

Wyclef`s Jean`s Candidacy Means He Will Go Up Against Uncle

Grammy Award-winning singer, Wyclef Jean, last night finally confirmed the rumors and reports that have been buzzing around for the past two weeks – he will be running for President of Haiti.

In an exclusive interview with Wolf Blitzer on CNN`s `Larry King Live,` the singer, speaking via satellite and phone from Port-Au-Prince, said: Today I signed the paper and I am running to be President of Haiti.`

He filed papers at the electoral council to run as a candidate for the Viv Ansanm (Live Together) political party, as excited young supporters clad in white T-shirts packed the surrounding streets, which still bore the scars of a devastating January 12 earthquake.

But Clef as he is popularly called, who seems closer to realizing the dream he sang about six year ago in the song, `President,` insisted that he believes he is being `drafted by the youth of Haiti,` moments after he flew into the country with his wife and young daughter and other relatives on a private jet from their New Jersey home.

As many teens and young people danced behind him, Jean said when he looked at the past 200 years of his country`s political history, he felt the time has come to give Haitians something new and he represents the hope for the future.

`I would like to tell (U.S.) President Barack Obama that the United States has Obama and Haiti has Wyclef Jean,` the three-time Grammy award-winner, who is 40, told cheering supporters in a downtown area of Port-au-Prince Thursday ahead of the CNN announcement. `This is the only president who will dance when Creole hip-hop is being played.`

The idea of being part of my country was always part of my mind but after Jan. 12th it seemed like the right time, he said. I feel like I am being drafted by the youth population who make up over 50 percent of the vote, to give them a different voice.

Going Up Against Uncle

The move by the U.S. green card holder now means that he will have to also face-off not against just many seasoned politicians in Haiti including a former prime minister, but also his uncle, Ray Joseph.

Joseph, according to sources, resigned his post as ambassador of Haiti to the U.S. effective August 1st. The move cleared the way for him to fly to Haiti to register as a candidate ahead of the election and begin the qualification process. Joseph`s wife was set to join him there. The deadline for registration is tomorrow, August 7th but authorities now have until August 17 to approve or reject Jean and all other registrants candidacy.

Born in Haiti, Jean shot to fame in the mid-1990s as a member of The Fugees, a U.S.-based hip-hop and reggae group. He performs now as a solo artist. He was one of the first celebrities to offer aid after the devastating earthquake there in January.

Asked about his political ideology, he insisted housing, job creations, education, health care and security.

`We need the Diaspora outside of Haiti to be part of job creation and galvanize our own people outside to help Haiti,` he said, while adding that as he begins to raise funds for his campaign he will be looking for his friends in the U.S. music industry and Hollywood for donations.

Election in Haiti is November 28th.