNU will do the same.

"In terms of the APNU, we are in a different position. We will engage and then we will determine what is in the best interest of our people. For instance, we have strongholds in Linden, we have strongholds in New Amsterdam, in Bartica, in Mahdia and in the last election we beat the PPP in Rose Hall. Now what is the PPP hope, the PPP hopes that nobody will go and they will get all the seats and dominate and control this entire society.

"We have made it clear that we will protect our strongholds how we do



APNU+AFC has been contending that the voters' list is padded with the names of dead and migrated persons. They have been calling on GECOM to embark on a process of house-to-house registration as a means of accurately representing the voting population. However, GECOM has consistently refused that request.

Additionally, the party has been calling for GECOM to launch an internal investigation into the March 2020 general and regional elections which saw it being uprooted from the seat of power. This request as well has been declined with GECOM noting that the power to investigate all electoral malpractice lies with a competent Elections Court.

Local Government Elections were constitutionally due at the end of last year but GECOM was without a Chief Election Officer and could not have prepared to host the elections. As a result, the Chair wrote to the government informing them of the situation but did commit to confirming a timeline after the appointment of a CEO.

APNU+AFC has been saying that before Guyana hosts another election, it should implement the recommendations of the various electoral observer groups and reform GECOM and its processes. The major concern for the group is the voters' list.

President Irfaan Ali has called on opposition political parties to "get ready" for the upcoming polls.

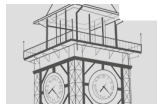


as the date for nomination day for the local government polls. He also said that all political parties, voluntary groups or individual candidates who are desirous of contesting the elections are required to submit their list of candidates and pre-approved symbols on nomination day.



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