

Villar eyeing Loren for...

PAGE A1 ◀ **tayo dun.** Villar said at a press conference on Monday, referring to the supposed ongoing negotiations between him and Legarda.

"Basta naman si Loren ay isang karapat-dapat na vice president. Maganda yung kanyang pinaglalaban - kapaligiran (Loren deserves to be a vice president. She is fighting for the environment)," he said.

Talks of the possible tandem of the two came about when Legarda, a member of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), declared her presidential bid last Friday without saying who would be her tandem next year.

Legarda's partymate, Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero, is said to be the NPC's standard-bearer next year. But Escudero has yet to make a formal announcement.

But despite Legarda's participation in his ouster from the Senate presidency, as well as in the C5 probe against him, Villar saw

no reason why he and Legarda could not team up in 2010.

"Ah wala wala naman akong nakikitang balakid dahil as I said, ang pag iimbestiga normal naman yun. Yung mga personal na bagay kasi ay sinasantabi natin yan para sa kung ano ang maganda sa bayan, (I don't see any hurdles because, as I've said, these investigations are normal. Our personal issues are put aside so we can focus on what is good for the nation," Villar said.

Besides, he also believed that his name had been cleared from the C-5 controversy since all witnesses called by the Senate testified that there were no double entry, re-alignment and overpricing in the project.

This was contrary to the allegations contained in the ethics complaint filed by Senator Ma. Ana Consuelo Madrigal that Villar used his position to benefit from the project.

"Palagay ko naman sa lahat ng nanonood, nakita nyo rin na wala tayong kasalanan so siguro ang hiling ko lang sa ating mga

kasamahan ay maging patas at maging objective sa pagbasa ng resulta (I think everyone knows that I am innocent so I am asking my colleagues to be fair and objective in reading the results," Villar said.

Villar, president of Nacionalista Party, said his choices for a running mate have narrowed down to two or three. He refused to identify them.

He said he would identify his running mate probably on the first week or second week of November and the formal announcement of the NP ticket will be made in the middle of the month.

Unlike his contenders, Villar claimed that he has more than the needed 12 candidates for the Senate.

"Ang problema nga namin kung paano babawasan e dahil nahihirapan kami. Kaya natataganan ng konti dahil yun ang problema (Our problem is how to reduce the number that's why it's taking some time)," he pointed out. ■

Pacquiao stronger than ever...

PAGE A3 ◀ to sacrifice something," said Ariza. "But with Manny luckily we put a gambit of different things together and it's all working out."

Before training camp, Pacquiao had always maintained the fact that Cotto, a natural 147-pound welterweight, would be bigger and stronger than him.

But that's not the case anymore.

Come Nov. 14 in Las Vegas, Pacquiao said he would be just as big, just as strong and even faster than ever.

King's Arrival

The scene at the Los Angeles International Airport was hectic to say the least. Pacquiao received a heroes welcome last Saturday night as he arrived to the US from Manila where he had been training the past month for his upcoming championship fight against Cotto.

Pacquiao was smothered by fans and ushered away the moment he stepped out of the Tom Bradley International Airport terminal.

Pacquiao said he's glad to be back in the US so he can focus on training.

"I'm still focused on my training despite the tragedy happen-

ing," he said to the *Asian Journal*. "I'm still focused on my training because I know this is going to be a hard fight for me."

It's been a difficult month for the pound-4-pound king Pacquiao

Pacquiao has not only been training hard for his upcoming match against Cotto but he's also been helping with relief efforts after the devastating typhoon that hit the Philippines.

He said making history with another title in a different weight class and most importantly, uplifting the spirit of the Filipino people is one of his underlying motivations to win this match.

"Exactly [that is] one of the reasons I need to win this fight because I'll make history in boxing and become the first seven title belts in a different weight division," he said.

"And of course, I have to win this fight for all the Filipino people whose suffering from the storm and to the Filipinos who are suffering"

Pacquiao, who weighs four pounds over the required 145-pound weight limit, will spend the next two weeks honing his game plan against Cotto at the Wildcard.

With the fight only three weeks away expect Pacquiao to carry more on his shoulders this time around.

As he said he's not only fighting for another championship belt, he's also fighting for all the typhoon victims. (*Joseph Pimentel/AJPress*)

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