

Community Development

Here we report on the burning issues as they affect the people of Klang and how Charles Santiago has responded to them

MID-TERM REVIEW OF 9TH MALAYSIA PLAN

14 JUNE Before the parliamentary debate on the mid-term review of 9th Malaysia Plan, Charles organised a 'People's Forum' in Klang to discuss the relevant issues. The aim of the forum was to solicit ideas from constituents to form the basis of Charles' contribution to the debate. Charles is very much committed to this consultative, democratic process and a new style of politics. He wants everyone in the constituency to have a voice on issues close to their hearts and to participate in the process of decision-making at the national level. From these small beginnings Charles hopes that a new kind of participatory democracy can be forged in the future.



WOMEN'S RIGHTS

27 JUL Despite advancement for some women, institutionalised and informal discrimination against women from all communities remains a fact. As part of his ongoing commitment to reaching out to vulnerable social groups, Charles - together with the KL Legal Aid Centre, Women Aid Organisation, All Women Action Society (AWAM) and Sisters in Islam (SIS) - jointly organised a women's rights training workshop. Women were introduced to their rights under both civil and *syariah* laws with a particular focus on issues to do with marriage and divorce, and domestic violence. As a follow-up, one-to-one legal advice was provided to women who sought clarification on specific issues.



THE FORGOTTEN PEOPLE



24 OCT It's an appalling experience: to be poor in Klang amid relative prosperity; to be deprived of even the basic necessities; to live without dignity. Invisible to the policy planners the poor have become the forgotten people. When Charles discovered the true extent of this blight he took immediate steps to address the problem. He obtained food donations from charities and concerned individuals and used the annual Deepavali celebration as an opportune time to help distribute these food parcels to poor families. But Charles is acutely aware that this is only a short-term palliative. In response, he is planning to launch a Klang Cares mutual assistance programme.

RECENT CONSTITUENCY EVENTS

- 7 December: Training on setting up new DAP branches in Klang, MP Klang Community Centre
- 7 December: Visit to flood victims in Taman Chi Liung and Bayu Perdana shophots
- 6 December: Handing out food hampers to the poor families in Teluk Gong, Dewan Hamid Tuah
- 27 November: Visit to SPAZ Sdn Bhd to discuss Klang's chronic traffic problems

INTER-FAITH DIALOGUE ON POVERTY

20 DEC In a multi-faith society like Malaysia it is vital that believers of different religions speak to each other in a spirit of tolerance and understanding. The best way to do so is through working together on practical issues that affect all. In a first for Klang, the Inter-Faith Dialogue on Poverty helped create a forum for people to share their experiences on issues of poverty. Not only did it encourage interaction between local religious leaders, it also proposed solutions that resonate with the desire of all faiths for justice and humanity.

SERI BEREMBANG FLATS



1 MAY On Labour Day Charles visited the Seri Berembang low-cost flats to monitor the cleaning exercise undertaken by Majlis Perbandaran Klang. There had been no regular rubbish collection for six years. Thanks to his intervention the public health situation has much improved.

Parliamentary & State Activities

Charles Santiago has been one of the most active MPs - bringing the concerns of his constituents to Parliament and speaking out on key issues

FOOD SECURITY AS A SOCIAL SAFETY NET



27 NOV Charles and Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, accepted a memorandum from individuals and non-governmental organisations after attending the Food Forum on the food crisis. The memorandum urged the government to engage the general public - especially farmers, fishermen, Orang Asli groups and other affected communities - in a consultative process. This would help ensure that their voices are heard, that the current system of price controls on essential items is functioning effectively, and that the government introduces measures for the needy.

A COMMON STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN FOR UUCA AMENDMENT

7 NOV In a roundtable discussion on the Universities and University Colleges Act (UUCA) organised and chaired by Charles, Gerakan Mahasiswa Mansuhkan AUKU (GMMMA), academic bodies such as PKAUM, IUMASA, GERAK and KAPTS unanimously spoke against the proposed amendments. The panellists said the amendments would only "restrict the critical minds of students" and send them into "a state of fear". The panellists also suggested that academics and students collaborate and issue a joint memorandum.

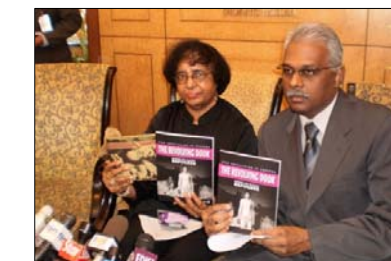
'UNSHACKLE THE PRESS', GOVERNMENT TOLD

13 NOV Gayathry Venkiteswaran, the Executive Director of the Centre for Independent Journalism, and several activists were in Parliament to hand over a memorandum and petition carrying 3,059 signatures calling on the government to ensure media freedom is respected in the country. The CIJ also urged the government to set up a parliamentary select committee on media freedom. Receiving the memorandum were Pakatan Rakyat MPs Charles, Sivarasa, Azmin Ali, Khalid Samad and Fuziah Salleh.



'REFUGEES FOR SALE' PRESS CONFERENCE

5 NOV Charles organised a joint press conference with Aegile Fernandez, co-ordinator of Anti-Trafficking in Persons at Tenaganita and Alice Nah from the Migration Working Group. The purpose was to highlight the plight of Burmese (Myanmar) refugees, some of whom were being "sold off" at the Malaysia-Thai border. Aegile presented evidence of refugees for sale in the book *Revolving Door* published by Tenaganita.



WATER RESTRUCTURING IN SELANGOR

9 OCT Charles is part of a 9-member panel that has been formed to review the Selangor government's move to reorganise the water industry in the state. The panel will determine the best price for state subsidiary Kumpulan Darul Ehsan to acquire relevant assets of companies involved in the production and distribution of water to consumers.

REJECT THE DRACONIAN DNA BILL

17 SEPT Charles launched a petition to reject the DNA Identification Bill 2008. Besides the fear that the Bill will confer excessive and arbitrary powers on the police, Charles also argues that it flies in the face of natural justice and human rights. If you are interested in signing the online petition please go to: <http://www.petitiononline.com/dnabill/petition-sign.html?>

CHARLES SANTIAGO QUOTE ... UNQUOTE

“I am appalled to note that the Malaysian Defence Ministry had been complacent about the radioactive leak by the US nuclear-powered submarine *USS Houston* This has implications for health, environment and quality of life of my constituents in Klang” *Malaysiakini*

“Appointments should be based on meritocracy, past performance and leadership qualities. Appointing or removing a person based on race and religion is discriminatory” *Press Release, 29 September 2008*



ISSUE

01

01/2009

MP Klang Newsletter

Planned Programmes for 2009

The office of Charles Santiago will be promoting a number of innovative programmes starting next year to help create new community awareness and long-term progress in Klang

FORUM ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS: IMPACTS FOR BUSINESS, WORKERS AND NATION

There is little doubt that the single most important challenge facing many people in the coming months will be the impact of the global economic crisis. The indicators of economic disaster are potentially catastrophic. It will have negative consequences for growth, jobs, livelihoods and general welfare. This Forum will discuss the character of the crisis and its impacts for the business community, for working people and vulnerable groups, as well as the nation as a whole. It will also search for viable remedial and long-term solutions to the crisis.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR TRAINING

The creation of meaningful jobs is of paramount importance - especially at a time of economic difficulties. People need the skills and knowledge to turn their ideas into business proposals that have a good chance of success. The Young Entrepreneur Training programme will train young people from all communities to develop their ideas through the acquisition of practical skills (communication planning, marketing), motivation, mentorship and guidance in cooperation with local businesses.

GREEN AMBASSADOR CAMPAIGN

Development has come at a high cost: deterioration of the environment through depletion of resources such as air, water and soil and the destruction of ecosystems. This new campaign aims to promote environmental awareness among young people, especially on issues of climate change, sustainable development, organic agriculture and pollution. It will galvanise young people to speak out in an informed way and become green ambassadors of the future.

KLANG CARES

Absolute and relative poverty are a terrible fact of life. Charitable donations can only go so far. Klang Cares is a community-based mutual assistance programme to help poor people obtain their basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. As the slogan says: "let's make poverty history".



COUNSELLING AND TRAINING FOR SINGLE MOTHERS

This programme aims to address single mothers' problems by designing a special social safety net for them. Counselling and training will be provided to motivate single mothers and increase their capacity to survive independently.



Photo Gallery



this issue

- klang community upholds human rights 1
- crime is our concern 1
- community development 2
- parliamentary & state activities 3
- planned programmes for 2009 4
- photo gallery 4



Solutions For A New Community

Welcome to the first issue of Klang Times, the newsletter of the office of Charles Santiago, the MP for Klang. The purpose of the newsletter is simple: it offers an insight into the deeply-felt concerns of the citizens of Klang - and offers some solutions to build a better and more vibrant community. The newsletter reflects community development as well as parliamentary and state matters. It reports on ongoing people-centred initiatives to tackle some of the most pressing problems facing Klang today. At the same time, there is a comprehensive digest of future plans and programmes. Please feel free to contribute your thoughts and ideas - and get involved in making a new community.

Contact Us

You can contact Charles Santiago through his office:

2A Jalan Bayu Tinggi 8/KS6
Batu Unjur
41200 Klang
Selangor

T: 03 3323 2122
F: 03 3324 3096
E: mpklang@yahoo.com
W: votecharles.wordpress.com

Hotline: 016 626 7797

Klang Community Upholds Human Rights Say No to ISA!

Efforts are being stepped up to challenge and abolish the Internal Security Act. The people of Klang are in the forefront of this important legal and ethical struggle.

by its MP in championing human rights for all Malaysians. The gathering culminated in the issuing of a Klang Declaration against the ISA.

In conjunction with the Hari Raya Aidilfitri festival, Klang MP Charles Santiago organised a programme on 3 October 2008 entitled "Hari Raya celebration together with ISA (Internal Security Act) victims and families".



A crowd estimated at more than 1,200 gathered to show solidarity with a number of notable individuals - including Raja Petra Kamarudin and the Hindaf 5 - as well as ISA detainees in general who have been held under the draconian law which allows indefinite detention without trial.

Among the keynote speakers at the event were Pakatan Rakyat leaders Dr Xavier Jayakumar, Khalid Samad, Ronnie Liu, Tony Pua, Lau Weng San, Nasir Ibrahim and Ismail Arsat; Raja Petra Kamarudin's wife Marina Lee; Hindraf's lawyer N. Surendren; and NGO leaders Haris Ibrahim and Ser Choon Ing.

Klang people were making history. It is the first community in Malaysia to be led

Crime is our concern - Klang's crime rate up 39%

The crime rate of Klang has increased by an alarming 39% since 2006. Rampant criminal activities have tarnished the city's image as a community with a prosperous economy and rich cultural heritage.

as poor street lighting, corruption and abuse of power by the police.

Not surprisingly, residents have voiced their concerns on escalating criminal activities. They point to some of the obvious symptoms of the problem such

In July, Charles held an anti-crime dialogue with Klang residents, together with the Deputy ODPD of Klang, Chong and the President of MPK, Mislan Tugiu.

Prior to this, Charles had formed an Anti-Crime Committee with residential associations to seek preventative solutions to this vital social problem.