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The Unity Labour Party; A force for good in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Introduction

It is the consensus among right thinking Vincentians, at home and abroad, that the Unity Labour Party is a force for good in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. There has been tremendous evidence to support this view, right before our very eyes. When the ULP arrived in office in March 2001, our beloved country was in a mess, the education system and the state machinery was in tatters, and there was no leadership.

To many Vincentians in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, March 28th 2001 was deliverance day in the country. On that day, Vincentians went to the polls and voted overwhelmingly to remove the heavy yolk of the NDP from their necks. That decision by the voters, to cast their votes next to the star, the symbol of the ULP, ushered in a new developmental era in the country.

Having elected the ULP to office in March 2001, Vincentians then re-elected the ULP to office in 2005, 2010 and 2015, four in a row. This was so because the people trusted the ULP government to deliver on their commitments, having seen the impressive work of Dr. Ralph Gonsalves and his ULP. Never has there been such a prolific period of development in the history of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Never has there been an outpouring of project work, all aimed at creating jobs, and making life better for the people of SVG.

Understanding our country

The success of the ULP administration under Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, is based on a sound understanding of the issues that affect the socio-economic development of our country, and the willingness to devise a framework to address these issues. So, from the outset, the ULP offered a vision which is based on a policy called “people-centered development”.

So, for example, all the development activities designed and implemented by the ULP, are all aimed at improving the lives and circumstances of all Vincentians. And the list is long, from the Education Revolution which educated and trained our people, to the bridge over the Rabacca Dry River which provided better communications for the people living in the north of the country; to turning dead capital into live capital, and to the number of health facilities which the ULP is providing. All these are aimed at improving the lives of Vincentians.

The other political party, the opposition New Democratic Party, is not in love with Vincentians, does not have the leadership skills, and is not in communion with the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Daily on radio, they malign this beloved country, cussing Vincentians, without any message to show that they understand the development needs of the country. They are a sorry bunch of misfits, who are desperate to get their hands on the treasury.

Ramping up the activities

Vincentians will have noticed that the ULP administration has ramped up its socio-economic development work load, with the official opening of several government projects, and the announcement of plans for some new enterprises. All this is happening at a time when the world economy is still affecting the countries in the Caribbean, including St.Vincent and the Grenadines, in a negative way.

And so the ULP administration has had to ramp up its strategies to deal with the effects of a hostile external economic environment. The success of this can be seen in the fact that St. Vincent and the Grenadines is perhaps one of the few countries in the Caribbean, who has not sought the services of the International Monetary Fund, the IMF. Countries who encounter economic challenges, seek the services of the IMF, to get out of their financial difficulties. The country of Barbados is a case in point. The new Barbados government has had to introduce a number of tax measures aimed at raising much needed revenue.

Over the next five months, the country will see a hive of construction activity, as two hotel projects get off the ground. In September, there will be the launch of the proposed Marriot hotel in the Mt. Wynne area. Readers will recall that the government obtained a loan of US\$50 million from the Republic of China on Taiwan, for this purpose.

Then there is the construction of the government-owned ninety-three room Holiday Inn express in the Diamond area, with work expected to commence towards the end of 2019. Also related to hotel occupancy is the construction of the privately owned Royal Mill hotel in the Calliaqua area, which will have a total of 200 rooms and private villas.

All this activity, to include work on the Buccama Resort, and the Black Sand hotel in the Keartons area, will see a further 1200 hotel rooms being added to the national stock. But the construction activity will be hectic over the next five months, and there will be new jobs on the market for Vincentian skilled workers, including masons, carpenters and plumbers.

The Diamond area will also see some further construction activity this year, with the construction of an athletic track facility to be built by a German company, and

the erection of a community centre, as a backdrop to the athletic track, and the Holiday Inn express.

Conclusion

All this is exciting news for the country. When the full plans for the Acute Referral Hospital at the new city at Arnos Vale is released, along with the port development work in Kingstown, that excitement will reach fever pitch

Only the ULP administration under the leadership of Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, will add more to the socio economic development of this country.