

Binay welcomes Puno as rival in 2010

by JOSE RODEL CLAPANO
Philstar.com

MAKATI City Mayor Jejomar Binay welcomed last May 27 the declaration of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno that he will run for vice president in the 2010 national elections. Binay said the tandem of Vice President Noli de Castro and Puno that was proposed by the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) is a welcome development. "Whether it's Secretary Puno

or any other administration personality running for vice president, and regardless of whom President Arroyo will anoint as her presidential bet, they will have to contend with the people's dissatisfaction with the Arroyo administration," Binay said. Binay said the 2010 elections would be a referendum on the Arroyo administration. "What matters to the people

in 2010 is whether or not a candidate can offer them a better government than what we have now and could assure that the government will work to put food on their table and provide jobs," Binay said. He said the country reached record poverty and hunger levels under the administration of Mrs. Arroyo. A majority of the people do not believe the Arroyo administration's claim that the economy is growing. "The number of Filipinos suffering from hunger and poverty has increased and they did not benefit from the claims of economic growth of this administration," Binay said. Under the Arroyo administration, government funds have not been used wisely and millions have been lost to large-scale corruption. "Under Mrs. Arroyo, our national agencies have become notoriously injudicious in

undertaking projects and implementing programs; and that's the kindest word I can think of. Worse, national funds are being allocated and disbursed as if they were the personal kitty of Mrs. Arroyo. This is the record that the administration candidates will defend before the people. Good luck to them," Binay said. **Teodoro open to tandem with Puno** Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro Jr., hailed Puno's decision to announce his intention to run for vice president. He said Puno is a veteran public servant and has vast experience in running the affairs of local governments and handling the country's security. "This makes him the most qualified vice presidential candidate in next year's elections," Teodoro said during the graduation rites of the Naval Officers' Candidate Course (NOCC) held at the Navy base in San Antonio, Zambales.

On the possibility of a Teodoro-Puno tandem, the defense chief said this is very much welcome to him but stressed that this must first pass through the administration's political coalition selection process. In the event he is chosen as the administration standard-bearer and Puno would be his running mate, Teodoro said the team will be very strong. However, if he is not selected, Teodoro said he would abide by the decision of the majority. Teodoro said that his decision to seek the presidential nomination was not solely his own but also the prodding of supporters from various political groups. Asked if he is willing to slide down as the vice presidential candidate of De Castro, Teodoro said this matter should also be decided during the selection process. Meanwhile, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago believes the Filipinos are experiencing



Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay

300 miles and counting

PAGE 1 ◀

difficult task to do but we have no regrets. In the 12 days since we ran from the Glendale, CA area to Nevada, we have seen and done things that we never thought we'd never see and do in our lifetime. We've crossed the Mojave Desert. We have climbed up Mount Baldy. We have seen snow for the first time in our lives and ate cactus."

Rojas said it's been an "extremely difficult" journey but "no regrets."

"California is huge. It is so huge," she added.

Since sprinting out of Eagle Rock Plaza on May 10, Rojas has had an adventure. The first day, she ran 33 miles to Ontario, CA. The second day, she continued eastbound to San Bernardino. However, on the third day, while in San Bernardino, the crew got lost.

"There was a route where we wanted to take through the San Bernardino forest," explained Chuck Crisanto, the TransUSA director, who along with Rojas' trainer Mat Macabe is accompanying Rojas in her journey. "They told us the road ends and it was like choosing between right and left. We went left. She ran for four hours until we were on top of a mountain covered with white. Mat said it was marble. Joy said 'that's snow.'"

After that brief set back, the crew was back on track.

During the press conference, Rojas thanked the good Samaritans for helping them get on their way.

"Maps, GPS, navigation and google maps are very helpful but ultimately, it's the people that we see and meet along the way who often point us to the right direction. That is why we are here today," she said.

Sylvia Elliot, Senior Marketing Director of Western Union said that Rojas is an inspiration not only to the Filipino community but also to everyone.

"This is just an example of the type of project and initiative we support," said Elliot. Western Union is one of Rojas' sponsors. "This is the first time ever that we have done an event in this magnitude where we are supporting a great cause and also build an awareness about a great service. In the future, you can expect to see us supporting more of these types of initiative. Again, we want to ignite the spirit of the Filipino community."

After resting all day Sunday, May 24 Rojas is back on the road. Crisanto said that this week, Rojas would be running northwest of Las Vegas to Mesquite before going on Route 66 straight to Utah.

Rojas's is running across America for her beneficiaries: the Anti-Tuberculosis Program of the Inner Wheel Club of Quezon City District 738 and the Social Services Division of the Philippine Heart Center. (Joseph Pimentel)

Under the Arroyo administration, government funds have not been used wisely and millions have been lost to large-scale corruption. "Under Mrs. Arroyo, our national agencies have become notoriously injudicious in

Under the Arroyo administration, government funds have not been used wisely and millions have been lost to large-scale corruption. "Under Mrs. Arroyo, our national agencies have become notoriously injudicious in

Villar: Noli toughest rival or strongest ally

SEN. Manuel Villar Jr. has admitted that Vice President Noli de Castro could be his toughest opponent in next year's presidential election.

Over dinner on Tuesday, May 26 Villar said everything was fluid at this point, and that De Castro could be a fierce opponent or his strongest ally. "That's a possibility," he said when asked about De Castro and himself running against each other for president.

He said De Castro could also join his ticket, but denied that a Villar-De Castro tandem was already in the works. "In fairness to Noli, we haven't talked yet," he said. Both Villar and De Castro, also a former senator, are members of the Senate's Wednesday Club founded by Sen. Joker Arroyo.

Wary about the presidential candidate of the well-oiled administration machinery, Villar stressed the need for the Nacio-

nalista Party, which he heads, to have a complete slate of candidates from the national to the local levels.

Palace lukewarm Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno's announcement on Tuesday, May 26 that he would take a crack at the vice presidency in 2010 drew a lukewarm reaction from Malacañang. "Secretary Puno is a member of the Cabinet. You might say that he has the stature to aspire for such a position. So nobody can fault him. He has been in politics for some time, and he has his own reputation as a politician. He's a leader," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said at a briefing.

But Ermita added that he had "no idea" if President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was aware of Puno's plan. Puno, a political strategist of the Arroyo, Estrada and Ramos administrations, had said he was keen on being nominated by the

merged Lakas-Kampi-CMD at the party convention as its candidate for vice president.

But Ermita said Puno would have to accept whatever would be the decision of the merged party during the selection of the administration's standard-bearer and running mate.

"I'm sure he will understand what the future action of the merged party will be. The fact is, what is done is done. He made his announcement, and nobody is faulting him for that," Ermita said.

'Wide open' options Speaker and incoming Lakas-Kampi-CMD president Prospero Nograles said he was fully behind Puno's aspiration.

Asked whether the new party would embrace Puno as its No. 2 in 2010, Nograles said: "Personally, I will."

He said all options on the party's candidates for 2010 were "wide open" with the merger.

"electoral chronic fatigue" that can explain why the coming elections do not seem to excite them at all.

Santiago said no one had also come out to be the "man to beat" despite the many personalities who had expressed intention to run. ■



RP Vice President Noli de Castro

"The selection process will be by local, regional and national consultations with an expanded national executive committee coupled with a strong arbitration and selection process," he said.

But the final choice will be made by Ms Arroyo, Nograles said.

"After getting the consensus of all members and leaders, she has to decide who. That is in our by-laws," he said. ■

indiobravo
2009 Film Festival
Philippine Cinema's Next Wave

**June 11- 14, 2009
New York City**

THURSDAY, JUNE 11
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
(11 West 53rd St. bet. 5th and 6th Aves.)

7:15 pm **BALER**
9:30 pm **100**
(Special Appearance by Mylene Dizon)

and 13 other award-winning Filipino films on
Friday, June 12- Sunday, June 14
Visual Arts Theater
333 West 23rd Street bet. 8th & 9th Aves.)

For schedule and tickets, visit:
www.indiobravo.org
To purchase tickets by phone, call:
1-800-838-3006

Use promo code **ASIANTHREADS**
for discounted tickets!

Philippine Independence Day Council Inc.
with the cooperation of the Philippine Consulate General of New York

2009 Grand Marshal Dr. Teofila Malanum-Santos
invites you to join us on **Sunday, June 7** as we celebrate the
**111th Anniversary of the Declaration of
Philippine Independence**

Special guests include:
Vice President Noli L. de Castro, Senator Manny B. Villar, Aljur Abrenica, Mylene Dizon, Paolo Paraiso, and more...

Guest Celebrities:
Ella Narasa Dance Troupe

**The Filipino - American:
"BAHAGI NG BAGONG BAYANI
NG BAYAN"**

INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE
12:00noon
Madison Avenue from 41st
Street head South (downtown)
Isagani Puertollano (Committee
Chair) (908)230-6468
Juliet Payabyab (917)557-7300
Elmer Abustan (845)352-8756
Rene Reniva (908)765-1953
Belen Castillo (973)393-8018
Linda Limcaco (609)903-1123
Rudy Mariano (860)848-7055

CULTURAL FESTIVAL
2:00pm to 6:00pm
Open Stage, Madison Avenue, North of
23rd Street
Dr. Bernie dela Merced (Chair)
(973)699-1849
Vivian Velasco (Co-Chair)
(917)623-3827

STREET FAIR
10:00am to 6:00pm
24th to 26th Streets
Gerry Austria (President) (201)238-1785
Isagani Puertollano (Committee Chair)
(908)230-6468
Medy Taeza (646)415-3040
Tambi Wycoco (212)420-0145
Rev. Gaudencio Soriano, Sr.
(201)947-2126/ (201)282-9341

**FLAG RAISING CEREMONY /
THANKSGIVING MASS**
8:00am to 10:00am
Philippine Center
556 Fifth Avenue, between
45th and 46th Streets
Nida Cortez (646)644-4101
Lumen Castañeda (917)538-1702

email: pidci2009@yahoo.com • www.pidci.org