

Philippines: Despite landslide 2019 loss, labor leader Leody de Guzman to run for president

Friday 8 October 2021, by [BUAN Lian](#) (Date first published: 28 September 2021).

It's not about a regime change, but a system change, says the ever idealistic Leody de Guzman

Despite a landslide loss [for the progressives](#) in the 2019 senatorial elections, labor leader [Leody de Guzman](#) will run for president in 2022, he and his workers' coalition announced on Tuesday, September 28.

"Tinatanggap ko ang hamon niyo. Laban talaga tayo, laban talaga (I am accepting the challenge. We will fight, we will really fight)," the veteran unionist said on Tuesday during the national convention of the Partido Lakas ng Masa (PLM).

De Guzman placed 38th in the [senatorial elections' battle for 12](#) in 2019, with his fellow candidates on the progressive [Labor Win ticket](#) also losing by a mile. The other Labor Win candidate, prominent activist Neri Colmenares who placed 24th, will [give it another go](#) for the Senate in 2022.

As the political opposition scrambles to assemble a unified ticket, all under the principle of having a fortified front to defeat an ally of President Rodrigo Duterte, De Guzman said it's not about a regime change, but a "system change."

"Dapat kumilos tayo labas sa ating base, 'yung mga hindi natin nagagawa ay gawin natin ngayon hindi lang para ibenta si Leody, ipaliwanag ang system change, hindi regime change," said ever idealistic De Guzman.

"Kailangan system change, hindi lang palitan si Duterte, hindi lang para palitan ang mukha ng pangulo sa Malacañang, kundi dapat palitan ang buong sistema ng goyerno," added De Guzman.

(We need to act outside of our base, we should do now what we haven't done before not just to campaign for Leody, but to explain that what we need is a system change and not just a regime change. We need a system change, not just to replace Duterte, but just to replace the face of the president in Malacañang, but to change the entire system of government.)

It is going to be an uphill battle for De Guzman who doesn't have funds or machineries that can compete with the resources of other presidentiables ranking high in pre-election surveys.

In the last 2019 elections, warring labor factions came together for a historic unified ticket for the Senate, but their dream of a labor vote - comprised ideally of 50 million Filipino workers - did not come through for any of them.

De Guzman and his fellow labor leader candidates said that running in the national polls is not just

about campaigning for a position, but gaining a bigger platform to campaign for labor rights - to raise minimum wages, and abolish contractualization.

PLM, the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino (BMP) - which De Guzman chairs - is part of the coalition Laban ng Masa (LNM). LNM earlier launched a signature campaign to convince [Walden Bello](#), a two-term representative of the Akbayan party-list, to run for president. Bello had said he will take on the challenge if they gather 300,000 signatures.

Lawyer Luke Espiritu of the BMP will run as senator, the PLM also decided on Tuesday.

Party-list elections

Their fellow progressives in the Makabayan bloc have also decided who they are fielding for the party-list election for the House of Representatives. Party lists choose their nominees, arranged by priority, and whoever its nominees are will take the seats in the lower house depending on the number of seats it wins.

The consistent winner Bayan Muna has former representative Teddy Casiño as first nominee, current representative Ferdinand Gaité as second nominee, Amirah Lidasan as third nominee, human rights lawyer Kristina Conti as fourth nominee; and Pepito Pico, John Ruiz and Roman Polintan as fifth, sixth and seventh nominee respectively.

Gabriela Representative Arlene Brosas will vie for her third and last term; Jean Lindo and Lucy Francisco as Gabriela's second and third nominee respectively.

Anakpawis, which didn't win any seat in 2019, will attempt a comeback with Duterte's former agrarian secretary Rafael Mariano as first nominee.

ACT-Teachers has current representative France Castro as first nominee; former representative Antonio Tinio as second nominee; and David Michael San Juan as third nominee.

Kabataaan Representative Sarah Elago will not seek a third term, as the party list chose National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP) president Raoul Manuel as first nominee.

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