

Sen. Villar ready for 2010 campaign, elections

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choice to succeed President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in 2010.

The SWS survey, according to the Senator, had 7,000 respondents and a 1.2 percent error margin as compared to the Pulse Asia survey which only has 1,200 respondents.

"Even if I am No. 2 in the other survey, when you average all the surveys, I am still on top," said Villar.

The former House Speaker and former Senate President, who has authored countless bills in both Houses that has benefited small scale enterprises, the environment, health care, responsive social care and high quality education, among many others, said he feels he is the most ready among all the candidates to deal with the problems facing the country today. He will be relying on his experiences and wherewithal to run the government which he says has been mismanaged in the past.

"It's about time that we managed the economy well," he said. "The new President must be able to manage from Day 1. We cannot afford a President who will do on-the-job training. We cannot just focus on one aspect and move on to the next. Everything

has to be done simultaneously in order to guarantee improvements in all areas of government."

According to Villar, as President, one must be able to work with the different branches of government and society, including the Senate, the House, the Catholic Church and other institutions and have them work towards the same objective and move in one direction. If one has no experience in making the different institutions work seamlessly, then it will become chaotic, Sen. Villar added.

While delegation of duties will be one of the keys to a successful implementation of programs, Villar hinted that concrete results and a full accounting will be demanded.

"It is not enough that you promise me that you will do this or that," he explained. "If say you tell me that your department has presided over the planting of a million trees to help the environment, I will want proof. Where are those trees planted? How many are actually there? It is not enough that you give your word to me."

Senator Villar further stated that efficient tax collection to about 18 percent of the gross do-

mestic product and introducing the concept of competition may help improve the economy of the Philippines.

Elections in 2010?

As Sen. Villar prepares for the upcoming elections next year, he is wary of moves by Congress in promoting the forming of a Constituent Assembly (or Con-Ass) as evidenced most recently by the passage of House Resolution 1109 through Congress.

"I have been warning colleagues that the Charter Change issue is not dead as the administration and its allies would like us to believe," the Senator said. "*Kaya nilang gawin 'yan* in one day (They can do it in one day). I expected this to happen. I am not happy with it."

Villar says that further movement of the Charter Change (or Cha-Cha), or its approval, will depend on how the people will react to it.

"There are protests now," he said. "But the administration and its allies are adopting a wait-and-see attitude. If they feel that the situation will turn bad, then they will not push through with it. But if they can get away with it... On the one hand, *galit ang tao* (the people are angry), but whether

project.

"*Pinapahaba lang nila 'yan para manganak* (They are prolonging the issue and hoping it will bear fruit)," he declared. "Look at the composition of the ethics committee... all of the other presidential candidates are bunched there. The Committee on Finance has already absolved me of any wrongdoing. Even the Department of Public Works and Highways has cleared me of any impropriety."

"This is more of an irritation," he added. "I know that this is being used for political purposes for 2010. Even after one year of accusations, they have not proven anything. They have changed the rules in order to accommodate this case. In the original definition of the ethics committee, what they are accusing me of is not part of the rules. They changed the rules. That's why Senator (Aquilino) Pimentel and Jovy Salonga said, '*Saan ka nakakita na iniba 'yung rules* and then they applied it retroactively? (Where else can you see a change of rules and then they applied it retroactively?)"

Villar revealed that their decision to not attend the Senate

hearings were based on a few developments.

"*Talo ka na nga, kasi ang mga accusers mo* are the judges (You've already lost because your accusers are the judges), but do you know that we learned that even before the first meeting of the Senate ethics committee on Wednesday, a decision was already being passed around on Tuesday? Could you imagine, Wednesday ang meeting but there was already a decision by Tuesday. *Ano ito, eleksyon?* (What are these, the elections?) That's why we did not attend the meeting," Sen. Villar explained.

Ready to face anything

Senator Villar's readiness for the rigors of the campaign for the 2010 elections can be gleaned from his response to the Senat investigation.

His family, he said, is also ready to deal with what's coming.

"My family is ready," he declared. "*Simple lang ang family ko, walang gulo* (We have a simple life with no drama)."

And himself? "They cannot do anything more to me," said the Senator. "They've already started. I have nothing to hide." ■

Ethnic media reaches 82% targeted market, according to New America poll

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American, Hispanic and Asian-American adults. "The thirst for relevant news and information has made many residents of ethnic communities turn to media outlets that do substantial reporting on their culture, issues and neighborhoods. The increase in ethnic media audiences is incredible, considering the declines that many mainstream media outlets are confronting."

At the opening plenary, pollster Sergio Bendixen announced these findings on outreach and impact of ethnic media and their relevance for communication with new America. The survey, conducted by Bendixen & Associates in eight languages including Tagalog, contacted 1,329 African-American (400), Hispanic (400) and Asian-American (529) adults. It has a 2.7 percent margin of error.

"The ethnic media is growing, and it is growing at a very impressive rate," Bendixen noted, "A lot of outlets in the ethnic media have posted substantial growth despite great competition and despite the fact that mainstream media have been losing their readers during the past couple of years."

NAM, an organization that collaborates with more than 2,500 ethnic media outlets, across the US, wanted to find out where the 69 million Hispanics and African and Asian Americans in the United States get their information.

The poll found that Asian Americans reported that they turn to ethnic media for news coverage of their home countries. For instance, new ethnic television stations, such as KCNS-TV (Chinese) in San Francisco and VATV (Vietnamese) in the Washington D.C. metro area, are popular because of their home country coverage.

Newspapers like Sing Tao, the World Journal, Korea Daily and Korea Times have substantially increased their circulation during the last four years. The reach of weekly and monthly publications that cater to the interests of the Filipino and Asian Indian populations has also expanded.

The poll also found that the penetration of Spanish-language television - led by network giants Univision and Telemundo - increased during the last four years and is now almost universal, covering 86 percent of the country's Hispanics. New Spanish language television stations are broadcasting in Raleigh, N.C. and Seattle.

The availability of African American-oriented channels is still limited, but a majority of black adults report watching Black Entertainment Television (BET) and similar channels on a regular basis. Meanwhile, the penetration of African American-oriented radio stations has increased. They now reach two-thirds of black adults.

Many new Spanish-language newspapers have begun publishing in the last four years and now reach more than one-third of His-

panic adults. New publications include Padres & Hijos in Atlanta and La Voz de San Diego.

Bendixen, president of Bendixen & Associates, said the poll also showed that a substantial percentage of African American, Hispanic and Asian American households have cable or satellite service.

"What's clear is that even as the country suffers through a recession, ethnic communities are staying tuned into ethnic media," Bendixen said, noting that an increase in penetration for African-American publications was sparked, in part, by interest in Barack Obama's candidacy and presidency.

Ms. Close said the increases in penetration come as the ethnic media are transforming themselves and preparing to play broader roles in their communities.

Emergency

On Thursday, June 4, Ms. Close unveiled an emergency network system that will send urgent health and disaster alerts to 3,000 ethnic media outlets, which will then transmit those messages to ethnic communities.

"This state-of-the-art system

will open the doors to ethnic communities that are not reached by mainstream media," she said. "The poll results reinforce the importance of using the ethnic media to communicate with populations—many don't speak English—which have often been ignored."

It's clear, Ms. Close said, that "ethnic media can be counted as an important segment of the New Media, and will continue growing in audience and influence in the future."

NAM is negotiating with government agencies, as well as non-profits, such as the American Red Cross to utilize the network. While emergency messaging is the immediate priority, the system may in the future be activated for public policy or private sector marketing that would create new revenue sources for ethnic media outlets.

"The system will leverage the ethnic media to open new doors to communities that the mainstream media often fails to reach, better connecting them to critical health and emergency information that can improve their quality of life," the NAM statement said. ■

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