

# Unfazed, unbothered – Norton shrugs off PNCR members' exits amid women's outcry

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*PNC stalwart Amna Ally (L) and Vanessa Kissoon (R) have resigned and party Leader Aubrey Norton (C) is not concerned*

Leader of the People's National Congress Reform (PNCR), Aubrey Norton, on Friday boldly declared that he remains unfazed by the continued departure of many of the party's long-standing members and continued complaints from members about issues of accountability, transparency, discrimination and mistreatment of women since he took charge.

Speaking at the party's weekly virtual press conference, Norton was questioned about the recent resignation of the party's former General Secretary, Amna Ally, who highlighted several concerns in her resignation letter, including the treatment of women within the party.

Ally's resignation follows the resignation of another party stalwart, Vanessa Kissoon, who had previously made allegations of sexual harassment by Norton. According to Norton, when it comes to the issue of the party hemorrhaging members, he sees nothing to worry about.

In her resignation letter, Ally expressed her dissatisfaction with the party's current leadership. According to Ally, Kissoon, along with Linden Mayor Sharma Solomon and party elder Cheryl Sampson, faced verbal abuse at Congress Place during the National Congress of Women (NCW).

She further noted that many senior females in the party have expressed disgust at how far the PNCPR has sunk under Norton and went on to call for him and his supporters in the party executive to resign and "save the party".

The issues outlined by Ally is the latest in a series of party members voicing their complaints and concerns that has plagued the party since Norton took over the leadership in December, 2021.

Earlier this year, well-known party member James Bond publicly voiced his support for a second term for President Irfaan Ali and the People's Progressive Party Civic (PPP/C), while former General Secretary Geeta Chandan also appeared to give the PPPC a nod of support in her budget speech in January.

Last year, Norton found himself re-elected to the party's leadership unopposed after the other strong contenders withdrew citing inconsistencies, discrepancies and lack of transparency in the elections process. Roysdale Force, Amanza Walton Desir, former Georgetown Mayor Ubraj Narine, and Members of Parliament Natasha Singh-Lewis and Annette Ferguson were all among those who withdrew their nominations for various roles in the executive over the lack of transparency.

In June of last year, the party's General Secretary, Dawn Hastings, resigned from the position citing lack of transparency and accountability in the management of the party. . In 2023 when Guyana held Local Government Elections (LGE), longstanding former Mayor and PNCR member Patricia Chase-Green, debuted as a Councillor for the PPPC, she was also accompanied by Trichiria Richards, another former Georgetown Councillor for the party.

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Also in 2023, the party's then treasurer, Faaiz Mursalin, who had been affiliated with the PNC/R for close to a decade, resigned from his post. Following his resignation, Mursaline made bombshell allegations of racial discrimination and financial improprieties taking place in the party. According to Mursaline, during his time as Treasurer, he was being made to sign blank cheques with no supporting documents and was met with hostility when he raised concerns.

"Why do I have to be so worried... All I will say to you is we are not affected by these departures. Why should we worry?" Norton reasoned.



