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“Acceptable” Azruddin Mohamed team will split PNC, PPP votes but can’t win elections- political analyst

Posted by: Denis Chabrol in Accountability, Business, News, Politics Monday, 10 March 2025, 22:57 0

Despite being greeted warmly by mainly young Guyanese of all races who are urging him to contest this year’s general elections to become Guyana’s next President, city businessman Azruddin Mohamed would still have to confront the fact that the United States sanctioned him for alleged tax evasion and even if he leads an “acceptable” team, he will split the votes of the two major political parties, according to Guyanese political analyst Vishnu Bisram.

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Except for those who meet Mr Mohamed during his community visits and donations of houses, sports gear, and other items to the underprivileged, the wider Guyanese community, so far, has only pictures and edited videos of him on his Team Mohameds Facebook page to go by.

In those videos, Mr Mohamed is seldom shown speaking but the people who shake his hands and hug him, are visualised as expressing their concerns about the present state of affairs in Guyana, describing him as “we President”, urging him to run for the top elected post and promising to vote for him if he throws his hat into the ring. “Mr Mohamed, as long as you are running for President, we are going to support you 100 percent,” a young man told Mr Mohamed during a recent visit to Lima Sands, Essequibo Coast.



In fact, since his father, Nazar “Shell” Mohamed’s made a not-so-subtle endorsement of his son entering the political fray, the younger Mohamed is being shown in the spliced videos as speaking a tad more than before. “If my son wants to go into politics, that is his choice. I will advise him on integrity and so forth, as a father towards a son,” the elder Mr Mohamed said. Incumbent People’s Progressive Party (PPP) General Secretary, Bharat Jagdeo last week said “we don’t have a problem with him going into politics” but the PPP would respond politically to any verbal attacks.

Responding to calls at one his public engagements for him to say categorically whether he would be running for the presidency, Mr Azruddin did not dismiss the invitations during a visit to the Essequibo Coast. “I will let you know what will be the plans on the way forward; you all will be informed,” he said.

But political analyst Bisram says the young businessman will have his work cut out for him. He says Mr Azruddin will still have to confront the fact that he was sanctioned by the US Treasury Department’s Office for Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) for allegedly evading US\$50 million in taxes to Guyanese authorities for the export of 10,000 kilogrammes of gold. “The publicity and the impact of the sanctions pose a serious challenge unless he addresses it head on. He will need experts on the law to deal with it,” he says. The Mohameds have not been charged or convicted in Guyana or elsewhere for tax evasion or other crimes,

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He also believes that Mr Azruddin can pull some support from young voters because they are not racially inclined like the older generation and may be attracted to something new. They, coupled with many voters who supported both major parties, are now dissatisfied with what the incumbent People's Progressive Party Civic (PPPC) and the People's National Congress Reform (PNCR) have to offer can work in his favour. "Voters are disgruntled with the two major parties: PPP and PNC (APNU). Many want an alternative, something different. Mr Azruddin Mohamed has been engaging voters who have called on him to launch a political party. He has not stated whether he would contest elections. If he does decide to contest, unlike other third parties, his candidacy and launch of a party could be different from others as voters are appealing directly to him to enter the political fray," Mr Bisram added.

He says Mr Azruddin's political fortunes cannot merely be pegged to himself as one man and his community visits but he will have to assemble a team of acceptable persons, including seasoned advisors and a very good list of candidates who represent the diversity of the nation to secure a volume of support. According to the political analyst, Mr Azruddin has to also put in place a system that reaches the grassroots and convinces Guyanese why they should vote for him instead. "He must have an effective political organisation with a structure at the community and village levels and in the larger areas of the regions. He must also have a plan on how he will campaign. He has to study the issues that concern people and address them. He has to explain why his government will be better than those of the other parties," he said.



So can Mr Azruddin see Guyana end up with another minority government as in 2011 when the combined opposition of the PNCR-led A Partnership for National Unity (APNU) and the Alliance For Change (AFC) had controlled the National Assembly? Mr Bisram says that depends on how many seats the small parties garner. He reasons that regardless of how many seats the others win, the PPP will still be in the lead because Mr Azruddin will be taking equally from both parties.

Echoing the PNCR's slogan against alleged discrimination by the government in the award of contracts and provision of certain public services, the younger Mohamed said, "It's all about the families, friends and favourites." Local businesses

With solid financial backing to campaign and contest an election on almost equal footing with the PNCR and PPP as well as support by a large Facebook following, Mr Bisram forecasts that Mr Azruddin's political organisation will "shake up the politics" and it will enter the National Assembly. He cautioned that the businessman should not be taken lightly by the two major parties because "there will be vote-splitting in which he will take support from both major parties in which neither one will have an advantage over the other, not benefiting PNC over PPP.



"He is very popular on the ground, a kind of folk hero distributing handouts to the public in various communities. He is charismatic and flamboyant attracting onlookers. What is interesting is in our racially polarized nation, where Indians flock to the PPP and Africans to the PNC, voters of all ethnic and religious backgrounds are flocking to Azruddin," the analyst said. [Local businesses](#)

Last Thursday, Mr Jagdeo mocked Mr Mohamed, saying he "can't string two coherent thoughts together... put him there, he can't mumble two words". Instead, he says people were fascinated by the Mohameds fancy cars and the businessman was apparently "delusional" because of his Facebook following and public response to his donations. "You got to be extremely delusional by what people say to you because you're sharing out some money on the ground that would translate into votes," he said.

"There's a difference between entertainment and politics. People look at the lives of their children so if you delude yourself based on the like that you get and you post a picture and dress up nicely or something like that and call yourself fancy names, it's all entertainment," he added.

Seemingly referring to Mr Jagdeo's categorical pronouncement that the Guyana government would not be doing business with the Mohameds because of the US sanctions, Mr Azruddin told Dartmouth residents that he was merely visiting the community but "You see the fight down I'm getting just to assist people." He later said at another meeting that assisting people is one of the pillars of his religion and that his father had been engaged in such activities for the past 40 years rather than during the last three years.

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