

An astute political strategist and planner should know what the Overseas-Filipino 500,000 votes could mean in a presidential election. There are also the possible “affinity votes” influenced by the “remittance funds” that could possibly triple that magic number, while hoping all the 500,000 overseas-registered voters have no inclination of supporting their fellow native-son (or native-daughter) candidates (who come from the same region, same school or same fraternity, etceteras, etc.)

The presidential contest before the advent of “Election Modernization Program” (EMP) reflected a 45-million turnout. A candidate that has regional support and the endorsement of the League of Governors and/or League of Mayors has the edge. The congressional candidates at the district level that consist of several local-government units (all of which depend upon the pork-barrel patronage) can fragment a regional stronghold. Thus the support of the incumbent governors and/or mayors can give the incumbent political party an advantage over other parties, except in the party-list elections where the two-percent threshold could insure victory. However, the last party-list elections upped the winning percentage to more than 10 percent of the votes cast.

If the Overseas Coalition—consisting of the DPP, the PPP, the Global Pinoy, the WFA and others—field a presidential candidate, it can only possibly grab a popular winning position if they (the coalesced DPP and PPP

and/or the Overseas Coalition) has a regional machinery. The political machinery can physically manifest their political influence in getting the voters to the polls and actually voting for the overseas-preferred presidential candidate. If the 42,000 baranggays voting electronically could reach an effective performance level of 85%, the physical presence of the winning party is imperative within the 90-day campaign period. The PPP

's presence could impact the voter turnout. It was the purpose of getting the PPP

to the barangay level, so as to establish a presence, which the DPP may

have to pursue to gain some community acceptance. The best strategy, therefore, is for the DPP and the PPP

to have at least a working merger – if not a formal merger – with some smaller national and/or regional parties.

To be effective, a traditional politician has to seek the same community acceptance in the 42,000 barangays plus the Overseas-Filipino influence without being beholden to a pressure group that may not be able to have human intervention in the electronic voting system. The importance of money (in vote buying) is lost or lessened in an “electronic election” due to the instantaneous results.

Therefore, the investment needed to secure community acceptance has to span earlier than the designated 90-day campaign period without violating the Commission on Election provisions. How does a presidential candidate attain this with less than a year before Election Day?

The leadership and campaign strategists of existing parties in the Philippines are the personalities the Overseas Coalition has to talk to, not the candidate. In the same manner that the overseas candidates have to tune-up and change the oil of their political machinery, so as to reach out to the barangay level of their intended jurisdiction and constituency. As for the senatorial contenders, voters in every region have to visibly perceive the impact of a candidacy, since senators are not supposed to be elected based on regional representation or of an exclusive group of constituency.

To be physically present in the 18 regions within a 10-month period before the 90-day campaign period is a daunting task for senatorial candidates. The candidates will need some good strategists and planners, unless they have

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already established an overseas-campaign person imbedded in the 42,000 barangays in the archipelago's 7107 islands. # # # [Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)