

# GMA gets bipartisan support from Cebu pols

CEBU CITY — The political parties here expressed their readiness to support the bid of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for a full six-year term in order to fulfill her vision to achieve the unity, stability, progress and prosperity for the country and the province of Cebu.

Cebu Vice Governor John Henry Gregory Osmeña of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) stressed this point in an interview during the "gathering for unity" of all political parties in the province at the Grand Convention Center here.

In his remarks, Osmeña said that the need now is to move away from too much politics and to concentrate on the unification of all political sectors for the sake of the economic development of Cebu and the whole nation.

Osmeña, son of the Sen. John Osmeña, asked his colleagues in the NPC here and from the other political parties to join hands with him to seek the best way to hasten the development of the province and the country.

Cebu Governor Pablo Garcia also assured the President that the Cebuanos are willing to help her administration in pushing through her vision for unity and reconciliation in exchange for all the assistance and support they received from her in improving the economy and business climate of the province.

Governor Garcia also assured the President that he would person-

ally campaign to make sure that she would win in the province in the 2004 presidential elections.

"We will assure you, Madam President, of an overwhelming victory in our province," Garcia said.

In a separate interview, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Jr. lauded all the political leaders of Cebu for their initiative and support to the unity call of the President.

"*Napakaganda ng visit ng Presidente ngayon* (The President's visit is very fruitful). For the first time all of the political leaders of Cebu from all the political parties are all here," de Venecia said.

He said the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats party is formalizing a coalition agreement with the NPC, with the Liberal Party, and with the Nacionalista Party.

De Venecia also noted that Representative Ace Durano of the 5<sup>th</sup> District of Cebu, the national secretary general of the NPC, is now working on a grand alliance to be completed hopefully before Christmas.

Also present during the unity were Secretary Michael Defensor of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), Secretary Elizea Gozun of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Presidential Legislative Liaison Officer Gabriel Claudio.

Both Lakas-CMD and NPC partisans showed up in a unity forum for the President.