

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Lacson declares bid for presidency in 2010

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will benefit the 88.7 million Filipinos, he said.
 Lacson is among a number of senators—including Manuel Villar, Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Manuel “Mar” Roxas II and Richard Gordon—known to be eyeing the presidency in 2010.
 He said there were “other factors to be considered when the proper time comes.”
 “But for now—that’s why I’m going around—I’m really determined to run!” he said.

Merger talks
 Lacson said merger talks were ongoing, but “it’s not clear yet who will slide down [to vice president].”
 He said his camp was trying to form a coalition with certain parties.
 “Right now, talks are still in the preliminary stage, so I cannot tell you anything concrete,” said Lacson, who became independent when he bolted the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino political party

to run for president in 2004.
 Lacson said the party formed by boxing champion Manny Pacquiao was a local political party—and by all indications, he will be coalescing with the administration party.”
 “I am out-and-out opposition. Since the time I entered politics, I have always been with the opposition,” he declared.
Lessons of history
 Lacson said he would go all-out against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her family.
 He pointed out, however, that institutions vested with the laws of the land, and not those in power, should go after the Arroyos.
 “If a complaint is lodged against her or any member of her family, the law should take its course. But for the next administration to be very much occupied with running after a predecessor, it will have hard time charting its [own] direction,” Lacson said.
 In his reckoning, this happened during the term of President Corazon Aquino regarding the family and cronies of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, and even during the present dispensation regarding former President Joseph Estrada.
 “So I think we should learn from the lessons of history,” he said.

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Vilification drive
 In a speech before the Philippine Association of Local Treasurers and Assessors in March, Lacson said he was the constant target of the administration's vilification campaign.
 “But none of these lies or black propaganda will stop me. I will fight corruption without end as I did when I was chief of the Philippine National Police about 10 years ago, whether in the smallest forms of *kotong* (mulcting), which victimize lowly drivers and vegetable dealers, or in crime syndicates involved in illegal drugs and illegal gambling,” he said.

RP is ok thus far, says New York Times

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albeit more slowly, it said.
 Business outsourcing absorbs some educated labor but does little for the unskilled, the NYT article said.
 Another boost will come from government spending in badly needed infrastructure, health and education which have been made possible by stabilizing fiscal position over several years that brought interest rates and the cost of debt servicing down, it added.
 Even agriculture, long a drag on the economy, has been achieving steady growth of 3 percent a year with increased investment and higher prices, the NYT reported.
 In his article, Bowring said the bottomline in the Philippines' good economic performance is that it did not depend on export manufacturing, which, however, was also a weakness in that the country failed to use its abundant labor force.
 Industry accounted for only 33 percent of output and has been declining for three decades. Philippine infrastructure is poor because of low budget revenues and the dominance of a few big groups in its commercial life has become a disincentive, the NYT report said.
 It said that Philippine labor will continue to be sought overseas—particularly in East Asia, which is aging fast. The country may be able to build on gains in fiscal stability and balance of payments equilibrium.
 Remittances will remain less vulnerable than manufactured exports to global developments, it said.

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