

# CORONA IMPEACHMENT: GOOD GOVERNANCE ON TRIAL?

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## EDITORIAL

# Preserve Judicial Independence and Integrity

**T**he on-going impeachment trial of Supreme Court Chief Justice Renato Corona is not only unprecedented but also the most difficult in the annals of Philippine political history. It involves legal and constitutional issues, along with political and partisan dimensions that make the case much more problematic to resolve. Also note that the constitutionally-mandated court of law trying the case is the Philippine Senate, with some members who are quite suspect themselves for alleged corrupt and fraudulent behavior as public officials. The Senate is not a “simon-pure” body sitting in judgment of another branch of government.

It is important to consider some of these underlying antecedents at the core of this most unusual case. On one hand, it is highly commendable that President Benigno Aquino III is singularly determined to root out or at least undermine the pervasive corruption that has afflicted the political system in the Philippines. This has been a cancer on the body politic that seems to have metastasized into a non-terminal permanent condition. We do not doubt the president’s sincerity and genuine resolve and understand why this condition should distress him to no end, as it does to everyone watching this riveting high drama. We applaud his political leadership on this issue, something that has been lacking for a long time.

On the other hand, there is a certain unease about the fact that the defendant in this case was a “midnight appointee” of the previous administration to the Supreme Court’s highest position who has taken adversarial positions against the current administration. In turn, the president has openly scorned Mr. Corona in public. This does not bode well for effective governance and for the country’s national and international image. The country suffers as the two protagonists are involved in this battle royale in Philippine politics.

This reminds us eerily of U.S. President Thomas Jefferson’s attacks against entrenched judicial power during the 19th century arising from the appointment of “midnight justices” that his predecessor, President John Adams, made on his last day as president. Jefferson had pressed for the impeachment of some of the more partisan judges, particularly against a “much larger fish” in the person of Supreme Court Associate Justice Samuel Chase.

Jefferson had attacked Chase as severely high-handed in some of his judicial decisions. Chase was impeached but acquitted in his trial because it had not been demonstrated that his actions constituted the high crimes and misdemeanors required by the Constitution to convict and remove a sitting judge. Though exasperated by the decision, Jefferson accepted it with equanimity.

The Corona case calls into question possible violations of doctrines like judicial independence, separation of powers and checks and balances, among others. These are time-honored touchstones of democratic governance enshrined in the Constitution. It is clear that these principles envision a just and fair system in which one power controls and limits another without reducing it to impotence.

We support the position articulated by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) that the Corona trial has not only placed one person on the spot but the entire Supreme Court. The embattled Supreme Court, now without a Chief, has questioned the authority of the Senate to try the case. This has put Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile on the defensive and he has invoked the constitutional provision that in impeachment cases, it is the Senate that is constituted as the jury.

Corona is not the Supreme Court. The IBP takes issue with the fact that in impeaching him, the Congress has arrogated unto itself the power to interpret the law. There was also some confusion about the strategy to present the case to the Senate by the House

## FROM THE PUBLISHER



The Philippines wasted little time in starting 2012 off with a bang. In case you missed it, trial began on January 16th for Chief Justice Renato Corona, the country’s top lawyer, who is facing impeachment on charges of corruption before a court composed of Philippine senators. It is the first such impeachment of a chief justice in Philippine history. Supporters of President Benigno “Noynoy” S. Aquino III say it’s about time that the nation’s corrupt officials are held accountable for their actions. Others are questioning the constitutionality of the entire process, since it is the Supreme Court’s responsibility, not members of the House of Representatives, to serve as the final interpreter of the law and arbiter of judicial disputes. We will do our very best to keep our readers updated on this unprecedented trial, which is expected to last for several months. For those who are unfamiliar with the Corona impeachment trial, please read this issue’s cover story beginning on page 4 as well as our insightful and thought-provoking editorial on page 2.

With 2012 being an election year, many candidates are gearing up for the campaign season. Some have already hung election signs throughout their respective neighborhoods, while others have announced their candidacy. One such candidate is a familiar face in the Filipino community—former State Sen. Ron Menor, who kicked off his campaign with a rally in Waipahu on January 22. We have an article on page 9 with good information on his announcement to run for City Council’s District 9, along with another editorial on page 3 that readers will find interesting and informative. Best wishes to Ron and the other candidates, especially those who are of Filipino ancestry!

Lastly, if you know of a Filipino youth who could benefit from attending a special leadership camp organized by the Sariling Gawa Youth Council, please read more on page 8 on how to sign him or her up. The three-day camp, scheduled from March 24-26 at Camp Erdman, is aimed at instilling self-confidence, ethnic pride and a sense of identity into our Filipino youth. Kudos to Sariling Gawa for hosting this much-needed annual camp!

In closing, thank you once again for supporting the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. As always, we encourage our readers to provide feedback, story ideas, tips or concerns regarding Hawaii’s dynamic and vibrant Filipino community. Please drop us an email at: [filiplinochronicle@gmail.com](mailto:filiplinochronicle@gmail.com). We’d love to hear from you!

Until next time... *aloha* and *mabuhay!*

of Representatives’ prosecutors, something that Enrile attributed to the novelty of this unique trial. Legislators are basically just that—legislators and not judges. There are other serious concerns, particularly the expected back-and-forth processes of legal motions, appeals, counter appeals and so on, which could render the case interminable and vulnerable to political circus dimensions. It would be most interesting to watch these developments as they unfold. We hope that this does not lead to a severe constitutional crisis, which would be disastrous for the country.

We also share the IBP’s grave concern over the breakneck impeachment of the Chief Justice based on grounds that subvert the constitutional allocation of powers. The IBP argues that, in line again with the judicial independence principle, the presidency as an institution should not act to subvert but rather to uphold the principles of judicial integrity.

The IBP statement ends with a call for the public to support the Supreme Court as an institution of democracy and the Rule of Law. We subscribe to that as well and must be careful to separate the political or personal issues from the institutional ones that have strengthened our basic branches of government as the pillars of a democratic society.



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## OPINION

# Follow The Money And You Will Find The Truth Behind A Candidate

By Edwin Quinabo

**T**he almighty dollar can sway any political race through widespread exposure of savvy, self-promoting ads. The fact that former Gov. Linda Lingle is quickly eclipsing her Democratic opponents in raising money in the race for U.S. Senate bodes well in her favor. Lingle already raised \$1.7 million since starting her campaign in October last year. Democratic contenders U.S. Rep. Mazie Hirono and former U.S. Rep. Ed Case who launched their campaigns much earlier trail behind Lingle.

The U.S. Senate race, which is a rematch of sorts for all three major candidates who faced off in the governor's race in 2002, is expected to spark greater national attention with Lingle providing the Republican Party its best chance in decades to finally seize a senate seat representing the state of Hawaii. That explains why millions of dollars are being thrown Lingle's way so early on.

Despite the fundraising advantage any one of these major contenders might hold, this race is wide open. All three have statewide appeal and solid experience in public office. They possess both grassroots and institutional support. Their appeal crosses over key demographic populations economically and ethnically. What should set them apart is their stance on the issues where deeply set philosophical differences come into play. Given the historical affinity Hawaii voters have for the Democratic Party, all three contenders will wisely establish platforms not too radically distant from this base, even for Lingle.

For Hirono, whose political values closely mirror the majority of Hawaii voters, getting her message across will come more naturally. For Case, he will have the biggest challenge among the three as a truly moderate Democrat. For Lingle, who cannot win on traditional, hard-line GOP values in this state, she must take on a chameleon role almost re-

sembling at times what Case is, a moderate Democrat, to attract independents, and at the same time rally behind Hawaii's conservative Republican base.

To educated political observers, they already are aware how each of these candidates will probably vote in Congress. Their minds have already been decided no matter who raises more money or how these candidates choose to project themselves in political ads. For a large number of other voters, these candidates will end up sounding the same, claiming to be the best leader to improve jobs, the economy and education. How they would achieve that is lost in short, emotion-driven, sound-byte commercials. Unfortunately, the millions of dollars raised by candidates will do little to promote their blueprint for a better future in their ads.

## What voters should look for

Perhaps voters should take an entirely different approach in deciding whom to elect. In addition to the usual candidates' experience and stance on the issues, voters should pay close attention to candidates' political donations. Knowing who is fi-

nancing campaigns, especially large donors, is the most revealing way to find out how these candidates will actually vote on issues, not by listening to their generic promises on polished TV, radio or print ads. Candidates, who reserve the right to reject donations, are keenly aware not to accept money from large donors who share opposing positions on the issues. A candidate's acceptance of money from large donors is a silent contract of sort, a tacit agreement that a candidate will be a political "friend" when the time is needed. By being aware of who is on a candidate's "friends list," voters are better informed of candidates' obligations to their financial supporters. Voters then can see how these obligations may match or clash with their own stance on the issues.

## Super PACs

Unfortunately, a 2010 Supreme Court (SC) ruling that allows unlimited contributions by corporations and unions to advocate for or against a political candidate makes the whole disclosure process difficult. Determining who is financially supporting a candidate has become muddled.

Under federal law, individuals can donate directly to a campaign with a cap of \$2,500 per election. Individuals who donate to a campaign are easily identifiable through disclosure laws. But the new SC law allows cor-

porations to donate unlimited sums to Super PACs (political action committees) independent from candidates' campaigns. These Super PACs can spend whatever they want in ads; in essence, operating much like another campaign. Determining who is financing Super PACs is more difficult, especially since at times disclosure of Super PAC donors is only mandated after an election cycle. This confusion is an area where the media can work to shed some light and step out of the typical, election coverage format. The media ought to play a greater role in informing the general public where a candidate's financial support is coming from, particularly when large donors, corporations and unions jump in to sway a race, which has become easier to do since the SC 2010 decision.

Voters can also do their part and demand more transparency from their candidates of choice. On issues of significant importance, voters should take that extra step and contact their candidate of choice to find out that candidate's position and which organizations, if any, have donated money and advocated for or against that issue. Let's be more informed voters this election. Don't take candidates' word on how they would vote on the issues and follow the trail of their financial backers. That answer is probably more telling than what you see or read in ads.

## EDITORIAL

# A Familiar Face for City Council

**W**hile the Filipino community was abuzz with news of former Gov. Ben Cayetano's decision to run for Honolulu mayor, a similar announcement by another candidate whose surname is recognized by many Filipinos failed to generate as much media attention. Former State Sen. Ron Menor's kick-off campaign rally for City Council District 9 was well-attended, yet flew under the radar of local news media outlets. Granted, a Council election is not as high-profile as the mayoral race but some observers felt he deserved more.

An attorney by training, Menor is the son of the late Hawaii Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Menor—the first Filipino appointed to the Hawaii State Supreme Court and the first Filipino-American in the

U.S. elected as a state senator. Menor followed his famous father's footsteps into public service and in 1982 was first elected to the State House of Representatives. He served in both the House and Senate for over 20 years. Among his legislative accomplishments were gas price controls, cheaper prescription drugs, lower auto insurance rates, regulating health insurance and promoting renewable energy.

Menor's political career hit a road bump in 2008 when a DUI arrest factored into an election day defeat several months later. Opponents and the media will more than likely use the incident to repeatedly black mark him. To Menor's credit, he has come to grips with the DUI arrest and made amends. Family members, associates and former aides have noticed a striking difference in Menor's demeanor since the incident. They say he

has a new-found inner peace and purpose in life. He has also donated his time serving as legal counsel for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

Does Menor deserve a second chance? Absolutely. Time and again, Hawaii voters have forgiven public officials who 'fess up to their faults. Furthermore, should he win the election, Menor's leadership and years of experience as a State legislator will prove invaluable as the Council makes key decisions on the future of rail, sewer and infrastructure improvements, landfill and other pressing matters.

It may be a bit early for the Chronicle to endorse a candidate but it is heartening for the Filipino community to see one of its own jump back into the race. It's been said that before leading others, a man must first be able to lead himself. We like the positive change we've seen so far in Menor and hope that it continues.

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## COVER STORY

# Corona Impeachment to Test Noynoy's Good Governance Policy

By HFC Staff

**T**he current impeachment trial of Renato Corona, the Philippines' Supreme Court Chief Justice, is extremely rare even in a country with a flair for politics. The trial has raised eyebrows not just in the Philippines, but also among Filipinos locally and across the U.S.

Supporters of Philippine President Benigno "Noynoy" S. Aquino III say he is making good on a campaign promise to root out corruption and promote good governance. After assuming the presidency in June 2010, Noynoy has aggressively gone after top leaders in the previous administration. He has filed corruption charges against Corona and accused former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of electoral sabotage and other alleged wrongdoings.

## Events Leading Up to Impeachment

In October 2011, the Philippines' Department of Justice (DOJ) barred Arroyo, who won election in 2010 as a representative of Pampanga, and her husband from leaving the country. Arroyo appealed the DOJ's order and claimed that she needed to travel abroad for medical treatment. A few weeks later, the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order (TRO) allowing the couple to

leave the country under certain conditions.

Arroyo's allies in the House of Representatives asked the Supreme Court to enforce the TRO but DOJ officials refused to budge. In mid-November 2011, an arrest warrant was served on Arroyo, which she received during confinement at a posh hospital in Taguig City. She was later transferred to a veterans medical center in Quezon City and placed under hospital arrest.

In the following weeks, rumors spread of a plot by President Aquino's allies in the House of Representatives to impeach the chief justice. On December 12, the House initiated an impeachment complaint signed by 188 members against Corona who was accused of eight counts of graft, corruption, betraying the public's trust and violating the Philippine Constitution. The complaint was filed the next day in the Senate. The Senate began the impeachment trial against Corona on January 16 with des-

igned members of the House of Representatives serving as prosecutors.

Arroyo is a close ally of Corona, who served as her chief-of-staff before she appointed him to the Supreme Court in April 2002. Shortly after Aquino won the presidency, Arroyo appointed Corona as chief justice, a "midnight appointment" that was seen by some as an effort to derail efforts to bring her and others in her administration to justice. Impeachment allegations against Corona include corruption and biased rulings that favored Arroyo.

## Corona Fires Back

In response, Corona has accused Noynoy of targeting Arroyo-appointed Supreme Court justices and filling it with his own appointees, which would give him control of the presidency, congress and the courts. The truth is, it's not easy to boot sitting justices and appoint one's own nominees to the bench. Supreme Court justices can only be replaced upon retirement or by vacancies brought about by resignation, death and conviction after impeachment. Some observers feel that the Corona camp, being the accused and on the defensive, was offering rationalizations for President Aquino's actions.

"I think the president's motives are more along his stated priorities on his fight against corruption and cleaning up the public bureaucracy, rather than along the more political expedient of being able to appoint his own men to the High Court," says Dr. Belinda Aquino, a retired University of Hawaii-Manoa professor and renowned expert on Philippine affairs.

Corona's supporters have also criticized Noynoy for chas-



Chief Justice Renato Corona, who is now undergoing impeachment trial at the Philippine Senate

ing corrupt officials when he instead should be focusing on economic growth policies. However, many say in defense of Noynoy that rooting out corruption would in fact result in economic gains since corruption is one of the reasons why investors are reluctant to do business in the Philippines.

Toy Arre, former president and CEO of the Filipino Community Center, agrees that rooting out corruption would have a positive effect on the Philippines' economy.

"Economic growth is difficult for the Philippines, even under ideal conditions," Arre says. "It's exponentially more difficult under a corrupt system of government."

## Ramifications of Impeachment

Noynoy's initiatives against corruption is seen as a cleansing process which, if successful in higher levels of government, could have an effect on the citizenry when it comes to weeding out graft.

"The problem has been rooted so long in the Philippine body politic that it will be extremely difficult to eradicate," says Dr. Aquino. "But the attempts of the current administration are welcomed news in a country that has been so long mired in corrupt practices."

Dr. Aquino was surprised that Noynoy openly and aggres-

sively targeted a "big fish" like Corona, instead of using a more subtle, low-key approach.

"He comes from a younger generation and less constrained I would imagine by the traditional niceties of Philippine politics and the possibility of being hit back," Aquino says.

Others like Visayan community leader Jun Colmenares say it was a good idea for Noynoy to go after a "big fish" like Corona.

"If the president is serious about going after government corruption, then a big fish (like Corona) is a good choice," he says. "It shows that he intends to root out corruption at the highest levels of government. What the Philippines needs is moral regeneration. It has been so mired in corruption for the past decades that it is high time to root it out. We need good and honest government leaders."

State House Rep. Joey Manahan hopes that the Aquino administration treads carefully—for its own sake.

"In principle, I agree with the policy of 'good governance' the Aquino administration is trying to put forth, but there is a balance that needs to be maintained once it is put into practice," Rep. Manahan says. "President Aquino is walking a fine line and I hope that the end game works to his advantage. Otherwise he will appear to be

(continued on page 5)

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COVER STORY



Dr. Belinda Aquino, Dr. Serafin Colmenares and Rep. Joey Manahan

(from page 4, CORONA...)

just as guilty of the graft and corruption that his administration is trying to prevent.”

**A Long, Winding Process**

Unfortunately, the trial could take months and consume much of the Aquino administration’s time and effort. It is possible for the public to become cynical with the never-ending technicalities and legal maneuverings from both sides.

“The reality in the Philippines is that the machinery for justice is so slow, cumbersome, antiquated and in some cases, corrupt,” says Dr. Aquino. “Judicial reform is badly needed in the Philippines. Progress has not been made despite attempts in the past to overhaul the system of justice. This long-standing structural deficiency has to be addressed but it is easier said than done because the political will is not there, among other issues.”

Senate President Enrile, who is presiding over the proceedings, was frustrated early on mainly because the prosecution team from the House had not gotten its act together in presenting its case before the Senate. It took awhile for things to get up to speed, since impeachment cases are rare and that House lawmakers needed to switch gears and become judicial entities—a role which they were not used to playing.

Sen. Miriam Santiago last week berated a member of the prosecution panel on the Senate floor regarding trial proceedings. She and fellow senators were reminded by Enrile to control their emotions during the proceedings.

“I hate to say this but soon, the whole thing might degenerate into a political circus, more as entertainment rather than anything else,” says Dr. Aquino.

The impeachment trial has been televised live and is expected to last for several months. But will the common man be interested in watching the events unfold or will he be

too busy eeking out a living? For Colmenares, the common tao should follow the proceedings.

“The impeachment trial is big news in the Philippines. Given the Filipinos’ penchant for politics, I am pretty sure many people there will follow it,” he says.

Rep. Manahan disagrees and says that the high stakes political game will likely be out of the common man’s reach.

“I can’t imagine there would be too much interest in following the proceedings for the average citizen in the Philippines or even abroad, because we are so far removed from this level,” says Rep. Manahan. “It is a sad commentary on Philippine politics, and it says a lot about the disparity between the people and the officials who represent our interests.”

Dr. Aquino agrees. “As you know, the ‘common tao’ in the Philippines is largely engaged in earning a living at the most elemental level. Their energies are spent trying to survive above water,” she says.

“I think this is a test case of Noynoy’s slogan for good governance—*Kung walang Korap, walang Mahirap*, or words to that effect. You can also turn it around to *Kung walang Mahirap, walang Korap* because as people get out of the poverty level, hopefully, they will be able to participate more in public affairs and be more critical of the way the government is run.”

**Striking a Balance**

With the trial headed into the end of its third week, public support for the impeachment remains steady. Things could change, however, if the government and congress focus too much of their collective efforts on what critics characterize as “vindictive politics.”

One ominous sign is the release of the Philippines’ economic growth report for 2011. According to the National Sta-

tistical Coordination Board, gross domestic product was 3.7 percent, which is less than half of 2010’s 7.6 percent and below the government’s projections of between 4.5 to 5.5 percent.

Critics may see it as proof that the government is excessively focusing on chasing corrupt officials from the previous administration, rather than working on the economy, creating jobs and alleviating poverty.

Administration officials trace part of the decrease to less government spending—a policy that Noynoy called for to ensure that government contracts were free of corruption. With reforms completed, they expect 2012 to be a much better year.

For Noynoy’s sake, Rep. Manahan hopes that he distances himself from the proceedings and lets the process take its course. He also pointed out the importance of public officials who are involved in the trial to be as transparent and unbiased as possible.

To quell his critics and maintain public support, the Aquino administration needs to strike a better balance between economic growth and other important matters besides the impeachment trial. That is, in fact, what good governance is all about.

**Statement from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) Re. Impeachment of Chief Justice Corona**

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the official organization of lawyers, expresses its grave concern over the breakneck impeachment of the Chief Justice based on grounds that subvert the constitutional allocation of powers and prerogatives of the Supreme Court as the final interpreter of the law and arbiter of judicial disputes as enshrined in the Constitution.

The impeachment has placed on trial not only the Chief Justice but the entire Supreme Court. The grounds invoked to impeach the Chief Justice refer to collegial decisions of the Supreme Court involving interpretations of law in actual disputes elevated for review.

In all of the cited cases, the record shows that the Chief Justice was not the ponente but merely concurred in the majority or minority opinion. Neither did the Chief Justice flip-flop or change his position in any of these cases. The decisions were reached by the Supreme Court pursuant to its processes and subjected to reconsideration proceedings. They all involve interpretation of what the law is

By impeaching the Chief Justice based on decisions issued by the Supreme Court now claimed to be unconstitutional, the House is in effect arrogating unto itself the power to interpret the law over and above the Supreme Court. Such an impeachment has transformed the House of Representatives as the higher interpreter of what law is, a clear encroachment on the prerogatives exclusively vested by the Constitution in the Supreme Court itself.

If the exercise of judicial review by the Supreme Court to pass upon the acts of other departments of government and to interpret the applicable laws could warrant congressional impeachment—despite the absence of any allegations of financial or illegal consideration—then the great constitutional doctrines of separation of powers and judicial supremacy on matters of interpretation of the law would completely crumble and fall apart.

While we support the reform agenda of the President, its implementation must respect and not subvert the constitutional allocation of powers. Of the three branches of government, the judiciary is the weakest. It does not have the powerful sword of the president or the awesome purse of congress. Its only weapon is the passive power of judicial review. If that constitutional weapon is despoiled, then its effectiveness as the protective mantle against potential excesses of power by the president and congress would be defanged and rendered inutile. If the Supreme Court is emasculated by partisan actions, to whom shall the people turn to against excesses by those who are in power?

The lessons of the past should be learned. As a sentinel of freedom and democracy, the IBP considers the breakneck and high-handed impeachment delivered by the House as a menace and an open subversion of the constitutional prerogatives of the Supreme court as the final interpreter of the law and the arbiter of rights.

Thus, the IBP, cognizant of its institutional mandates, calls upon the stakeholders and the pillars of the justice system to rally behind and defend the Supreme Court as an institution of democracy and the Rule of Law.



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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION



By Senator Will Espero

**E Komo Mai**

For many years now, testimony was accepted by fax to the committee chairman's office. Now, thanks to the magic of technology, you can give your input on legislative measures online at [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). The legislative website is informative. With a simple click, you can

- Find who your representative and senator are;
- See the membership of the different House and Senate committees;
- See all bills and resolutions introduced in the current biennium;
- See what hearings are scheduled and what bills are being heard;
- See committee reports that summarize testimony on bills;
- Check the broadcast schedule for hearings and daily sessions of the House and Senate; or
- See what bills will be voted on by the entire House or Senate that day.

For example, suppose you are concerned about the huge effect that plastic shopping bags have on our landfills and the hazard it poses to sea creatures. You hear that House Bill (HB) 1828 was introduced by Speaker of the House Calvin Say, and you want to know how that bill is going. Go to the [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov) website. In

the top left box, "Bill Status/Measure Status", type in "HB 1828" and click "go." The website will take you to the page for HB 1828.

The webpage for HB 1828 tells you the title, "Single-use Plastic Checkout Bags; Tax". The bill description is that customers pay a tax on each plastic bag distributed at store check-outs. "Companion" tells you the number of the identical Senate bill if one was introduced; in this case, there was no companion. "Current Referral" identifies the House committees to which the bill was sent for possible hearing. The most recent status of the bill is shown just under that. Referred to the House Energy and Environmental Protection (EEP) Committee, it was heard on January 26 at 10:00 in conference room 325. After listening to testimony on the bill during the hearing, the committee deferred the bill, meaning it decided that the bill should not go any further in the legislative process.

You can testify online via the [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov) website. After you've found a bill you want to give input on, look on the website to see if it is being heard. If the bill is scheduled for a hearing, click on the "Submit Testimony" icon. It will take you to the testimony page. In the "Enter a measure" box, type in the bill number. The page will identify the hearing. If that is the hearing you want to testify for, fill in the testifier information and upload a file of your testimony. Click on the "Submit" button and you're all set. Keep in mind our deadlines – you must submit your testimony no later than 24 hours before the hearing.

Bills can be heard in more than one committee. Check the

referrals. Committees are identified by three letter abbreviations. For HB 1828, the referral is "EEP, ERB, FIN." This means the bill must be approved by three consecutive committees in three separate hearings before it can go to a final vote in the chamber in which it was introduced. HB 1828's January 26 hearing was in the first committee, Energy and Environmental Protection (EEP). If that committee had passed the bill, it would next have gone to the Economic Revitalization and Business (ERB) Committee. That committee's chairman then has the say over whether or not to give the bill a hearing. With three referrals, the bill must be given the okay by all three committees in order for it to be voted on by the whole House of Representatives. So, if you want to see the bill passed (or not), it's advisable to submit testimony to all three hearings. Testimony does not get conveyed from one hearing to the next. You can, however, use the same testimony for subsequent hearings if the bill is not changed much. If the bill is modified, you may have to update your testimony.

If the referral has committees separated by a slash, for example, if it was "EER/ERB" then both committees hear the bill together, i.e., at the same time and day. In that case, you only submit the testimony once for both committees at that one hearing, not to two separate committees. The committee that is first on that referral is the one that you should submit your testimony to, and is called the "lead" committee.

After a bill passes all of its committee referrals, it goes to the entire House or Senate for a vote, which is called a "floor

vote". If it is approved by the majority of the legislators then it crosses over to the other side, where the hearing process is repeated. If you're still interested in the bill, then you can submit testimony in that chamber's committee hearings as well.

The Public Access Room (PAR) on the fourth floor of the State Capitol is a free service to help people participate in the legislative process. Hawaii's PAR was the first in the nation, and is nationally recognized for its innovation in citizen involvement in government.

The experienced staff of the Public Access Room can assist you with navigating the complex legislative process, especially with the short deadlines the Legislature has. They can help you locate your legislator's office, show you how to offer testimony or track a bill as it moves through its hearings and votes in each chamber, and teach you how to use the Legislature's website. They can answer questions about Hawaii's statutes, administrative rules, studies and reports, previously considered legislation and testimony, or state offices. The PAR is also a mini-office, with work space for you to charge and use your laptop, with free wireless. You can write and print your testimony, do research on issues, meet with a few others, do paperwork, read, or take a break. A photocopier is available for printing testimony or correspondence to legislators. On the Capitol's closed circuit television, you can watch broadcasts of hearings and House or Senate floor sessions. A telephone, TTY, and fax machine, are available as well as reference materials, including the Hawaii Revised Statutes, Session Laws, dictionaries, and directories.

The 2012 Legislative Session is off to an exciting start. Many ideas will find their way through the maze of legislative hearings this spring. Here are a few of the bills introduced in the Senate:

- Provide funding to bring emergency medical services back to the leeward side;
- Whether mobile phone companies should be required to give cell phone locations to emergency services to help in finding missing children, youth, and adults;
- Allow credit unions to offer raffles to attract and motivate people who don't have a savings account to open one and save regularly;

People too often stand back while the lawmaking process goes on then complain about the laws that passed or the good ideas that didn't pass. "I can't get off from work to testify", some say. Others say, "I'm too shy. I don't want to get up in front of people and speak." You no longer have to show up in person to weigh in on a bill.



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## LEGAL MATTERS



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

**D**oes the attachment of a Global Positioning-System (GPS) tracking device to an individual's vehicle, and subsequent use of that device to monitor the vehicle's movements on public streets, constitute a search or seizure within the meaning of the Fourth Amendment which guarantees the people's right against unreasonable searches and seizures and requires a prior search warrant?

Yesterday (01/23/12), the U.S. Supreme Court gave its much-awaited answer to this question in *United States v. Jones*, No. 10-1259.

Jones, a District of Columbia nightclub owner was suspected of trafficking in narcotics. He was targeted for investigation by an FBI and Metropolitan Police Department task force. Officers employed various investigative techniques, including visual surveillance of the nightclub, installation of a camera focused on the front door of the club, and a pen register and wiretap covering the person's cellular phone.

## Is Attachment of GPS Tracking Device to Vehicle Without Warrant Legal?

Based in part on information gathered from these sources, the Government applied to the United States District Court for the District of Columbia for a warrant authorizing the use of an electronic tracking device on the Jeep registered to his wife. A warrant issued, authorizing installation of the device in the District of Columbia and within 10 days.

On the 11th day, in Maryland, not in D.C., agents installed a GPS tracking device on the undercarriage of a Jeep registered in his wife's name while it was parked in a public parking lot. The government conceded non-compliance with the warrant but argued that a warrant was not required. Over the next 28 days, the Government used the device to track the vehicle's movements. The Government indicted Jones and others for conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine and 50 grams or more of cocaine base, in violation of 21 U. S. C. §§841 and 846.

Jones moved to suppress evidence obtained through the GPS device. The District Court granted the motion in part, suppressing the data obtained while the vehicle was parked in the garage adjoining Jones's resi-

dence, holding the remaining data admissible, because "[a] person traveling in an automobile on public thoroughfares has no reasonable expectation of privacy in his movements from one place to another." Jones's trial in October 2006 produced a hung jury. In March 2007, a grand jury returned another indictment, charging Jones and others with the same conspiracy. The Government introduced at trial the same GPS derived data admitted in the first trial, which connected Jones to the alleged conspirators' stash house that contained \$850,000 in cash, 97 kilograms of cocaine, and 1 kilogram of cocaine base. The jury returned a guilty verdict, and the District Court sentenced Jones to life imprisonment.

The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit reversed the conviction because of admission of the evidence obtained by warrantless use of the GPS device which, it said, violated the Fourth Amendment. The D. C. Circuit denied the

Government's petition for rehearing.

### FOURTH AMENDMENT GUARANTEES RIGHT AGAINST UNREASONABLE SEARCH

The Fourth Amendment provides in relevant part that "[t]he right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated." A vehicle is an "effect" as used in the Amendment. Therefore, the Government's installation of a GPS device on a target's vehicle, and its use of that device to monitor the vehicle's movements, constitutes a "search." The Government physically occupied private property for the purpose of obtaining information. Such a physical intrusion would have been considered a "search" within the meaning of the Fourth Amendment when it

was adopted. For most of our history the Fourth Amendment was understood to embody a particular concern for government trespass upon the areas ("persons, houses, papers, and effects") it enumerates.

The Court of Appeals had previously concluded that the vehicle's registration in the name of Jones' wife name did not affect his ability to make a Fourth Amendment objection and the Government did not challenge that determination. The Supreme Court did not consider as significant Jones's status.

(ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. Office: 800 Bethel St., Suite 402, Honolulu, HI 96813. Tel. (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Websites: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com, and www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. Listen to the most witty, interesting, and informative radio program in Hawaii on KNDI at 1270, AM dial every Thursday at 7:30 a.m., rebroadcast at www.iluko.com.)

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### Town Hall Meeting to Discuss Hawaii Medical Center Closure

State Rep. Kymberly Marcos Pine will host a town hall meeting to discuss the effects of the closure of the Hawaii Medical Center (HMC) on February 9, 2012 from 7 pm to 8:30 pm at Kapolei Middle School's Dining Room/Cultural Center.

The meeting will focus on medical resources and options available in the wake of HMC's closure and what the community can do to re-open a much-needed hospital or emergency room in the area.

After the closure of the HMC in the West Oahu region, many people are wondering what their options are for medical care. Medical professionals and healthcare industry experts will be on hand to answer questions following the

panel discussion.

"This is the most important issue for the Leeward Coast," says Rep. Pine. "The community needs to know what is being done to help them."

Panelists include: Dr. David Sakamoto, State Deputy Director for Health Resources Administration; Dr. Melanie Kelly, Medical Director of Pearl City Urgent Care; Dr. James Ireland, City EMS director; and Jen Chahovich, chief operating officer for Pali Momi Medical Center.

A Leeward job fair is also planned in March to include healthcare opportunities and assistance to those laid off from the HMC hospital closures. For more information, please call 586-9730.

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## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## State to Hold Medicare Fraud Prevention Meetings

The Senior Medicare Patrol, the State Executive Office on Aging and the Office of Language Access will host town hall meetings on Kauai, Maui, Lanai and the Big Island during February and March 2012. The target audience is Ilocano-speaking Medicare beneficiaries with limited English proficiency.

Organizers say the meetings are meant to educate the public about types of Medicare fraud, tips for detecting Medicare fraud and billing errors and resources to call for help. The Kauai Agency on Elderly Affairs, the Maui County Office on Aging, and

the Hawaii County Office of Aging are participating in this outreach activity, along with the Filipino Community Councils on Kauai, Lanai and Hawaii.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) is a program of the U.S. Administration on Aging. In 1997, Congress established the SMP program to recruit and train retired professionals to fight against Medicare and Medicaid fraud, error and abuse through educational outreach at the grassroots level. The Administration on Aging also awarded a grant to the State to establish an SMP project. Initially named "SageWatch," Hawaii's SMP has been based



in the State Executive Office on Aging ever since.

One of the objectives of the Senior Medicare Patrol grant is to educate hard-to-reach populations, including not only geographically-remote communities, but populations isolated by language access barriers. These populations are vul-

nerable to fraud committed by perpetrators from the outside as well as from within their own ethnic group.

The Office of Language Access was established by law to address the language access needs of limited English proficient individuals and ensure that they are able to meaningfully access services, programs and activities offered by the State. It also provides technical assistance to state agencies as they implement the requirements of the language access law and conducts outreach to limited English proficient communities.

The town hall meetings will be held in Ilokano and English.

Admission is free. The meetings are follows:

- Kauai: February 18, from 9 am to 12 noon, Wilcox Elementary School Cafeteria
- Lanai: February 26, from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, Lanai Senior Center
- Maui: March 3, from 9 am to 12 noon, Maui Waena Intermediate School Cafeteria
- Big Island: March 10, from 9 am to 12 noon, Aupuni Center

For more information, please contact Adele Ching at 586-7281 or 296-9422, or Serafin Colmenares Jr. at 586-8730.

## Hawaiian Volcano Observatory Marks Centennial

The U.S. Geological Survey's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (HVO) launched the celebration of its 100th anniversary with an open house and free admission. Attendees learned about the eruptive history and current status of Hawaii's active volcanoes and how scientists monitor them.

USGS officials will also host talks and lectures throughout the year, as well as a vividly illustrated new general-interest publication detailing the observatory's history and accomplishments.

HVO holds the distinction as the first volcano observatory

in the U.S. For a century, it has been an international leader in volcanological studies and a magnet for researchers from around the world.

Located on the rim of Kilauea Volcano's summit caldera within Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, HVO monitors the seismic and volcanic activity of six Hawaiian volcanoes, including Kilauea and Mauna Loa, two of the most active volcanoes in the world. Kilauea has erupted 48 times on HVO's watch, with a nearly continuous flank eruption since 1983 and an ongoing summit eruption since 2008.

Mauna Loa, the largest volcano on earth, has erupted 12 times in the same period, most recently in 1984, when lava flowed to within about four miles of Hilo.

"Volcanic activity and its associated earthquakes are responsible for Hawaii's fertile soil, rainfall, isolated habitat for unique species, breathtaking natural beauty, but also, unfortunately, its geologic hazards," says USGS director Marcia McNutt. "The activities planned during HVO's centennial are an engaging and stimulating way for residents and visitors alike to learn more about the fascinating processes that have



formed and continue to shape these enormous volcanic features, and how to live safely in the vicinity of such powerful geologic forces."

HVO's timely and effective warnings help protect the public from volcanic and seismic hazards—a key mission since

the start of the observatory's work with the collaboration of Massachusetts Institute of Technology geologist Thomas A. Jaggar and pioneer volcanologist Frank Perret.

To learn more about HVO and centennial events, go online and visit: <http://hvo.wr.usgs.gov/>.

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## Sariling Gawa to hold 32nd Annual Statewide Leadership Conference

Members of the Sariling Gawa Youth Council will hold its 32nd Annual Leadership Conference at Camp Erdman from March 24-26, 2012.

The theme for this three-day high-level energy and empowerment gathering is "From the Ground Up." All high school students in the State of Hawaii are invited to attend the conference. Registration is \$120 per student.

The statewide conference is meant to empower youth and young adults as active participants in society and the importance of the power they have as

individuals to have an impact in their families, schools, and communities.

Youth and young adults will develop leadership skills and gain self-confidence, ethnic pride, and a sense of identity through teambuilding, self exploration, educational and cultural activities. For over 30 years, young Filipinos have been a part of the Sariling Gawa experience, which also raises awareness and sensitivity to issues concerning the youth in Hawaii.

Sariling Gawa Youth Council is a grass roots organization that began with a group

of college students who reflected on their experiences as immigrant and local-born Filipinos in Hawaii. In addition to implementing an annual leadership conference, Sariling Gawa also participates in community and cultural events.

Registration forms are available online at: [www.sarilinggawa.org](http://www.sarilinggawa.org). Completed applications and payments can be mailed to P.O. Box 971225, Waipahu, HI 96797.

For more details, please contact Board President Rouel Velasco at 218-0833 or Program Coordinator Geordan Arenal at (707) 246-4058.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

# Menor Announces Council Bid

Former State Sen. Ron Menor launched his campaign for the City Council with a boisterous community rally at August Ahrens School in Waipahu on January 22.

Menor is vying for the District 9 Council seat currently held by veteran legislator Nestor Garcia whose term expires in December 2012. District 9 includes Mililani, Waikele, Waipahu, Village Park, Royal Kunia and Ewa Beach.

A longtime resident of Mililani, Menor represented many of the same neighborhoods while a state representative and senator, making him intimately familiar with issues and concerns of area residents.

"I am running because I can provide an experienced voice on the Council for the residents of Central and Leeward Oahu who can hit the ground running from day one," Menor says. "I also have a clear understanding of the needs, hopes and dreams of our district that comes from a life-long commitment to a place I'm proud to call home."

If elected, Menor will fight

for a fair share of City resources for District 9, including badly-needed services and infrastructure improvements. He will also work to alleviate traffic congestion through a comprehensive and coordinated transportation system that is multi-dimensional and multi-purposed. He will push to make Central and Leeward Oahu neighborhoods safe and free from crime.

Another priority for Menor is to promote the adoption of policies at the city level that will help create jobs and encourage meaningful economic growth.

"For the last several years, I have watched government and the private sector wrestle unsuccessfully with a stagnant economy," Menor said. "That's one of the main reasons why I've committed to returning to public service in 2012. I believe I can contribute positively to the discussion and search for a sustainable solution that will benefit all of Hawaii."

Menor is the son of the late Hawaii Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Menor and Lillian Menor. His family moved to



Central Oahu from Hilo more than 40 years ago. After attending college and law school on the mainland, he returned to raise a family and practice law.

Menor was elected to the State House of Representatives in 1982 and has served in both the House and Senate for over 20 years.

While in the State Senate, Menor chaired the Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection & Housing Committee and the Energy & Environment Committee. He also co-chaired the Joint Senate and House Affordable Housing Task Force; was a member of the Senate Committees on Business & Economic Development, Education, Transportation, Ways & Means; and

was a member of the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Task Force.

Among those in attendance at Menor's rally were fellow legislators State Sen. Will Espero, State Rep. Marilyn Lee, City Council Chair Ernie Martin and Councilmember Romy Cachola.

"Many people have told me that the City Council needs the kind of strong, committed and responsive leadership that I can provide," Menor says. "I have dedicated most of my career to public service and would like to continue to do that as City councilman for District 9."

## Candidate Filing Begins January 30

Hawaii's 2012 election season officially begins January 30, 2012 with the start of candidate filings.

By law, those interested in seeking elective office must file nomination papers in order to appear and be listed on the state's official election ballot. Chief Election Officer Scott Nago and the county clerks will be issuing nomination papers and accepting completed candidate filings at various locations throughout the state.

Until the state legislative reapportionment plan is complete, individuals may begin filings for only county, Office of Hawaii Affairs and federal seats. The candidate filing deadline is 4:30 pm on June 5, 2012.

Please keep in mind the following important dates for voters:

- July 12, 2012: Deadline to register for Primary Election
- August 4, 2012: Deadline to register to vote in Primary Election via absentee ballot

- August 11, 2012: Primary Election
- October 8, 2012: Deadline to register for General Election
- October 30, 2012: Deadline to register to vote in General Election via absentee ballot
- November 6, 2012: General Election

For more details regarding candidate filing and other election information, go to [www.hawaii.gov/elections](http://www.hawaii.gov/elections) or call 453-VOTE.



# Prophecies for These End of Times\*

## A Free Talk with Healing Service

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 Waikiki Beach Marriott - *Leahi Ballroom*  
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 Doors Open: 6:30pm • Talk Begins: 7:00pm sharp  
**Contact: Josephine 808-545-3546**

**Saturday, February 18, 2012**  
 Maui Beach Hotel - *Ballroom*  
 170 Kaahunanu Ave., Kahului, Maui, Hawaii 96732  
 Doors Open: 1:00pm • Talk Begins: 1:30pm sharp  
**Contact: Tim Maher 310-569-2096**

### Have you not yet read the Signs of the End of Times?

God in His greatness of Love for us has been sending us warning, after warning asking us to repent. He has been inspiring chosen souls in our times whom he called to transmit His Message as in the time when our Lady appeared in Fatima (May 13, 1917) to warn the world, that unless they repent and return to God, and lead a life of prayer, a great war, greater than the 1st World War will come, and that Russia will spread her errors to her neighboring countries as well. Humanity ignored our Lady's message and Her prediction came true.

Vassula is a chosen soul to whom God has given messages for our times; of which many have come true, for example: the 2004 Tsunami, the Twin Towers, the world in turmoil and the fall of communism in Russia. These are the last warnings. God is so offended with the actual widespread apostasy that unless we heed His calling, He will chastise the world with a hurricane of fire.

"Those who have ears let them hear, those who do not want to hear let them not hear", this is what God said to Vassula to tell this generation and to tell all the Churches. For a complete set of the True Life in God books & DVD's of her talks, call **The American Assoc. for True Life in God at 1-816-461-8888** and receive one free item.

Books and other materials will be available • [www.tlig.org](http://www.tlig.org) • [www.tligradio.org](http://www.tligradio.org)

\* The End of Times is NOT the end of the world, it is the end of an era



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**PHILIPPINE NEWS**

**'Phl Wages Among Highest in  
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from [www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)  
Thursday, January 26, 2012

**M**ANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) - The Philippines has one of the highest minimum wages in the region, the country's statistics agency reported Thursday.

The National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) said the minimum wage set in the Philippines and Thailand can buy the most rice compared to minimum wage in other ASEAN countries.

The country's minimum wage of P270.98 or \$6.16 per day can buy around 7.9 kilos of rice. In Thailand, the minimum wage of \$4.84 per day, can buy as much as 10.3 kilos of rice. The NSCB used the Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) estimate that each kilo of rice was valued at \$0.78.

In Vietnam, the minimum wage of \$1.74 can buy 3.95 kilos of rice, while

Cambodia's \$2.03 can buy 4.95 kilos of rice. A \$2 minimum wage in Indonesia can buy two kilos of rice, while Myanmar's \$3 can buy 6.67 kilos of rice.

"This means that our minimum wage is not (that) low compared to other countries. Of course, transportation costs are quite high but if the entire minimum wage is used to buy rice only, we can say that we are not far behind from our ASEAN neighbors," NSCB Secretary General Romulo A. Virola said.

Data also showed that when the minimum wage in Metro Manila is used, the Philippines replaces Thailand in the top spot. The minimum wage in the National Capital Region is \$404 or \$8.34 per day. That amount can buy as much as 10.69 kilos of rice.

"Based on this data, there is no need to increase minimum wage in the Philippines. However, we all know that setting minimum wage setting is not as simple and we also need to take other factors into consideration," Virola said.

**It's Final: Phl Gov't Wins NAIA-3  
Case in Singapore**

by **Rudy Santos**  
Friday, January 27, 2012

**M**ANILA, Philippines - After nine years, the arbitration case between the Philippine government and the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) is finally over.



GM Jose Angel Honrado

Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) general manager Jose Angel Honrado yesterday announced that the Singapore-based International Chamber of Commerce's (ICC) ruling in favor of the Philippine government has become final and executory.

In a manifestation filed on Dec. 27, 2011, Piatco formally withdrew its second application to set aside the earlier ICC ruling that dismissed its claims against the Philippine government.

Piatco in February 2003 filed a request for arbitration before the ICC seeking to enforce its concession agreement with the Philippine government for the construction of Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 (NAIA-3).

The agreement authorized Piatco to build the \$650-million NAIA-3 and granted a franchise to operate and maintain the terminal during the concession period of 25 years.

But the Supreme Court (SC) declared the agreement null and void for having been "amended and re-stated" without the approval of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Honrado said.

The SC said that Piatco Consortium, the predecessor of Piatco, did not possess the requisite financial capacity when it was awarded the NAIA-3 contract and that the agreement was contrary to public policy.

Piatco sued the government before the ICC in Singapore where it sought to recover at least \$565 million in damages.

Its foreign investor, Fraport, separately sued the Philippine government at the International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Washington.

In August 2007, the ICSID affirmed the SC's nullification of the concessions and rejected Fraport's claim because of its violation of the Anti-Dummy Law.

The ICC also rejected Piatco's claim because of illegality arising from Piatco's violation of the Anti-Dummy Law, which requires that the operation, management and control of public utilities such as the airport should remain with Filipinos.

With Piatco's withdrawal, Honrado said the ICC award granting the Philippine government more than \$6 million in arbitration cost has become final.

"This final ICC ruling, coupled with payment of just compensation in the expropriation case decided in our favor by the Regional Trial Court of Pasay City, will pave the way for the full commercial operations of the NAIA Terminal 3," Honrado announced. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

FEATURE

# “Bold Dream, Uncommon Valor”: The Florentino Das Story

By Serafin Colmenares, Jr., Ph.D.

**O**n Saturday, February 4, 2012, a lecture and panel discussion on Florentino Das' solo voyage from Hawaii to the Philippines will be presented starting at 4:00 p.m. at the Philippine Consulate General lanai. Cecilia Noble, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Hawaii at Manoa will give the presentation, with Sylvia Das Day, Dr. Jun Colmenares and Dr. Patricia Halagao as panel discussants. Dr. Vina Lanzona, director of the UH Center for Philippine Studies, will be the moderator. The event is being sponsored by the Congress of Visayan Organizations (COVO) on the occasion of its 27th anniversary celebration, and the UH Center for Philippine Studies.

The presentation will feature the daring journey of a Philippine-born Hawaiian resident who braved the Pacific Ocean, alone, in pursuit of a bold dream. He accomplished what no man has ever done before, and proved to the world that, armed with courage and steadfastness, what seemed to be an impossible dream can be achieved.

## The Man and the Journey

Florentino Das was born in 1918 in Samar, Philippines. He stowed away to Hawaii on a British freighter in 1934. In Hawaii, he married the former Herminia Cipriano with whom he had six children: Florentino Jr., Ronald, Dennis, Justin, Luisa, and Sylvia, all of whom are in the United States. To support his family, Florentino Das worked as a fisherman, a prize-fighter, a carpenter, and a Pearl Harbor shipyard worker.

In 1955, Florentino Das, then a resident of Maili, Waiānae, and with support from the erstwhile Timarau Club of Honolulu, embarked on his dream of crossing the Pacific Ocean and reaching the Philippines from Hawaii. What made him decide to do this could have been a combination of homesickness – he wanted to see the family he left behind in the Philippines – and a desire to prove that the Pacific can be conquered. There were people who thought him crazy but he persisted. On May 14, 1955, he left Kewalo Basin aboard his home-made 24-foot wooden boat named "Lady Timarau," powered only by two 25-hp outboard motors and a canvas sail, and with no modern communication devices or navigational instruments to guide him except a simple compass and the stars. A month into his solo voyage, having encountered several storms and with his boat

taking in water, he was aided and towed by a Japanese fishing vessel to Ponape, in Micronesia, where he stayed for several months repairing his boat. While there, he was instructed by his sponsor, the Timarau Club, to abort his journey and return to Hawaii, but he refused because he felt that "Filipino national pride was on the line." He continued with his voyage, passing by Truk and Yap islands, and reached the island of Siargao, off the northeastern part of Mindanao, Philippines, on April 25, 1956. From Siargao, he sailed to Allen, Samar, his place of birth, before being escorted by the Philippine Navy and Coast Guard to Manila where a hero's welcome awaited him. For his formidable feat and patriotic zeal, he was received and honored by no less than then Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay who bestowed on him the Legion of Honor and the honorary title of Commodore of the Philippine Navy. He was also given the keys to the City of Manila by then Manila Mayor Arsenio Lacson.

After the initial adulation, however, Florentino Das slipped into obscurity. Abandoned by his sponsors and with no money, Das was unable to return back to Hawaii as he planned. He became ill with diabetes and its complications. Impoverished and without work, Das was admitted to charitable hospitals and was completely blind when he succumbed to uremia on October 7, 1964 in Manila. He was



Filipino voyager Florentino Das

46 years old.

Das kept a diary of his voyage from Honolulu to Ponape that he sent to his sponsors, the Timarau Club, from whom the Star-Bulletin acquired sole publication rights. Portions of the diary were published but the diary itself can no longer be found.

## In Commemoration

For almost three decades, nothing was done to commemorate Das' achievement. In 1990, through the initiative of the Congress of Visayan Organizations (COVO) and then Philippine Consul General Buddy Gomez, with financial support from the City and County of Honolulu, a replica of his boat was constructed. It was initially housed

(continued on page 13)

**FLORENTINO R. DAS' SOLO VOYAGE  
HAWAII-PHILIPPINES  
May 14, 1955 - April 25, 1956  
"Bold Dream, Uncommon Valor"**



Crossing the great Pacific Ocean, alone, from Hawaii to the Philippines, in a self-made 24-foot sailboat, powered only by two 25-horsepower outboard motors and a canvas sail, is more than a bold dream. But that is exactly what Florentino Das did. Without the use of modern communications devices or navigational instruments, and guided only by a simple compass and the stars, he left Kewalo Basin on May 14, 1955 aboard his boat "Lady Timarau" and reached Siargao, Mindanao, Philippines on April 25, 1956. He encountered several typhoons, faced life-threatening situations, and had to stop and repair his boat along the way. But he refused to heed his sponsors' call to abandon the voyage, demonstrating an unwavering will and spirit to succeed. For his daring feat and patriotic zeal, he was honored by no less than then Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay who bestowed on him the Legion of Honor and the honorary title of Commodore of the Philippine Navy.

Florentino Das was born in Samar, Philippines in 1918, came to Hawaii in 1934, and died in Manila, Philippines in 1964. He was a fisherman, a prize-fighter, a carpenter, and a former Pearl Harbor shipyard worker. He will always be remembered for his bold dream and uncommon valor.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

This marker is a project of the Filipino Centennial Celebration Commission, the Congress of Visayan Organizations (COVO) and the Oahu Visayan Council, with support from the Hawaii Community Development Authority and the Office of the Governor.

May 14, 2006

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## PHILIPPINE NEWS

# Plan to Expand U.S. Military Presence in Philippines Assailed, Defended

from [www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)  
Tuesday, January 31, 2012

**M**ANILA (Xinhua) -- The plan to expand United States military presence in the Philippines as agreed during the Jan. 27 bilateral dialogue in Washington, D.C. has been assailed by the country's groups but defended by officials of the government of President Benigno Aquino, III.

Teodoro Casino, a party-list member of the House of Representatives representing Bayan Muna (Country First), said that there is no need for the expansion of U.S. military presence in the country. He even called for a congressional probe into the planned deal.

"We were able to get rid of the U.S. bases and we are still fighting against the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), we do not need the government to once again sell out our sovereignty," Casino said in a statement.

The VFA, signed in 1999, allows the temporary stay in the country of American military forces but only during joint military exercises and other non-combatant operations.

Casino said that the review of the VFA, which the Aquino administration has agreed to, has not even started yet but "we are going to enter a new agreement that would further put us in a disadvantaged position."

According to Casino, the

U.S. move to reassert its military presence in the Pacific Ocean is not merely intended to block China's so-called increasing dominance in the region but "to stave off the U.S. floundering economy."

Other groups also denounced the plan for increased military cooperation with the U.S..

Renato Reyes, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (New Nationalist Alliance), has assailed the port calls in Manila and Cebu of two American warships, saying these "were already part of the heightened U.S. power projection in Asia as stated in the new U.S. defense strategy."

The U.S. embassy in Manila said that the U.S. Navy guided missile destroyer USS Wayne E. Meyer was to make a port call in Manila over the weekend while the USS Chafee was to visit the port of Cebu.

Reyes said that the U.S. may not even need formal bases in the Philippines given the access and virtual basing opportunities that they have now under the VFA.

But Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario said that while the Philippines would accept an increased U.S. military presence in the country this would be in accordance with Philippine laws that ban the bas-



Filipino and American troops in Balikatan exercises

ing of foreign troops.

Del Rosario said that increased military presence could include more and more frequent joint exercises and a greater number of U.S. troops rotating through the country.

"It is to our definite advantage to be exploring how to maximize our treaty alliance with the United States in ways that would be mutually acceptable and beneficial," Del Rosario said in a statement.

In the Washington dialogue, both the Philippines and the U.S. agreed to shift into high gear their cooperation in maritime security, defense and law enforcement as provided for in the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) signed in 1951

by the two countries.

"We reinforced the significance of our Mutual Defense Treaty as the basis for the alliance and the treaty's continued relevance to the peace, security and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific," the joint communique issued after the dialogue said.

Del Rosario said that if there would be threats to the country's national interest, it should be prepared to deal with these issues diplomatically. "To complement the diplomatic approach we must at the very least also endeavor to achieve a minimum credible defense posture," he said.

In Malacanang, Presidential Communications Secretary Ramon Carandang said that

there was a convergence of interests in the need of the Philippines to upgrade its defense capability and the U.S. desire to make its presence felt in the Asia-Pacific.

Carandang said the U.S. is not just talking to the Philippines on having their presence felt but also to other countries in Asia like Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand and Australia.

Del Rosario and other officials stressed that any U.S. military buildup would be in accordance with Philippine law, which bans any foreign troops from being permanently based in the country.

The U.S. maintained two large military bases in the Philippines but was forced to abandon them in 1992 after the Philippine Senate voted down a new agreement crafted by the administration of the late President Corazon Aquino.

But even without the American bases, a rotating force of about 600 U.S. troops has been stationed in Mindanao for the past decade but purely on non-combatant role, such as training Filipino soldiers in the fight against Islamic extremists. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

## PCG to Get Additional P1.6B

from [www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)  
Friday, January 27, 2012

**M**ANILA, Philippines -- The Philippine Coast Guard will get an additional P1.6 billion for the acquisition of equipment to boost its emergency response and archipelagic defense capabilities, said Transportation Secretary Mar Roxas.

In an interview with reporters, Roxas said the augmentation budget will be coming from special account in the General Fund 151 of the Department of Energy (Gas-Malampaya Collection).

"It will go to the acquisition of assets and equipment such as ships, platforms, aircrafts, and air surveillance so that in the event our citizens are placed in a situation of danger while traveling the high seas, or within our inland waters, the Coast Guard can respond with the fast search, rescue and evacuation measures," Roxas said.

The budget will be funneled to a build-up program broken down as follows: deployment of sovereign markers on areas of Philippine jurisdiction; deployment of operational ships and aircraft for maritime surveillance and patrol operations; sensors capability enhancement; acquisition of small boats and capability upgrade for special operations units; command, control and communications enhancement; organization, training and maintenance of Coast Guard district and stations; firepower upgrade for ships; additional capability requirements and support to Presidential security duties.

Roxas clarified that the acquisition of new equipment and technologies for the modernization of the PCG will undergo a strict bidding process, as per World Bank specifications. He said he is hoping that the



PCG would acquire at least two helicopters, both costing somewhere from P200 to 300 million, by the end of the year.

These helicopters are important because of their 'loitering capability' whenever they are looking for survivors, Roxas said.

Earlier, newly designated Coast Guard commandant Rear Admiral Edmund Tan said five more helicopters will be purchased by the PCG under the program to beef up the maritime agency's air assets, which are presently made up of two Islander planes.

"We expect to receive seven helicopters in all under the program, with two being delivered before the year ends, while the others will be delivered within a three-year timeframe, and deployed in key areas all over the country," Tan said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

# Proposed Waiver Rule Expected to Benefit Thousands

cacy groups, including the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Under the law, those who were unlawfully present in the U.S. for more than 180 days but less than one year face a 3 year bar to reentry. If the unlawful presence reached 1 year or more, the bar is 10 years. This bar takes effect when the alien departs from the U.S. If the inadmissibility due to unlawful presence is waived, the bar will not apply.

Adjudication of waivers could take anywhere from three months to several years. If the alien applies for the waiver abroad, he/she will be separated from his/her family in the

United States. If the waiver is denied, unless an appeal is successful the alien may have to spend the rest of the 3 or 10 year period overseas and away from his/her family.

This proposal will benefit thousands of families. Stateside processing will bring undocumented immigrants out of the shadows by encouraging them to apply for a green card and file for a waiver while they remain in the United States. It will also streamline the waiver process.

To qualify for the waiver, the alien must establish that he/she is the immediate relative of a U.S. citizen and that the denial of the waiver would result in extreme hardship to a quali-

ifying relative. The qualifying relative must be a U.S. citizen spouse or parent.

Note that only immediate relatives are covered, so sons and daughters over 21 years of age of U.S. citizens, as well as siblings of U.S. citizens, are not affected by this rule change. The rule also will not apply to family members of lawful permanent residents.

The proposal is also limited to waiver of unlawful presence. It does not include waiver of other inadmissibility grounds such as fraud or misrepresentation and criminal conviction. Aliens subject to these inadmissibility bars must obtain a waiver under the normal procedure, i.e. depart the United States and file a waiver applica-

tion after a finding of inadmissibility at the U.S. consulate.

Since the proposed rule is quite narrow, it is important to seek the guidance of competent counsel before applying for the provisional waiver and leaving the United States.

While this new procedure will keep families together and reduce the time that they are separated, there is no reason why the DHS should not cover adult children of U.S. citizens, and spouses and children of LPRs under the proposal. Hopefully they will be included in the final rule expected to be released this year.

REUBEN S. SEGURITAN has been practicing law for over 30 years. For further information, you may call him at (212) 695 5281 or log on to his website at [www.seguritan.com](http://www.seguritan.com)

**T**he Department of Homeland Security on January 6, 2012 announced that it is proposing a rule that will allow spouses and children of U.S. citizens, who are ineligible to adjust status, to apply for a provisional waiver in the U.S. before leaving to process their immigrant visa application abroad. Under the current law, waivers are filed outside the United States.

This was in response to recommendations made by advo-

TRAVEL & TOURISM

# Tagaytay Highlands: A Top Wedding Destination

from [www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)

**M**ANILA, Philippines - Tagaytay Highlands has evolved into a preferred destination for, not only honeymoons, but also weddings.

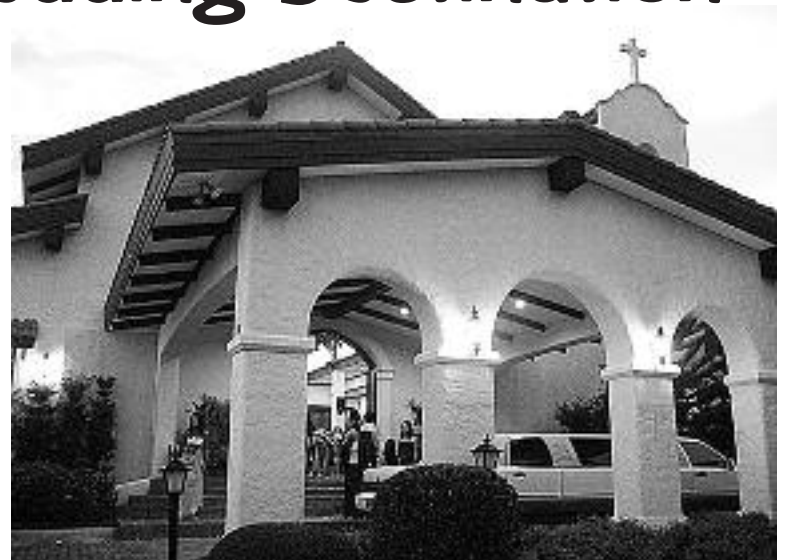
"The breathtaking view of the Taal Lake and Volcano, the majestic mountains where the earth meets the sky on the horizon in a passionate union, the fine, cool weather that brings them in a romantic embrace, the sprawling and rolling greenery that seems to dance in celebrating matrimony, the dazzling

structures and world-class facilities that add cheers to the occasion, the picture-perfect environs that evoke inspiration, and our famous Madre de Dios Wedding Chapel that hosts and blesses the marriage vows, all inside the 1,300-hectare Tagaytay Highlands to make each wedding an experience of a lifetime," said Yasmin Cadungog, director of banquet and sales.

The fully-airconditioned chapel, which can accommodate 200 guests, is a landmark in the Tagaytay Highlands with its trademark white stucco walls, rust-orange terracotta roof tiles and colorful stained

glass windows gleaming from the sun's rays.

But even a week of honeymoon may seem too short for them to enjoy all of Tagaytay Highlands' leisure facilities and amenities such as its two international championship golf courses, an additional nine-hole golf course, mini golf links, driving ranges, tennis courts, swimming pool, fishing pier, equestrian park, pony, hiking and biking trails, paintball camp, tennis courts, and indoor sports center with bowling, billiards, badminton, table tennis, basketball/volleyball and squash courts, lap pool, and Internet gaming.



Madre de Dios Chapel in Tagaytay Highlands

FEATURE (cont.) (from page 11, "BOLD DREAM...")

at the Hawaii Maritime Museum but has been on display at the Philippine Consulate General since 1996.

In 2006, upon the initiative again of the Congress of Visayan Organizations, a project to put up a bronze commemorative plaque at Kewalo Basin was approved and made part of the Filipino centennial celebration. The plaque was installed on May 14, 2006 at the Kewalo Basin Park pavilion. The event was selected as a Filipino centennial event because of its historical significance and

educational value, particularly to the Filipino youth. In that centennial year, it served as a reminder of the unique achievements that members of the Filipino community in Hawaii have accomplished during the past century.

Then, in 2010, the Congress of Visayan Organizations approved a project to produce two books on Florentino Das: a biographical book based on the research of Cecilia Noble, a Ph.D. student in sociology at the University of Hawaii, and a children's book (with an

accompanying curriculum) for elementary grade students to be developed by Dr. Patricia Halagao, a professor of education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. The books are expected to be finished by May of this year.

It is hoped that these events and projects not only celebrate Florentino Das' "bold dream," his "uncommon valor" and his intrepid journey - a feat that is worthy of adulation and emulation - but will also serve as an example of man's ability to succeed against all odds.

## Joseph M. Zobian, M.D.



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## PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE



**ILOKO**  
By Amado I. Yoro

**S**aan nakaskasdaaw no balligi [manen] ti imbunga ti kaudian nga Oahu Filipino Community Council [OFCC] Adopt a Hwy Clean up project committee nga ipanguluan ni Larry Ramirez, a naangay idi Sabado, Enero 21, 2012.

“Maragsakanak ta balligi ti proyekto a nakipartisiparan da: William Cudal, Faye Cudal ken Jesse Pascual iti OFCC ken

dagiti agtutubo manipud iti Farrington High School nga imbagian da Adriana Nichelle Jones ken Monalyn Appara ken Kalakaua Intermediate School nga imbagian da Raizza Pulido-Kalakaua Intermediate School, Regine Ramos, Bryson Lu, Jeffrey Bautista, Michelle Bonilla, Jasmine Santiago ken Michael Tran,” inyemail kaniak ni Larry.

Idi Oktubre 2011 nga inallawat ni Larry daytoy a takem. Saankami a nagkedked idi dawattenna a danggayanmi a kas dati a

# Ni Larry Ramirez Ken Ti OFCC Adopt A Hwy Project 2012

pangulo. Gapu iti komunidad, aramidenmi met latta ti mabal-inmi nga aramiden “to continue our service and commitment as a volunteer in our Mission Day Service” at best we can.

Ni Larry ti maysa kadagiti kaaktibuan ita a director ti OFCC, Isu ti Chairman iti OFCC Special Projects a pakairamanan ti Adopt a Hwy, Hawaii Food Bank, Feeding the Homeless kas partnership project ti UFCH ken dadduma grupo. Toy nagsurat ti dati a pangulo ti UFCH Social Action ken co-chair iti OFCC Special projects nga impanguluan ni Gus Concepcion.

Saan a paudi ni Larry kadagiti volunteer works iti komunidad. Opisial kadagiti nadumaduma nga organisasion. Kameng iti nadumaduma a komite ti OFCC kas iti Membership, Miss Oahu Filipina, Scholarship, Top Ten Outstanding Pilipino Students, kdpay.

Nagpresidente iti Ilocos Norteniens of America [INA]. Isu ti pondador ken agdama a presidente ti Ilocos Norte College of Arts and Trades Alumni Assn of Hawaii.



Taldiap ti adopt a hwy project:

Nagbalinen a regular a proyekto ti OFCC daytoy. Boluntario ti pannakipartisipar. Umay ti mayat a mangted ti tiempoma. Limmasat kadagiti nagsisin-nublatan nga administrasion ti OFCC a no saankami nga agriro idi taraudi ti 70's. Kapigsana la unay idi 90's ken 2002. Adu idi ti kameng ti OFCC. Ngem adda panawen idin a kimmapsut ti suporta ti OFCC, bimmaba ti bilang ti miembro. Nairaman a bimmaba ti partisipasion dagiti unit organizations, bimmassit met ti volunteers itoy a proyekto, banag a dandani inikkat ti Dept of Transportation, Highway Division ti ADOPT A HIGHWAY agsipud ta segun iti Volunteer Coordina-

tor/DOT, adda panawen a pan-nakaliway ti komite kadagidin a tiempo.

Kas pannakitinnulongmi iti proyekto, inkalikagummi a maisubli koma ti karatula a nakaimarkaan ti nagan ti Oahu Filipino Council iti agsipungto ti Kalihi St manipud iti Nimitz Hwy ken iti Kula Kolea Rd, a sanguanan ti Kalihi Elementary School. Dua a milia ti sakupen ti proyekto. Naisubli ken nagaktibo manen ti OFCC idi 2006 aginggana ita.

Saan la nga iti Oahu ti yan ti proyekto nga Adopt a Hwy.

Saan la met a ti OFCC ti adda proyektoma a kastoy. Kas nangrugianmi iti community service and volunteering iti Lions Club International, daytoy idi ti dati a Weeful Project ti State of Hawaii.

Kadagiti napasiarmin a lugar iti Hawaii kas iti Kauai, Maui, Big Island, Molokai, Lanai, umuna a biroken dagiti matami ti karatula nga Adopt a Hwy. Saan a mapaay dagiti matami, banag a patienmi a saan la a dakdakami ti maawagan iti “para pidut ti basura” iti igid ti kalsada, banag pay a kasla pakaibabaan ti dayaw no adda agkuna: trash picker.

Adda pay dagiti dadduma a lugar a napasiarmin pakaibilangan ti Vancouver, Canada, Seattle, Kent, Washington, Virginia, Skagway, Juneau, Kitchikan, Alaska, Washington, DC., San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Rancho, California, Navasota, Texas, plastado ti karatula: Adopt a Hwy a nakabaskag iti igid ti Freeway wenno highways.

Ti OFCC Special Projects committee ti maysa a kaaktibuan a komite ti OFCC, adda pay dagiti tiempo a naawis a nakipartisipar pay ti sumagmamano a lehislador a pakairamanan da

representante Joey Manahan, John Mizuno ken dati a representante Jun Abinsay.

Napadayawan met ti komite iti ititipon ni dati a Miss Hawaii Filipina Margaret Pascual ken nadumaduma a lider ken kameng ti nadumaduma a gunglo

Saan met a nagpaudi ti NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY nga ipanguluan ni Vanessa Pulido iti Farrington High School ken padana nga agtutubo a pakairamanan da Dustin Borromeo, Josh Cabanero, Karl Cubangbang, Jhenna Garvida, Anessa Jones, Brian Lu, Ryan Mandado, Tere Ann Membrere, Von Uisa.

Maangay ti ADOPT A HWY Clean up iti tunggal tallo a bulan.

Pagyamananmi dagiti sumaganad: Art Abinsay, Eddie Agas, Sr., Philip Alcain, Franklin Borromeo, Cleo Bala Casino, Franco Casino, Gus Concepcion, Louie Funtanilla, Ruben Gutierrez, Johnny Idica, Antonio Ipalari, Mario Palma, Jesse Pascual, Jessie Ponce, Ador Quijano, Larry Ramirez, John Ramos, Al Sabangan, Larry Ramirez, John Ramos, Danny Villaruz, dadduma pay.

ALOHA A'INA EARTH Day da, Jean Jeremiah, Gil Penaranda, Fe Velasco, Mario Palma, Eddie Agas, Ben Cabrerros, Jesse Pascual, Philip Alcain, Lynne Gutierrez, Connie Ramirez, Larry Ramirez, Katharina C. Velasco

Itoy a tawen, kinuna ni Larry nga agpartner ti Special Projects ken Youth Task Force committee nga ipanguluan ni Fe Velasco, umuna a bise presidente ti OFCC tapno agtinnulong a mangidalan ken mangisagana ti naun-unege a kaipapanan ti leadership development ken ti panagbalin dagiti agtutubo a lider iti masakbayan.



(Top) Youth Group volunteers  
(Left) Miss Hawaii Filipina Margaret Pascual [in white cap], Eddie Agas, Sr., and Margaret's parents Dino and Maria Lucy Pascual from Laoag City

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**4TH CORONATION OF MRS. ANAK TI BADO** ITI HAWAII AND VALENTINE'S DINNER / SATURDAY

February 4, 2012, 6pm • Pacific Beach Hotel • For more info, contact Marilyn @ 678-1482

**10TH ANNIVERSARY OF SURONG VALLEY ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL, ALA MOANA HOTEL / SATURDAY**

February 11, 2012, 6pm • Ala Moana Hotel • For more details, contact Felix Agraan @748-5742

**58TH ANNIVERSARY OF HAWAII FILIPINO WOMEN'S CLUB & 38TH ANNUAL TERNO BALL / SATURDAY**

March 3, 2012, 6pm • Ala Moana Hotel • Contact: Carmen Cabrerros @ 358-3845 or Jenny Quezon @ 840-0987

## GLOBAL NEWS

# World Markets Rise as Investors Watch Europe

BEIJING (AP) — World markets rose Tuesday as traders watched for a possible deal to cut Greece's debts and Japanese factory output rebounded.

Benchmark oil rose above \$99 per barrel while the dollar fell against the euro and was unchanged against the yen.

Tokyo's Nikkei 225 rose 0.1 percent to 8,802.51 after data showed December industrial activity rose 4 percent over the previous month. Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 1.1 percent to 20,383.3 and Seoul's Kospi was up 0.8 percent at 1,955.79.

In Europe, France's CAC-40 added 0.8 percent to 3,292.38, rebounding from a 1.6 percent loss Monday. Germany's DAX gained 0.5 percent to 6,473.96, reversing a 1 percent decline a day earlier. Britain's FTSE 100 rose 0.6 percent to 5,703.94.

Wall Street was also set to open higher, with Dow Jones industrial futures rising 0.4 percent at 12,649 and S&P 500 futures 0.4 percent higher at 1,313.80.

Traders watched Europe following reports Greece and its creditors were close to a deal to cut its debts. Also

Monday, European leaders agreed on a new treaty meant to stop overspending and put an end to the region's crippling debt woes.

"Everyone is watching the European summit and how the Greek debt crisis comes out," said Jackson Wong at Tanrich Securities in Hong Kong. "The general atmosphere is to play a wait-and-see game."

China's benchmark Shanghai Composite Index was up 0.3 percent at 2,292.61 ahead of Wednesday's release of a key manufacturing index. Investors are hoping for a loosening of credit curbs if it shows activity is slowing amid lackluster global demand.

India's Sensex gained 1.5 percent to 17,109.30 while Australia's S&P/ASX 200 fell 0.2 percent to 4,262.70. Benchmarks in Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia and India rose while Singapore and New Zealand fell.

European markets tumbled Monday on concerns Greece's financial problems might not be solved even if creditors agree to cancel part of its debt.

Under a tentative agreement, investors holding 206 billion euros (\$272 billion) in Greek bonds would exchange them for bonds with half the face value. The replacement bonds

would have a longer maturity and pay a lower interest rate. When the bonds mature, Greece would have to pay its bondholders only 103 billion euros.

Wall Street fell in early trading but Asian investors were encouraged after the Dow Jones industrial average recovered most of its losses to close down just 0.1 percent. The Standard & Poor's 500 lost 0.8 percent.

Borrowing costs for the most indebted European countries shot higher. The two-year interest rate for Portugal's government debt jumped to 21 percent after trading around 14 percent last week.

Portugal may become the next country "where default is a real possibility," said Martin Hennecke of Tyche Group in Hong Kong.

The treaty agreed to Monday by all European Union governments except Britain and the Czech Republic includes strict debt brakes and is aimed at making it harder for violators to escape sanctions. The 17 countries in the eurozone hope the tighter rules will restore confidence in their joint currency.

In currencies, the euro rose to \$1.3207 from \$1.3114 late Monday in New York. The dollar held steady at 76.25 yen. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

## MAINLAND NEWS

# Obama Wants Small Business Tax, Investment Breaks

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration wants Congress to enact or expand tax breaks for small businesses and remove barriers to business startups. The legislation seizes on existing bipartisan proposals that could win support even in an election year.

President Barack Obama plans to send the legislation to Congress on Tuesday. The package includes measures to make permanent a zero capital gains tax rate for investments in small businesses. It also would extend for a year the ability of businesses to deduct immediately all the costs of equipment

and software purchases.

Obama also is proposing a new 10 percent tax credit for small businesses that add jobs or increase wages in 2012. In addition, the legislation would make it easier for new startup companies to raise money and go public. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

# Internships Available with U.S. State Dept

The U.S. Department of State is accepting applications for its Fall 2012 Student Internship Program.

Internship and fellowship opportunities are available for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as for working professionals. Officials with the U.S. Department of State are looking for diverse, culturally-aware, adaptable, well-rounded and

strategic problem-solvers who are committed to experiencing a public service opportunity.

To be eligible for this program, applicants must:

- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be a full- or part-time continuing college or university junior, or graduate student (including graduating seniors intending to go on to graduate school).

- Have good academic standing
- Successfully complete a background investigation
- Receive either a Secret or Top Secret clearance

Please go online and visit: <http://careers.state.gov/students/programs> for more about the Student Internship Program and to start the application process. The deadline to submit completed applications is

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Applicants are encouraged to also visit the Student Programs forum at <http://careers.state.gov/engage/forums/student-programs> to post questions or read discussions about the program.

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