

# GMA: Ensure Gibo-Edu win

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Acknowledging the "big and arduous task" ahead for the ruling party, President Arroyo directed yesterday her party mates to work hard to ensure the victory of Lakas-Kampi-CMD standard-bearer Gilbert Teodoro and running mate Edu Manzano in the May 2010 elections.

Mrs. Arroyo gave the order just before she formally relinquished the chairmanship of the Lakas-Kampi-CMD to Teodoro during the party's jam-packed national convention at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City.

She said with the party's selection of "capable, competent, energetic leaders to lead us into the next generation, our national initiative to fight poverty and reach the First World within this generation can succeed."

"But, first things first. Let us get them elected, elected with as big a mandate as you our leaders in the countryside and urban centers can win from our people, so that they can go beyond building on the gains of the programs of this administration and lead a new reform agenda on pro-people reforms, ever guided by the institutional ideology of our party, the ideology of Christian democracy enriched by your interfaith dialogue with our Muslim brothers and sisters," Mrs. Arroyo said.

"This is a big and arduous task. But our party has been challenged many times before and has won," she said.

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that enables every citizen to pursue his dreams and attain to each citizen what is his due," Teodoro said in his speech.

"We shall protect the life of each and every citizen. This respect for life shall be from the moment of conception to the moment of death. The protection of life is guaranteed by our Constitution, and on this principle, there is no compromise," Teodoro said.

"The human rights of each Filipino citizen shall be guaranteed and promoted at home and protected abroad," he said.

He also said family would take center stage under his administration.

"The right of parents to bring up their children cannot be violated since the children are the coming generations and on their will rest the structuring of the future of our country and of civilization," Teodoro pointed out.

### Job, education

He also promised to tackle unemployment squarely and complement the effort through enhanced public education and health.

"Every Filipino has a right to be fully employed, because it is in work that a person finds

high-profile party defections. "It is natural in politics. That's the way it is. Some leave and some take their oath," Teodoro said in Filipino, referring to Batangas Gov. Vilwa Sison. Her husband former senator Ralph Recto attended the party's national convention.

He said he welcomes offers of help, but stressed they should be in accordance with party principles and guidelines, including those coming from his uncle businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

Malabang, meanwhile, said President Arroyo doesn't mind the defections very much, and that she doesn't see them as acts of betrayal.

"When you get ill in politics, it is in accordance with standing, you have to give some leeway to the wishes of other people," Ermita said in Filipino.

"I don't think you are still posing, your first reaction is the opposite. If you don't agree with what has been done, your reaction is to pick a fight immediately. When you get to be more matured, you become more understanding," he added.

Ermita also said that defections are expected in these times because not all of the aspirants can be accommodated.

In the case of Batangas, Ermita said that Santos' transfer to the LP has made it easier for Lakas-Kampi-CMD to move.

"Now the battle lines are very defined. That's what I mean," Ermita said.

### 'Game na'

Manzano said he's got what it takes to be vice president and that he's ready to face his opposition rivals who are firing better in surveys.

"In questioning my qualifications for the vice presidency simply because of one of my professions, my detractors virtually made a wholesale condemnation of those in the entertainment industry as being unfit and incapable of providing competent leadership to our people," Manzano said in his acceptance speech.

He said his being asked to be Teodoro's running mate was "a daunting challenge that I find most difficult to reject."

"What they (detractors) do not realize is that, in effect, they also question the intellectual capacity of everyday Filipinos to decide who their leaders should be," Manzano said.

Manzano proudly claimed that he probably had more experience at 54 than any of his opponents from the other political parties.

He served in the United States Air Force during his younger years and was able to take up a course in civil engineering as part of his military service.

When he returned to Manila as a young adult, Manzano studied economics at the De La Salle University and on the side, became a judo black

belt and champion.

He became vice mayor of Makati City in 1998. He ran for mayor in 2001 but lost to Jejomar Binay.

Manzano said he sees nothing wrong with a political party bringing in some stars to boost its chances and can only be so glad to help Secretary Gibo," he said.

"Celebrity appeal is always something that's a given. Any candidate for that matter always looks for someone who can boost his chances and can only be so glad to help Secretary Gibo," he said.

Sarah Palin's experience was limited in Alaska. In my time in Alaska, I was a long time with the Alaska Young Voters League for a long time. I have been around the Philippines. I had a chance to network with my fellow vice mayors who are now mayors

and I know that you can't be a little bit more to the table than just celebrity appeal," Manzano said on being compared to former Alaska Governor and US vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin. Palin provided star power to the Republican Party but she had to face ridicule during the campaign for her limited knowledge in foreign affairs.

### Doomed

Senate Majority Leader Aquilino Pimentel II and Sen. Francis Tangco said the administration is destined to lose in the elections because of the many controversies that hounded it in the past eight years.

"I don't think that they are running at all. And the biggest question mark is (Vice President) Noli (de Castro). Why is Noli so quiet? Has he entered into a modus vivendi with (President) Gloria (Arroyo)?" So that when Gloria runs for congress—can in Pampanga she can make an announcement that she resigns and lets Noli become president in the meantime. That is a malicious scenario," Pimentel said during the Kapitan sa Senado forum.

Pimentel also said Senate Minority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri's father, Balidown Gov. Jose Zubiri, might also bolt the administration party to join the Liberal Party.

"I don't know. It's not him but he has not left the party. I cannot comment on the matter," Zubiri said on his father's rumored defection to the LP.

The younger Zubiri himself said he would remain with Lakas—With Marvin Bin, Cedillo Suarez Felipe, Ben Diaz, Aurea Caliga, Diane Balabao

"It is now time to consolidate our ranks and fortify our party for the electoral battle ahead," she said.

Teodoro continues to rate poorly in surveys but administration officials said the ratings would go up once he goes out and presses flesh. Mrs. Arroyo described Teodoro as "young and brilliant."

"This is a far-sighted decision and it keeps the tradition of free, democratic, and transparent selection of candidates that our party holds sacred," the President said.

She said she was heartened by the presence of so many similar faces and recognizable names that stood by Lakas-Kampi-CMD despite some defections.

"There's no one here dragged or forced from just anywhere. But all are leaders, genuine leaders who are all here, as many as can fit in this room," Mrs. Arroyo said.

"So many leaders here from all over the country with a genuine mandate from their own people demonstrate that indeed our party is a party that can win," she said.

### Role of law

"Our engagement in politics is to serve the people in the context of a powerful Filipino society built on the rule of law