

RP, China ink bilateral pacts

MANILA – The Philippines and China on October 29 signed agreements that map out bilateral cooperation in the next five years, and address concerns on consular procedures in providing assistance to Filipinos in China.

Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, who concluded on October 29 a two-day visit to Manila, and Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo signed the Philippines-China Joint Action Plan for Strategic Cooperation (PCJAPSC) which determines the direction of cooperation between the two countries in the next five years.

Romulo said the PCJAPSC “covers the gamut of economic, political, people to people, trade, investment, tourism, and all the important aspects of the relations that we have (with China).”

“So we are going to intensify those relationships and all our departments will be involved just as all their ministries will be involved,” he said.

He said China remains a “strategic partner” for the Philippines.

“China is a strategic partner so we are looking forward to the Strategic Joint Action Plan to have more activities between the two countries,” Romulo said.



BILATERAL PACT. President Arroyo claps while Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi (left) and his counterpart Department of Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo shake hands after signing the Philippines-China Joint Action Plan for Strategic Cooperation and the Philippines-China Consular Agreement.

AP Photo

The Philippines-China Consular Agreement (PCCA), on the other hand, establishes the conduct of consular relations between the two nations and is expected to settle the concerns of the Philippine embassy and consulates general in China on giving assistance to Filipinos in China who are arrested or detained, need to be repatriated, or are involved in disputes.

“This (PCCA) will help facili-

tate the consular relationship between the two countries and in particular help our countrymen who go to China,” Romulo said.

He said the PCCA is the “first consular agreement that we (Philippines) are signing after the Vienna Convention.”

The Vienna Convention on Consular Relations (VCCR) was a multilateral treaty completed in 1963 to codify consular procedures. (*Philstar.com*)

ees Col. Ariel Querubin and Lt. Col. Custodio Parcon. (*Philstar.com*)

Villar says competence, experience are his best assets

by AUREA CALICA
Philstar.com

MANILA – Sen. Manny Villar Jr. said his competence and experience as a leader in the private and government sectors are his advantage over the other presidential aspirants.

At the Manila Overseas Press Club’s forum Thursday night, the Nacionalista Party standard-bearer said other contenders might just use the presidency to practice their managerial skills.

“What I am just saying here is for all of my inadequacies, inefficiencies – I have a lot of failures in life (and) I have experienced difficulties – when you look at me you are looking at Manny Villar, what you see is what you get,” he said.

“You’re not looking at my mother, my father or the tycoon behind me. You are looking at Manny Villar.”

People must consider competence and experience rather than popularity and emotion in electing the next president next year, he added.

Villar said he would like to steer the economy and give Filipinos here and abroad opportunities so they would not have to leave their families.

“Other countries have done it,” he said.

“Why can’t we do it? We have been mismanaged all these decades. I submit that this country has not moved forward because we have been mismanaged.”

“We have never used leadership and managerial ability as basis for electing a president. Our presidents have always been chosen on the basis of popularity purely and on emotions.”

“Why is leadership important? Leadership is important because there are so many institutions in this country - you have media, the church, the AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines), Congress, local governments, the judiciary.”

Villar said the next president must be able to persuade all sectors to move towards one direction, without declaring martial law.

“If you have no leadership, you cannot do this,” he said.

“And how does one show the people that he or she got the qualities of a leader? You must at least have been elected once in your life or so many times in your life, you must have been selected by your peers.”

“Because if you have never been elected or selected by your peers, you have never been a president of the homeowner’s association, what makes you think you can run this country? We need leadership.”

“That is the reason why we are chaotic. This might be self-serving because I have been speaker of the House, Senate president and a leader in the housing industry, but I think that is very important.”

“When you hire a CEO (chief executive officer), you ask this question, his leadership capability because he will lead the company. Managerial ability is a must.”

“Our economy has been mismanaged but why are we surprised that our economy has been mismanaged when we never ask, we never use managerial competence as a basis for electing our president?”

“Why are we surprised that our economy has been mismanaged all these decades? It is high time that we stop this incompetence for the sake of our people. We must use these two.”

Villar said the man to beat in 2010 would be the most popular, but not necessarily the best.

However a lot of things could happen until May next year and on October 31’s frontrunner could still be dislodged, he added.

People must not be carried away by the claims of various aspirants and must look at what they had achieved, he said.

Villar said he would not lift a finger to defend the Arroyo family once cases of corruption are filed against them after President Arroyo’s term ends in

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Partido Magdalo backs Villar...

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Escudero.

Escudero, who resigned from the Nationalist People’s Coalition (NPC) on October 28, batted for the release from detention of Trillanes and other leaders of his group.

He said Trillanes and other Magdalo soldiers should be freed because no one should be persecuted for fighting graft and corruption in the country.

They should be given a chance to do what they want outside their prisons to fight corruption, Escudero said at his press conference at Club Filipino in Greenhills on October 28.

Trillanes won decisively in the 2007 senatorial elections with over 11 million votes.

Last Sunday, the Magdalo Group expressed its unequivocal support for the presidential bid of Escudero who pushed for the grant of amnesty to all soldiers and officers allegedly involved in a coup attempt against Arroyo in 2006 to heal the divi-

sions in the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

“The government should grant an amnesty to other officers and soldiers still detained for violating Article 67 of the Articles of War (Mutiny and Sedition),” he said.

“Now that 11 military officers have been acquitted of violating said Article, the proceedings against 17 other officers detained for allegedly committing the same violation should be hastened.”

He reiterated that the families of detained military officers should not continue suffering, saying that “the absence of a father at home means their economic livelihood as well the educational upbringing of their children will continue to be affected.”

Among those detained are former Philippine Marines commandant Maj. Gen. Romeo Miranda, former Scout Ranger commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, and Medal of Valor award-

NAIA installs new...

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children affects their attendance and performance in school. The study also showed that 97 percent of six year olds and 81 percent of 12 year olds have dental caries, or tooth decay.

The study also shows that school-based fluoride tooth brushing programs reduce tooth decay among children by 40 to 50 percent.

Multinational firm Colgate-Palmolive Philippines, which also produces consumer goods, earlier launched a similar cam-

paign.

The project will be carried out in 1,168 elementary schools. Nine thousand schoolteachers and volunteer parents will be trained in the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project.

The United Nations International Childrens’ Education Fund (UNICEF) has also tied up with GMA Kapuso Foundation for the Linis Lusog Kids project that aims to improve water and sanitation facilities in public schools. ■

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