



# Casualty of Conflict

**O**ne of the biggest casualties of armed conflict in Mindanao is the education of thousands of children. Yesterday education in Sulu suffered another blow with the discovery of the decapitated remains of a school principal. Gabriel Canizares, 36, was kidnapped in Patikul three weeks ago by suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf. His severed head was found in a bag that was left at a gas station in Jolo.

Six teachers kidnapped earlier this year by the Abu Sayyaf had been freed. But the kidnappings were enough to scare away teachers from the conflict areas of Mindanao – the very places where there is an urgent need for education. Canizares is not the first educator to be decapitated by Abu Sayyaf kidnappers. The bandits like to attack schools and seize teachers, using them as human shields or holding them for ransom. Teachers have been kidnapped near their homes, and while traveling in buses or boats. Scores have been murdered in the past years.

The public school system already suffers from an acute lack of teachers. That lack is most felt in Sulu and the other conflict areas of Mindanao, where teachers constantly fear for their safety. State forces can secure schools, but they can't guard every teacher around the clock. The government must devise ways of protecting teachers and ensuring that children in Mindanao receive formal education without disruptions. Some pupils may need counseling; the news of a teacher being beheaded can be traumatic to students.

Soldiers particularly in Sulu have been performing various functions that should be carried out by the civilian government, but education needs special expertise. Soldiers can provide only limited protection to teachers. Local governments and community leaders can help boost that protection. But the best guarantee of protection for the teachers of Mindanao is the neutralization of the Abu Sayyaf. Thousands of children in Mindanao face an uncertain future because their education has been repeatedly disrupted by armed conflict.

"We shall make them pay for the enormity of this savagery," a Malacañang official said yesterday following news of Canizares' beheading. Such fighting words have been issued for many years. The government must start backing those words with decisive action. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■



# 'Apocalyptic Corruption'

**F**rom 2001 to 2009, the government collected a total of P60.5 billion, paid by motorists as road users' tax in the registration of vehicles. Under the law that created the tax, the money, administered by the Road Board, is supposed to be used exclusively for road maintenance and improvement of road drainage, the installation of traffic lights and road safety devices, and for air pollution control.

As the colossal flooding during storm "Ondoy" and typhoon "Pepeng" showed, the improvement of road drainage has been a joke. And driving around Metro Manila will quickly illustrate the lackadaisical enforcement of laws regulating vehicular emissions.

How was the P60.5 billion spent? The Commission on Audit reported that P332.64 million of the road tax, earmarked for the OYSTER or Out-of-School Youth Serving Towards Economic Recovery program, was transferred to the Philippine National Police. Why? Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago wants to know, and so does the public.

Santiago, who spearheaded a Senate probe into the use of the road tax,

noted that the PNP is under the Department of the Interior and Local Government, whose head Ronaldo Puno happens to be the brother of former Road Board executive director Rodolfo Puno. Santiago also noted that in 2007, an election year, there was an "unusually large amount of allotments obligated" involving the road tax. She said the case involved "apocalyptic corruption."

The apparent fund juggling could have been facilitated by the fact that the tax is not remitted by the collecting agency, the Land Transportation Office, to the National Treasury but deposited in special accounts under the supervision of the Road Board, whose ex officio chair is the secretary of public works and highways. On Monday night the Senate unanimously approved the filing of plunder and graft cases against Rodolfo Puno, Danilo Valero of the board and Hermogenes Ebda Jr., who recently resigned from the public works department.

Beyond pursuing the prosecution of anyone who might have misused the multibillion-peso fund, lawmakers should also consider changing the system of handling the tax, in a way that would promote transparency and prevent its misuse. Such oversight mechanisms are needed as the tax continues to be collected and the temptation to misuse the funds increases as the 2010 elections approach. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■



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# LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION

## Furlough Fridays and Public Education



by Senator Will  
ESPERO

**B**y now, all of us have likely heard or read something about the Furlough Fridays and its impact on our state. Our public schools have received the most attention in the media due to the 17 days of lost classroom instruction. Our public school instructional time will fall from 180 classroom days to 163 days. This drop embarrassingly places Hawaii as the worst state in the nation in terms of teaching or learning days. We have garnered national and international news because of the decisions and agreements made. As a comparison, Japan teaches 243 days a year and Korea 220 days. Our 163 days are a huge error in my opinion.

Most comments I have heard are critical of the reduction. Parents throughout our state have expressed anger and disbelief at the lack of commitment to our education system. Even the Secretary of Education under President

Obama has offered his stinging remarks about this sad situation. Many of my colleagues in the Legislature are also dissatisfied with the current dilemma we face, and feel it is wrong to balance our state budget on the backs of our students' education.

Instead of waiting until next January 2010 to look at the present state of education, some of my colleagues had met and decided to initiate action. No one except parents and advocates had been pushing government to act, so a petition was created, and I was able to get 15 state senators to sign asking for a special session to address the Friday Furloughs in our schools. We also went as far as to seriously consider the Hurricane Relief Fund or other funding sources to reduce the 17 days of furloughs. Certain House members also felt the same and have begun their own petition. As of this writing, 19 had signed the House petition.

We realize it will not be easy to call for a special session. Our plan is to have all stakeholders support a plan to make this current school year whole. The Governor, unions, BOE, DOE, and Legislature must all agree to a temporary solution. Then it would be imperative upon the Legislature and Governor to develop a



Parents, teachers, and educators rallied at the Capitol to protest State-implemented furlough days on the first "Furlough Friday" for schools on October 23.  
Photo by Travis Quezon

plan next session to deal with the total state budget and the coming years. If one party does not agree with a plan, the idea to salvage the current school year will fail.

Timing is paramount in this process. I believe we have a small window of opportunity to address this issue before the end of the year. If we do not, the 17 days will become reality, and we will carry the label as the state with the lowest teaching days in the nation. Our children's education and future are on the line, and stakeholders must work together for the sake of our kids.

Some have stated we must be fair to everyone and wait until next session to address the problem at the statewide level. They comment that some unions are still negotiating with the Governor so there is uncertainty in the budget. They also feel the budgetary situation may get worse be-

fore it gets better. I counter that reducing school days to 163 is a terrible option and unacceptable. If we really value education, we will collaborate and create a plan to save our public schools. Some have stated the governor and unions should reopen their negotiations. If that can happen that would be great, however, other options should be considered lacking that outcome.

Several ideas are being circulated, and I know it is possible to keep our keiki in school if we have the will and resolve to do so. One involves borrowing \$50 million from the Hurricane Relief Fund with payback language and the other uses federal stimulus funds and HRF. A third option could include temporary holiday givebacks.

Simultaneously, we are looking at the next budget cycle next session and the alternatives which will face us. We will likely have to

find new revenue sources or make more cuts in government services and programs or a combination of both. New revenue sources does not automatically mean new or higher taxes, however, I have received many e-mails from people willing to pay more taxes if they went to education. Everything will be on the table next session to deal with the budget crisis we are in. Some estimates are we will have over a billion dollar shortfall for next session.

Many experts say the recession has bottomed out but the recovery will be slow. As government leaders we understand this and will do what we can to maintain a high quality of life for our residents. The ideal outcome for me is that we are able to save the current school year and have at least 170 – 175 instructional days this year. Then we approach next session with a resolve to be fair to our citizens when detailing solutions but maintain an educational standard which we can accept and be proud of.

Now is the time for leadership. Now is the time to place education on that pedestal where it belongs. We do not need words and rhetoric; we need action. If we cannot stop the Furlough Fridays in our schools, it is our children who will suffer the most. ■

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**REAL ESTATE****Condotels in the Philippines, the Best Option for Condo Ownership**

**C**ondo hotels or what is termed as Condotels is the newest trend and most practical vacation home ownership now in the Philippines. Buyers can own a luxury vacation condo at a world-class leisure estate and receive rent revenue whenever they are not using it.

Condo hotel unit owners have the option of putting their condo hotel unit into the hotel's rental program. This is what makes condo hotels so attractive. A professional management company takes care of renting out the units when they are not in use by the owner. The rental revenue, which is shared with the operator, helps defray the condo owner's expenses such as condo fees and utilities. But of

course, the unit owner still has a maximum of 6 months per year to stay in his condo unit whenever he wants and then earn rentals for the rest of the 6 months by entering into the condotel pooling program. Typically, a regular Balikbayan stays at least for a month or two in the Philippines, thus, if a unit owner consumes only 2 months' stay in his unit, he can earn 10 months rental pooling revenues for the year. The gross income of the unit is computed by getting the condotel gross room revenues, deduct the total cost of operation, financial charges (if any), and taxes to get the net revenue which is the divided by the total square meters of the units in the condotel pool.

Ownership is 100 percent

hassle-free as all maintenance and rental issues are handled by a professional, in-house management and hospitality company.

By capitalizing on the condotel's name recognition, advertising, national affiliations, organized and centralized reservation system and management expertise, condo hotel unit owners typically receive a higher level of rental income than they would from a traditional vacation condohome.

Investment wise, such condo units even appreciate in value over time and can be readily resold because of their prime locations, limited inventory and upscale quality. Unlike a timeshare which can be difficult to resell, even if the seller is willing to take a



loss. And considering the recent economic downturn of real estate in North America, it is best to re-think investment options by considering Philippine condotel investments.

Joel Santos, the Marketing Director for North America of Landenmore Properties and Major Properties from the Philippines will

be sharing more insights on this new trend of Philippine real estate investment for free on November 21, Saturday at Max's of Manila in Waipahu from 5:30 pm to 9:30 pm and on November 22, Sunday from 11:30 am to 5 pm. For reservations, interested parties may call: Shali at (808) 678-8930 or (808) 284-4185. ■

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### Fiction Writer to Hold Book Signing at Punahoa

**FICTION WRITER MICHELLE CRUZ SKINNER** will hold a book reading and signing on November 17, 2009 at 6:30 pm at Punahoa School's Luke Lecture Hall.

Skinner's third book "In the Company of Strangers" is being published by Bamboo Ridge Press and is a follow-up to two earlier books that have won awards. "Balikbayan" was selected for the PEN Syndicated Fiction Project, while "Mango Seasons" was nominated for the 1998 Philippine National Book Award.

Born in Manila and raised primarily in Olongapo City in the Philippines, Skinner currently

lives in Hawaii with her husband and two children and teaches at Punahoa School. Her work has been adapted for stage and public radio. She has read extensively at universities and conferences both in the Philippines and the mainland.

The cover for "In the Company of Strangers" was designed by Dindo Llana, a multi-awarded painter and children's book illustrator who lives in Quezon City. Earlier this year, Llana was awarded a 7-month art research grant to the U.S. by the Philippine National Commission for Culture and the Arts. His politically-inspired paint-



ings and solo exhibits have been shown in various museums and venues in the Philippines, among them "Gloria's Sari-Sari Store" at the Conspiracy Gallery and "Im-

pakto" at the Ayala Museum in Manila. His art has also been exhibited in San Francisco, Hong Kong, Spain and Australia.

Skinner will hold a second reading and book signing on December 8, 2009 at the University of Hawaii-Manoa art auditorium beginning at 7 pm. Both events are free and open to the public. ■

## BBB Warns of Swine Flu Scams

**HAWAII'S BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU (BBB)** warns consumers to be skeptical of web sites and e-mails promoting swine flu prevention products. Officials say consumers may be putting their health at risk by taking medicine purchased from sites that don't require a prescription for prescription-only drugs.

"It's not surprising that news coverage regarding the delay in delivery and current low inventory of H1N1 vaccine has inspired scammers to take advantage of the public's anxiety," says Dwight Kealoha, BBB's chief executive officer. "They waste people's money but, more importantly, they might keep them from getting medically sound treatment."

Federal agencies have come across contaminated, counterfeit and counterproductive pharmaceutical products, including Tam-

flu, a prescription drug used to treat H1N1 patients. What was sold as the generic version of Tamiflu actually contained Vitamin C and other substances that cannot treat nor prevent the H1N1 virus.

The proliferation of supposed flu-prevention and flu-remedy products online led the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) to create a "Fraudulent Products List" on its website. In some cases, the product might be legitimate—such as an air purifier—but the FDA questions the marketing language and promised health benefits used to sell the product.

Other products listed include lotions and gels, gloves and masks, herbal extracts, sprays, body washes, inhalers, flu kits, supplements, tea and even a shampoo.

Hawaii's BBB offers some tips

to help protect you from swine flu scams:

- Be wary of promotions using words such as "scientific breakthrough," "miracle cure," "secret ingredient" or "ancient remedy."
- Avoid websites that don't list the company's name, physical address, phone number or other contact information.
- Don't fall for personal testimonials or claims that a product is a quick, effective way to can treat or cure an illness.
- Follow health advice only from a trusted source and don't believe any product's claims to prevent or cure swine flu.

For more tips and resources to avoid swine flu scams, go to hawaii.bbb.org. ■

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# BUSINESS

## Philippine Economy: Quo Vadis?

by Raul Nicolas S.  
TOMAS

**M**ANILA, Philippines - In Siargao, an island off Mindanao, the ride from Sayak Airport to the town of Gen. Luna takes about one hour over 30 kilometers of paved and rough roads that skirt around mountains, grazing land and mangroves. Despite the island's relative remoteness, Alex, the driver I commissioned on my recent visit there, was knowledgeable enough to explain to me and my companions how tourist arrivals to the island have slowed down because of the global financial crisis and the A(H1N1) virus — tourism has become the main source of income for the local population. Clearly, the issues that are worrying leaders of economic powerhouses are also on the minds of regular folks in the remotest places. And yet, due to the very nature of forecasts and projections, experts, and people like Alex, cannot agree on what the future holds for the Philippines.

A couple of realizations can be gleaned from our driver's comments. First, that this is indeed the information age, where no one has an excuse not to know what is going on around the world. Second, that the world economy has become so integrated that even a flu strain that first became evident in Mexico can eventually affect the livelihood of people in Siargao.

Compared to its neighbors, however, the Philippines may be one of the least affected by developments in the economies of the developed countries. It has actually been a place of relative peace and calm economically ever since the Asian financial crisis in the late

90's. Our economy hasn't stumbled as badly as our other Asian neighbors, but in the same token we also haven't grown as fast as these countries during boom times.

In the current global financial crisis, for example, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand have been hardest hit in the ASEAN region, with negative growth rates in the first half of 2009. On the other hand, the Philippines is one of three countries (aside from Indonesia and Vietnam) that registered positive year-on-year quarterly real growth rates in gross domestic product (GDP) among the major ASEAN economies (or the so-called ASEAN-6). True to form, however, the Philippines' growth rates are generally not as high as the other two countries (see chart). The obvious question begging to be asked is: What's so different about the Philippines and what role will such differences play (if at all) in the country's recovery from the current economic crisis?

The answer to the first part of the question is actually relatively easy since the Philippines is indeed quite different economically from the ASEAN-6. Except for Indonesia, the Philippines has the lowest ratio of exports and total international trade to national income among the ASEAN-6 — 29.4 percent and 63.4 percent, respectively, in 2008. The country has also consistently attracted the lowest level and growth rate of foreign direct investments. Taken together, these characteristics make the Philippines the least integrated to the world economy among the ASEAN-6. Thus, when the economies of the developed countries began to stall and contract, the impact on the Philip-

pines was not as severe.

This is not to say that the country is completely unaffected. On the contrary, there is another conduit through which the impact of the world economy is more directly transmitted to the Philippines: remittances from overseas Filipinos (OFWs).

In 2008, remittances from OFWs reached \$18.6 billion; that's the fourth largest in the world. This is believed to be understated (by much, some analysts say) as it is limited to money that flowed through the financial system.

At a recent talk given to the executives of Punongbayan & Araullo, Dr. Bernardo Villegas of the University of Asia and the Pacific said that the IMF came up with an estimate of how much global remittances will decline in 2009 and then distributed the decline equally among the countries. Such methodology, he said, does not

account for the preference of the receiving countries for Filipino workers, which Dr. Villegas himself witnessed.

During a trip to Spain, Dr. Villegas noticed that most of the workers at the restaurant he was dining at were Filipinos. When he asked the owner about this, the restaurateur gamely answered that his patrons like Pinoy because, unlike other workers, they make it a point to bathe everyday. Through personal experience, another possible reason could be a substitution effect, whereby Filipinos abroad send more remittances during times of crises, thinking their families need the extra help. This can help combat the possible effects of the global recession. Whatever the reason, it is apparent that OFW remittances continue to prop up the economy despite its predicted weakening.

Does this mean then that the

Philippines has this elixir that can guarantee continued economic growth? Well, maybe not an elixir, but as long as OFWs continue to channel large chunks of their earnings to their families here, remittances will remain one of the, if not the, primary driver of the economy. Let's not forget, however, that a weakening in OFW remittances in the future could also spell big trouble for the economy.

In this way, it can be said that the Philippines is in the same boat as its neighbors in that our economy is also captive to forces outside the country. The only difference is that we are dependent on remittances while our neighbors are dependent on trade. Thus, even though the Philippines is finding ways to power through this global recession, the country cannot escape the fact that like its neighbors, it is highly dependent on a handful of rich nations. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

(The author is a director with Punongbayan & Araullo's Specialist Advisory Services division.)

## ■ FOOD & LEISURE I Eat, I Educate

by Lai S. REYES

**M**ANILA, Philippines - Believing that food brings out the best in everyone, eight restaurants in Serendra and Bonifacio High Street have banded together to make a difference in the lives of street children.

Virianie Foundation, Inc., a private non-sectarian child-caring institution in Manila, has partnered with Arama, Cav, Chelesa, Cupcakes by Sonja, Fu, Healthy Kitchen, Sentro 1771 and Xocolatl for a new campaign to highlight education for those who need it the most — street children.

Dubbed "I to Educate," this awareness campaign aims to promote and support education for disadvantaged children.

Dine at any of the eight participating restaurants until Dec. 31 and help send a street kid to school. Each restaurant has identified a special item on its menu that bears a Virianie sticker. For example, when you order the fried chicken cutlets at Sentro 1771, a portion of the amount you pay for the dish will be donated to Virianie.

"The restaurants have also allowed us to put this mini-stand on their tables. The standee contains information about the campaign. Patrons of the restaurants can get a pledge form from any of the participating restaurants in case they want to donate to us directly," explains Celine Santillan, executive director of Virianie Foundation, Inc.

Virianie and its campaign partners are hopeful that their concern for education extends beyond mealtime.

"Eating is one of our favorite

pastimes. I'm sure foodies will agree that this campaign is both a fun and fulfilling way to reach out to the less fortunate. Imagine, not only do you get to eat in a fine dining restaurant, you also get to help a child in the process," adds Celine.

### DIFFERENT WAYS TO EDUCATE

As Children's Month (October) drew to a close, Virianie Foundation, Inc. was reminded of the importance of education in the lives of Filipino children.

For years now, the foundation has been keen on providing street kids with free education.

"We educate some 800 street children. We normally send them to public schools, while some attend the Magellan Learning Center," added Celine. "We also have a mobile school, which is stationed in Paco and Divisoria. We now have 441 students currently enrolled in public schools."

The Magellan Learning Center prepares street kids for formal school. It is one of the education programs of the foundation that conducts a yearly assessment of all the children in Virianie's residential homes. The center caters to children from three to 22 years of age — from nursery, pre-school, elementary and high school to college (special cases).

"It is a support program that aims to complement the formal education that the beneficiaries of Virianie receive from public school. With three full-time teachers and one coordinator, MLC has served 200 beneficiaries from the 12 residential homes as well as the children in outreach communities,"

notes Celine.

Virianie also provides special education for differently-abled children. The classes are facilitated by SPED (Special Education) teachers at the foundation's Jade and Aimee homes. Some children attend SPED schools outside Virianie.

An average of 150 street children in Paco and Divisoria benefit from Virianie's Mobile Education Unit. The foundation also has home/school collaboration for children who aren't ready for big schools yet. So far, they have a total of 52 children who are tutored in the homes and prepared for integration into public school.

Virianie not only provides free education but also cares for street children who are abandoned, abused, involved in forced labor, and are found living in the streets.

"Today, we don't just help street children, but their entire families as well. Our Open Day Center in Quiapo provides them with a temporary shelter during the day. Here, they can cook their meals and eat together as a family," Celine says. They can also take a bath and use the toilet facilities.

For only P800 a month, you can support the educational needs of an elementary student, pay for his uniform, shoes, school supplies, transportation, meals and special projects.

"The amount varies for high school and college. We hope that after or midway through the campaign we will be able to hear more and more people say, 'I ate to educate. Shouldn't you?'" adds Celine. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

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## LEGAL MATTERS



**by Atty. Emmanuel Samonte TIPON**

**O**bamacare - that is the pet name for the health care reform bill - railroaded by the U.S. House of Representatives by a margin of 5 votes (220 to 215), although it's "dead on arrival" in the Senate, said a leading Senator.

I consulted a medicine man on what he thought of Obamacare.

"Bad medicine," he said.

Here are 7 deadly reasons why:

**1. USE OF FORCE.** Under Obamacare, America will no longer be the home of the free. Obamacare uses force to compel Americans to buy health care insurance. It will be illegal for people not to have health insurance. If you have no insurance, you will pay a penalty including possible jail time. How cruel can these Obamacareans be?

**2. GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF HEALTH CARE.** Obamacare is socialized medicine. We will become the United Socialist States of America. Obamacareans want to bankrupt health care providers by offering very low rates so that the government will have a monopoly. Then they will raise the rates. You

will be calling an 800 number to make appointments with a government selected doctor. If you make misrepresentations about your health status, it could be a federal offense -- lying to government officials to obtain benefits, like lying to officials to obtain immigration benefits.

**3. FBI COULD LOOK AT YOUR MEDICAL RECORD.** If the government is running health care, your medical record is a government record. The FBI and other government agencies will be able to look at it. It will be accessible via the internet just like criminal records. You will have no more privacy.

**4. PUNISHES SENIORS.** Obamacare cuts about \$500 million from Medicare spending for seniors. Obamacareans obviously hate senior citizens. They think they are useless.

Their excuse is that there is a lot of waste in Medicare. But Medicare is run by the government. What will happen if the entire health care system is run by the government? Total waste.

**5. ALI BABA AND THE 40 THIEVES.** Ali Baba robbed the rich to help the poor. Or was it Robin Hood. To pay for subsidies for the poor, Obamacare imposes a surcharge of 5.4 percent on people with adjusted gross income of more than \$500,000 for individuals



and \$1 million for joint filers.

Why punish these people. What have they done to deserve such cruel punishment? If they earned their money by unlawful means, they should not only be taxed, they should be jailed. But if they earned their money the old fashioned way -- by honestly working for it, it's unjust to punish them.

**6. BARS ABORTION COVERAGE.** The liberal pro-abortionists are hopping mad because Obamacare will not cover the costs of abortion. This was a concession to certain conservatives so they could get the 5 votes to pass Obamacare.

Women needing an abortion -- like victims of rape and incest or those whose lives are endangered by their pregnancy -- will have to pay for the cost of the operation because the

government will not cover it.

But those sneaky members of congress must have whispered to the liberals. Don't worry, we will include coverage later by tagging it to a bill that will surely be approved -- like the Department of Defense appropriation bill.

**7. ILLEGAL ALIENS WILL BE COVERED.** Obamacare does not contain a provision specifically prohibiting coverage for illegal aliens. Stop calling illegal aliens "undocumented aliens". Every alien is documented, otherwise how could they work and travel by plane. But their documents are mostly fake. These illegal aliens will get a subsidy paid for by our taxes in order to pay for their health insurance premiums. What an irony that a legal beneficiary of an immi-

grant visa petition will not be able to get a subsidized health care premium because their petitioner's affidavit of support guarantees that they will not become a "public charge". Getting a government subsidy makes them a public charge. The petitioners will pay from their own pocket the health care benefit for their legal beneficiaries while illegal aliens will be enjoying subsidized health care paid for by us.

I saw Obama in person at the Kahala (Hawaii's Manila Hotel). Obama might be a nice guy to have beer with at a Waikiki bar. But, excuse me, I have no taste for Obamacare. ■

(ATTY. TIPON is from Laog City, Philippines. He holds a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from U.P. He is admitted to practice law before the U.S. Supreme Court, other U.S. Courts, and Philippine courts. He handles cases throughout the U.S. and the Philippines. He specializes in immigration law and criminal defense. Tel: 905 Uni. St., Suite 201, Honolulu, HI 96819. Tel: (808) 734-1601. E-mail: [email protected] filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: [www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com](http://www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com). Listen to his very interesting, useful, and humorous program "Immigration X Files" on KNDI Hawaii radio 1270 AM on the dial every Friday 7:30-8:00 a.m. This article is for general information only. It is not legal advice. It may not be cited as an authority.)



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NOVEMBER 14, 2009

# ■ HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## Save the Date For 2010 Filipino Fiesta

ORGANIZERS OF THE ANNUAL FILIPIÑO FIESTA are encouraging Filipinos to mark their calendars for the 2010 edition of the foremost and largest event for Hawaii's Filipino community. The event is scheduled for Saturday, May 8, 2010 at Kapiolani Park.

The theme for this year's event is "Lahbay Kultura" which will take you on a journey of the various Philippine cultures. The day-long event will start with a parade down Kalakaua Avenue, with several floats depicting Philippine culture. The 2010 parade will include the Flores De Mayo, a popular Filipino tradition held annually

during the month of May.

The Fiesta will showcase various aspects of Filipino culture, with a regional cultural village, a Keiki Village, food booths and an all-day-long entertainment program featuring local and Philippine-based artists. Various business and sponsor booths will allow local entrepreneurs to showcase their products to the thousands of people who attend this annual event.

For more information and reservations (parade, booth and food vendors), please contact the Fil-Com Center at 680-0451. ■

## Census Officials Urge Hawaii Residents to be Counted in 2010

**IN A MEDIA BRIEFING AND UPDATE HELD OCTOBER 28, 2009,** U.S. Census officials sent an early reminder to the public of the significance of the 2010 Census.

Census questionnaires will be mailed or delivered to Hawaii households beginning in March 2010. From May 2010 - July 2010, census takers will visit households that did not return questionnaires by mail.

To achieve an accurate assessment of the number and location of the people living in the U.S., the Constitution mandates a census of the population every 10 years. The census totals determine which states gain or lose representation in Congress. Census data will also determine how more than \$4 trillion is allocated to local, state and tribal governments over the next 10 years.

It is estimated that Hawaii receives \$1,200 per person in federal funds. In order for funding allocation to be accomplished fairly and accurately, the goal of the census is to count everybody, count them only once and count them in the right place. The facts gathered in the census also help shape decisions for the rest of the decade about public health, neighborhood improvements, transportation, education, senior services and much more.

In the 2000 Census, Hawaii had one of the lowest response rates in the nation. Be-

cause of the importance of an accurate count, the Census Bureau is making an extra effort to ensure that every person in Hawaii is counted. Local officials, media outlets and private industries are all participating to help in this effort.

The Census Bureau will not ask the legal status of respondents in any of its surveys and census programs. The Census will ask a person's name, gender, age, race, ethnicity, relationship and whether you own or rent your home.

Responses to the 2010 Census questionnaire are required by law, are used for statistical purposes only and are strictly confidential. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share individually identifiable or a household's questionnaire responses with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities. The law applies to the White House, U.S. Supreme Court, Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, police, military and welfare agencies.

To help ensure that the nation's increasingly diverse population can answer the questionnaire accurately and completely, questionnaires will be printed in 59 languages.

For more information on the 2010 Census, please visit [www.census.gov/2010](http://www.census.gov/2010). ■

# ■ PHILIPPINE NEWS

## RP Unlikely to Get Additional Fund from US Because of Corruption Index

by Paolo ROMERO /  
Tuesday, November 11, 2009

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) - THE PHILIPPINES IS NOT LIKELY TO GET AN ADDITIONAL 500-MILLION-US-DOLLAR poverty reduction funding from a United States government aid agency after it failed anew in Washington's latest corruption

index.



Washington-based Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), which initially granted \$21 million to the Philippines under the agency's threshold program in 2007 to fund anti-corruption projects, made the announcement on Tuesday ahead of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to (continued on page 15)

# Senate Panel Tags GMA, First Gentleman in ZTE Case

by Aureo CAUCA /  
Tuesday, November 11, 2009

**MANILA, Philippines - THE SENATE BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE** has recommended the filing of graft charges against First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo and other personalities involved in the anomalous \$329-million national broadband network (NBN) contract with China's ZTE Corp.

In the same report, the committee recommended the further investigation of President Arroyo for her role in the approval of the controversial contract.

The committee, led by Sen. Richard Gordon, also sought the filing of charges against businessman Jose "Joey" de Venecia III and former government consultant Rodolfo Lozada Jr., the two whistleblowers of the case.

The committee also recommended the filing of graft charges against former socio-economic planning secretary Romulo Neri, former elections chief Benjamin Abalos and Transportation and Communications Secretary Leandro Mendoza, as well as Assistant Secretaries Elmer Soneja and Lorenzo Formoso.

Gordon said the committee also found substantial evidence to warrant the filing of charges against Deputy Executive Secretary Manuel Gaita and Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Lito Atienza for their alleged attempt to prevent Lozada from testifying at the Senate.

Gordon said Gaita and Atienza could be charged with violation of Article 150 of the Revised Penal Code.

The First Gentleman, through his lawyer Ruy Rondain, said they have yet to receive a copy of the Senate report.

"I haven't seen the report but I would like to point out that there was a case filed by several individuals several months ago before the Office of the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman a few months ago came out with a resolution saying there is no evidence linking the First Gentleman (to the case)," Rondain told the STAR.

Rondain said the Ombudsman, after reviewing evidence including the entire Senate transcript of the hearings, "found no evidence versus Atty. Arroyo beyond speculations and conjectures."

Rondain brushed aside the legal implications of the Senate report against Mr. Arroyo, saying it was only recommendatory.

Rondain declared there is "no remedy" for any party to file a suit against Mr. Arroyo following the Senate report, since only the Ombudsman is authorized to handle such cases.

"We will let the process take its course," he said.

Rondain said the complainants must allow the Ombuds-

man to wrap up its investigations before resorting to any other legal remedy.

While he is not the lawyer of President Arroyo, Rondain expressed the same opinion that there is no evidence that could pin her down.

The President's lawyer, Romulo Macalintal, could not be reached for comment.

The Blue Ribbon has yet to release the full 127-page committee report signed by Gordon, with Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Senators Joker Arroyo and Edgardo Angara as principal sponsors.

Out of the 17 members of the committee, nine senators have yet to sign the report in order to approve the committee report.

The on-and-off investigation began in September 2007 and was concluded last September after 13 days of grueling hearings, four technical working groups and 41 witnesses.

#### 'LOTS TO ANSWER FOR'

The committee report said the Office of the Ombudsman should take the initiative of investigating the President over her role in the ZTE deal.

"The President has lots to answer for. The (Office of the Ombudsman) is wrong in merely dismissing the case against the President on the mere pretext of presidential immunity from suit. The Ombudsman must make a finding and forward it to the House of Representatives," the report said.

The committee noted Mrs. Arroyo enjoys immunity from suit and can only be charged after her term ends on June 30, 2010.

Nonetheless, the committee said the Ombudsman has the constitutional duty to investigate impeachable officers, including the President.

"What the (Ombudsman) should have done was to investigate and make findings to transmit to the House, if an impeachment would have been warranted, rather than a blanket statement of exculpation because of supposed immunity," the report read.

Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said President Arroyo did what she had to do after the anomaly came out in the open.

"It is not true that the President did not act on the report of (Neri) that there was an attempt to bribe him. The President ordered Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno to investigate through the PNP (Philippine National Police)," Remonde said.

Remonde added Puno ordered the PNP to conduct the probe but the result was still inconclusive.

"Puno reported to the President that there was no basis to file charges against anyone at that time," Remonde said.



*The First Couple, Atty. Mike Arroyo and PGMA (left) and "whistleblowers" Jun Lozada and Joey de Venecia, III*

Gordon, however, said the findings of the committee revealed the President did not act accordingly even after she was informed by Neri of the bribery attempt by Abalos.

After confirming the bribery attempt, Neri has refused to comment further on the issue, claiming he has said all he knows about the contract when he testified before the Senate in September last year.

Neri repeatedly shot down calls for him to disclose the details of his conversations with Mrs. Arroyo on the matter by invoking executive privilege.

"You could see the litany of errors on the part of the President, apparently she was not able to crack the whip on her people," Gordon said.

The Senate committee explained the First Gentleman should be charged with violations of Section 4 (a) and 5 of Republic Act No. 3019, otherwise known as the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, particularly against private individuals involved in "business, transaction, application, request or contract with the government."

Gordon said the Arroyos, along with then Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., went to Shenzhen in China, even played golf and had lunch with ZTE officials on Nov. 2, 2006.

It was during that visit when the scandal broke out that the NBN deal was being rigged to favor several government officials, he said.

Gordon stressed the President should not act on the report of (Neri) that there was an attempt to bribe him. The President ordered Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno to investigate through the PNP (Philippine National Police)," Remonde said.

Remonde added Puno ordered the PNP to conduct the probe but the result was still inconclusive.

"Puno reported to the President that there was no basis to file charges against anyone at that time," Remonde said.

Mr. Arroyo pointed a finger at him while telling him to "back off" from pursuing the NBN project.

De Venecia went on to testify that Abalos was acting as the broker of the NBN contract and was fronting for Mr. Arroyo.

Gordon explained the younger De Venecia should be charged with the same violation of Section 5 of RA 3019, just like the First Gentleman as private individuals.

He said the elder De Venecia should be charged for violation of Section 7 (d) of the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials for meddling in the deal.

The committee said Abalos should be charged with violation Section 3 (a) of RA 3019 for "persuading, inducing or influencing another public officer to perform an act and (h) for directly or indirectly having financing or pecuniary interest in any business, contract, or transaction in connection with which he intervenes or takes part in his official capacity."

capacity."

Lozada and Neri, on the other hand, should also be charged for the same violations, the committee said.

The Senate committee added Abalos should also be charged with violation of Article 212 of the Revised Penal Code for corruption of public officials.

Lozada will also have to face a case for alleged violation of the Civil Service Law for taking part in the negotiations when he was chief of the Philippine Forest Corp., an agency connected with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Lozada was also the former consultant of the NBN contract that eventually went in favor of ZTE.

Lozada echoed the testimonies of De Venecia III in implicating the First Gentleman and Abalos in the Senate inquiry over the deal.

Mendoza, Soneja and Formoso, on the other hand, were also recommended by the committee to be charged with violation Section 3 (a) of RA 3019 for "directly and indirectly having financing or pecuniary interest in any business, contract, or transaction in connection with which he intervenes or takes part in his official capacity, or in which he is prohibited by the Constitution or by any law from having any interest."

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# Comelec Vows Fraud-free Automated Elections

by Jose Rodel CLAPANO /

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

**MANILA, Philippines - THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) yesterday assured former President Joseph Estrada and other opposition leaders that the first automated elections in the country's political history, would be "fraud free."**

Comelec spokesman James Jimenez assured Estrada and other leaders of the opposition Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) that the automated counting machines (ACMs) that the Comelec will use in the 2010 elections are more secure, fast, transparent and clean.

Jimenez pointed out the ACMs, also known as the Precinct Count Optical Scan (PCOS) machines, have been proven successful in elections in other countries.

"The feeding of ballots by the voters will be one by one. A minimum of 10 people can vote at the same time. The counting machines are in front of everyone. The only thing that the Board of Elections Inspectors (BEI) will do is to close the machine for voting after the pre-scripted time," Jimenez said.

Jimenez assured the ACMs would be placed in very visible areas on election day to ensure transparency and prevent possible switching of votes.

Jimenez also stressed the important role played by poll watchers from the different political parties.

"Poll watchers are not irrelevant. Since the machine is new, watchers are more relevant," he said.

Jimenez stressed the need for the Filipino voters to remain vigilant during the whole election process, pointing out that voters are more serious in their quest for honest,

clean and accurate elections.

"We think that the Filipino voters are more serious than that. I think they will stay. There will be a waiting room for the voters. Our voting is not steady. The people are coming once in a while," he said.

Jimenez joined officials of the joint venture Smartmatic Inc. in briefing Estrada and the PMP that irregularities that marked the 2004 elections would be a thing of the past.

"There will be no more 'Garc' there," Jimenez said, referring to election official Virgilio "Garc" Garci who was widely believed to have been responsible for rigging the results in Mindanao during the 2004 presidential elections.

"Garc will not fit in the (automated counting) machine. We have 80,122 precincts all over the country and we will have 82,200 machines," he said.

Jimenez said the automated elections next year is more secured.

"With the automated counting, the counting will be done in one minute. After you vote in the old system, you put it in the ballot box, then leave the place. In automation, after you finish filling it up (the new ballot), you bring it to the counting machine, feed it in and it will be counted," he said.

He said under the new system, no one, except for the Board of Elections Inspectors, would handle the ballots that would be electronically transmitted.

Jimenez said there is no need for the voter to linger in the polling precinct, since the transmission of the results of the elections could be done in half a second.

Jimenez said the new system would also ensure that the winner would be proclaimed sooner.

Jimenez also said the Comelec has prepared a contingency

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country. We must educate the people to choose honest and capable persons who have the ability to govern," he said.

PMP spokesman Ralph Calinisan said the automated machines bring the Filipino election system to a higher level.

"A new dawn now awaits us. The age of automated elections is now here. The 2010 elections is the Filipino people's chance to exercise his right to vote through the PCOS machine...knowledge is power. With help from our friends in Comelec and Smartmatic, the PMP is the first political party to conduct such a briefing," Calinisan said.

Calinisan said the PMP would be working with the Comelec and in ensuring clean and honest elections next year.

"Once the machine malfunctions, we have contingency for that. We can replace the ballot if the machine cannot scan the ballot. Take the memory card and deliver it to another machine that can transmit the ballot results," he said.

Jimenez said the automated elections would transform and change the habit of Filipino voters.

"These transformations include the way we will vote; the way we will count; the way we will canvass and the way we will transmit the results of the voting. There will be no more identity theft in the voters' lists," he said.

Under the old system, the voter would need to write the entire name of the candidates of their choice, while under the automated system, the voter would simply shade the figure beside the name of the candidate of their choice.

"Once you over vote, the ballot will not be read by the machine and that will be considered (stray vote)," Jimenez explained.



(Clockwise) Comelec Chairman Jose Melo tests the automated voting, Comelec spokesman James Jimenez, and former President Joseph Estrada

plan in case any of the machines malfunction.

"Once the machine malfunctions, we have contingency for that. We can replace the ballot if the machine cannot scan the ballot. Take the memory card and deliver it to another machine that can transmit the ballot results," he said.

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### ASSURANCE NOT ENOUGH

Before the Comelec briefing, Estrada aired his concerns over what Malacañang would do during the elections.

Estrada said Malacañang must also make public assurances that there will be honest and clean



elections next year.

"I have faith in the Comelec, but we don't know what the people in Malacañang are going to do. We have to get the assurance of Malacañang for honest and clean elections in 2010," he said.

Estrada personally tested the PCOS machines during the briefing of the Comelec but did not say if he was satisfied by the outcome.

Estrada though noted the information campaign of the Comelec to educate the voting public about the new election system.

He said Comelec may not be able to effectively educate the 400,000 teachers and the six other major political parties on the intricacies of the new voting system, considering that the election is barely six months away.

For his part, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said the automated election is not an assurance that a true leader would emerge and solve the present socio-economic problems of the nation.

Enrile said the Filipino voters needed to be educated on how to choose honest and capable leaders."

"The 2010 elections is not just a question of clean and honest elections. The clear question is the person elected through the automated elections is capable of addressing the problems of the

country. We must educate the people to choose honest and capable persons who have the ability to govern," he said.

PMP spokesman Ralph Calinisan said the automated machines bring the Filipino election system to a higher level.

"A new dawn now awaits us.

The age of automated elections is now here. The 2010 elections is the Filipino people's chance to exercise his right to vote through the PCOS machine...knowledge is power. With help from our friends in Comelec and Smartmatic, the PMP is the first political party to conduct such a briefing," Calinisan said.

Calinisan said the PMP would be working with the Comelec and in ensuring clean and honest elections next year.

Smartmatic-TIM officials, for their part, said they would hire some 50,000 "technical support representatives" who will help troubleshoot the PCOS machines.

Bonifacio Belen, regional manager of Smartmatic-TIM, said they have tapped the manpower firms Placewell, Manred and Ventureslink to recruit the information technology specialists that would be deployed in polling precincts across the nation on May 10, 2010.

"There is no shortage of patriotic and IT-savvy Filipinos who want to be part of history," Belen said.

Bonifacio added the poll automation project could "probably (be) one of the single biggest hiring jobs ever undertaken in the country."

Bonifacio also said that the specialists would be trained on how to troubleshoot the problems of the election day.

Comelec Commissioner Gregorio Larrababal added the specialists would have to be certified by the Department of Science and Technology (DOST) before they could be hired.

Larrababal added the Comelec would also hire an IT expert per municipality and city to supervise the specialists of Smartmatic-TIM. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

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## LEGAL NOTES



by Reuben S.  
SEGURITAN

**C**ongress has approved a bill amending the rule that if the petitioner dies, the petition is automatically revoked. The bill is expected to be signed into law by President Obama soon.

The new legislation will provide relief to surviving spouses and surviving family members.

Surviving spouses will be able to file a self-petition for permanent residence even if they were married for less than two (2) years. Under the old law, they were deportable as only surviving

spouses married for at least two years had the right to self-petition.

Surviving family members will also be allowed to pursue their green card applications despite the death of their petitioning relatives provided they resided in the U.S. at the time of the death of the relatives and they continue to reside in the U.S. Under the old law, the said family members lost the immigration benefit derived from the petition once the petitioner died.

Surviving family members covered under the new law include the spouse, parent and minor children of a U.S. citizen with pending or approved petitions and the married or unmarried son or daughter of a citizen, the spouse or child of a permanent resident and the brother or sister of a citizen, who have

pending or approved petitions.

They also include the derivative beneficiaries of pending or approved employment-based petitions, the beneficiaries of pending or approved asylum/refugee/relative petitions, nonimmigrants in T (trafficking victims) or U (crime victims) status and asylees.

The following example illustrates how the law will benefit the surviving family member.

A U.S. citizen parent petitioned his married daughter under the family-based third preference category. The petition is approved but because the wait time to get a visa number is long - 18 years in the case of a Philippine national - it is not uncommon that the petitioner dies. The petition or the daughter's application for adjustment of status and any related application will continue to be

adjudicated notwithstanding the death of the petitioning parent unless the approval would not be in the public interest.

If the daughter dies prior to the interview, the derivative beneficiaries, meaning the husband and her minor unmarried children will continue with their adjustment of status applications.

Another example: An employer files an employment-based third preference petition on behalf of his employee but the employee dies before the immigration interview. His wife and daughter will be allowed to continue with their adjustment applications.

Beneficiaries who were abroad at the time of the death of the petitioner will not be protected under the new law but they will still be able under the old law to request humanitarian reinstatement. If their request is granted, the petition that was revoked upon the death of the petitioner will be reinstated.

Under the provision that will allow the filing of a self-petition by a surviving spouse, the law does not require that a petition had been filed by the deceased citizen spouse. But it requires the filing of the I-360 petition within two (2) years from the passage of the law. Unmarried children may be included in the self-petition.

If the surviving spouse is outside the U.S., he/she can apply for an immigrant visa abroad after the approval of the I-360 petition. If he/she is in the U.S., the I-360 can be filed together with the adjustment of status application. An affidavit of support is not required to be submitted although the applicant must still prove that he/she will not become a public charge. ■

**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)

## PHILIPPINE NEWS

### Bank Lending Expands by 5.9% in September

by Lawrence AGCAOLU /  
Wednesday, October 11, 2009

**M**ANILA, Philippines - THE GROWTH IN COMMERCIAL BANK LENDING remained steady at 5.9 percent in September, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) reported yesterday.

Statistics released by the central bank showed that the outstanding loans of commercial banks excluding reverse repurchase agreements (RRPs) reached P1.98 trillion in September from P1.87 trillion in the same period last year.

The amount was also P39 billion more than the P1.94 trillion lent by commercial banks in August.

The expansion of outstanding loans not RRs was slower than the 8.7 percent growth registered in July to P1.93 trillion from P1.776 trillion in the same month last year.

On the other hand, total



Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

loans of commercial banks including RRPs grew by 6.9 percent to P2.178 trillion in September from P2.052 trillion in the same month last year and 3.5 percent higher than the P2.03 trillion registered in August.

BSP Governor Amando M. Tetangco Jr. said the increasing signs of global economic recovery along with ample liquidity conditions should provide support to credit activity going forward.

Preliminary data indicated that loans for production activities expanded year-on-year by 5.2 percent to P1.765 trillion in Sep-

tember from P1.738 trillion in August, lower than the 5.7-percent growth reported in August.

The expansion of lending to some productive sectors, according to the central bank, was pulled down by the contraction in other sector led by manufacturing.

Manufacturing loans which accounted for 14.5 percent of the total loans contracted by 20.5 percent amid the still weak demand for exports while construction loans plunged by 18.3 percent due to the ongoing correction in the property market.

Loans extended to the fol-

lowing productive sectors, which comprised nearly half of total loans, were major contributors to lending growth particularly to transportation, storage and communication that surged by 42 percent followed by electricity, gas and water that jumped by 40.3 percent.

Furthermore, the growth in consumption loans improved to 6.9 percent in September from 5.3 percent in August due to faster growth in auto loans and credit card lending.

Despite the slowdown, the BSP still believes that bank lend-

ing would continue to grow in double digit level this year amid the slackening domestic economy brought about by the full impact of the global economic downturn.

BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espinilla Jr. earlier told reporters that the projected 10 percent growth in bank lending is "doable" this year despite the slackening domestic economy.

"I expect credit growth to remain positive. The projected 10 percent growth in bank lending is still doable," Espinilla said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

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ILOKO

by Amado I. YORO

**ELPIDIO QUIRINO-  
MAIKADU A PRESIDENTE  
ITI FILIPINAS**

Nayakan iday Vigan, Ilocos Sur idi Nobiembre 16, 1890 kada Mariano Quirino iti Caoayan, Ilocos Sur ken Gregorio Rivera iti Agoo, La Union. Nadumaduna a wagas a nagserbi kadagit kailanganina manipud iti kinamaestro, sa diputado, senador, sekretario iti aduanan, bise presidente, sekretario iti foreign af-



President Elpidio Quirino

iti makuna a Philippine-United States Defense Pact idi Agosto 30, 1951. Pimmsuy idi 1951.

**JOSE BURGOS-  
MARTIR ITI 1872**

Natalak ti Gomburza a martir iti 1872 Cavite Revolt. Ket maya nga anak iti Vigan, Ilocos Sur ni Father Jose Burgos kadagitoy. Nayakan iti Vigan, Ilocos Sur idi Febrero 9, 1873 kada Jose Tiburcio Burgos, maya a teniente iti Spanish militia iti Ilocos Sur ken Florence Garcia a natiblo iti Vigan. Intendia ti biaga iti kinapadi apama na aordenaen idi Disembre 17, 1864. Nagsaad a kas second uralate, magistrate ken chief curate iti Manila Cathedral ken fiscal iti Ecclesiastical court. Aktibra ken saan a mabmoleg a kameng iti Comite Reformador, kampion iti

sekularisasiun dagiti papadi a Filipino. Implicate in the Cavite Mutiny idi Enero 20, 1872 ken executed babaon iti Garrote iti Bagumbayan idi Pebrero 17, 1872.

**DIEGO SILANG, PANGULO  
ITI ILOCOS REVOLT**

Nayakan iday Aringay, Pangasinan idi Disiembre 16, 1730 kada Miguel Silang ken Nicolsa delos Santos. Indauluanma ti natalak nga Ilocos Sur Revolt idi 1762-1763. Babaon iti panangidaulona kadagitoy rebelde, adu a baligui iti rugun-odua. Nupay ababa dayta a panawen saan a nagbayag gapu iti panangilbi. Kausbong a Miguel Vicos, a pangalpat kenkuana iti pagtaenganna idi Mayo 1763.

**GABRIELA SILANG, UMUNA**
A BABAI ITI FILIPINAS A  
DAULO TI REBELDE

Isu ti maawawagan ng a umuna a Babai a Lider Dagiti Rebeldie iti Filipinas. Nayakan iday Barao Canlogan, Santa, Ilocos Sur idi Marso 19, 1731. Isu ti nangallawat a dagiti iti liderato a napawanan ti awasawa a Diego gapu iti pannakalibat. Dina binigbig ken tinnalikuduna ti kombension sosial, linaksidna ti makuna a mortal fear, inarmassana ti bagina ket naktibakal iti lay-tak iti gubatan babaon iti suporta dagiti padana a rebelde.

Bitay ti nganggups ti biaga iti Setiembre 20, 1763 iti Vigan. ■

## MAINLAND NEWS

### Filipina Appointed as Lt. Gov. of California

**MONA PASQUIL HAS BEEN APPOINTED** as interim lieutenant governor of California—the first Filipina and first woman named to that position.

Pasquill assumes the state's second-in-command after former Lt. Gov. John Garamendi won a recent special election to replace the Congressional seat vacated by former California Rep. Ellen Tauscher. A provision in the state's Constitution allows Pasquill, who is Garamendi's chief of staff, to serve

as acting lieutenant governor until Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's appointee is confirmed.

Pasquill, 45, will serve in a temporary capacity until the majority of both the California Senate and the Assembly confirms or rescinds her appointment during a regular session in January 2010.

Her appointment was welcomed news for Filipinos in the U.S. and abroad.

"The Filipino-American community is very proud of Mona, who

is highly deserving of her new position," says Alice Bulos, a former sociology professor at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. "I personally know Mona as a very hardworking public servant and very intelligent person."

State Sen. Leland Yee, a longtime friend of the Bay Area Filipino American community, also praised her appointment.

"I have no doubt that she will do well in her temporary role as lieutenant governor. Her previous

responsibilities in the Clinton administration, other governments and serving as Garamendi's chief of staff will give her the support and knowledge needed for this new position. This is another great accomplishment for Filipino Americans in California," he says.

Pasquill has served on staff for the Kerry Edwards presidential campaign as Deputy Political Director for Constituency Groups. A leader in the Asian Pacific Islander community, she was the political di-

rector for Gov. Gray Davis, California political director for Gore/Lieberman 2000, deputy CEO for the 2000 Democratic National Convention, western political director in the Clinton White House, western political desk and director of Asian Pacific affairs at the DNC.

She is the daughter of a gifted jazz pianist, enjoys singing and is involved with My Sister's House, a safe haven for Asian Pacific Islander victims of domestic violence. In her spare time, Pasquill trains for a Grand Canyon hike or marathon each year to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. (FilAmNation) ■

### Pacquiao Hits Vegas as Heavy Favorite

by Abac CORDERO /  
Wednesday, October 11, 2009

LAS VEGAS — THE NUMBERS THAT ARE REFLECTED IN THE GIANT ELECTRONIC BILLBOARD of Mandalay Bay's betting station suggest a one-sided contest this coming Saturday.

Now it's even harder to think that Manny Pacquiao is facing Miguel Cotto, the WBO welterweight champion who is supposed to be the younger, bigger and stronger fighter.

Pacquiao arrived here in Sin City late Monday evening after a delayed five-hour trip from Los Angeles, and amid all the bright, colorful lights stood as the overwhelming favorite.

Based on the odds, the 30-year-old Filipino superstar is now a -350 favorite, meaning you need to place \$350 just to win a hundred bucks.

And for those rooting for Cotto, there's everything to win and nothing to lose now. The 29-year-old champion from Puerto

Rico is placed at +270, meaning you get \$270 dollars for every bet of \$100.

Pacquiao is so favored that fight fans are looking for a knockout win for the reigning pound-for-pound champion who climbs the ring six months after a spectacular second-round knockout of Ricky Hatton at the MGM Grand.

Odds that this fight won't last the distance are at -155 and that it would be at +125. It's now 1/2 that Pacquiao would win by a knockout and 6/1 if it's Cotto up on his feet in case of a knockout.

Pacquiao left LA a little past five in the afternoon, on board his gray SUV, together with his wife, Jinkee, and a couple of friends. Behind them were a few other vehicles and the customized Pacquiao bus.

Everybody went straight to Pacquiao's suite at Mandalay Bay where a feast of Filipino food was prepared beforehand.

Pacquiao, with no problems at all with his weight, enjoyed his dinner of bulalo, kaldereta, chicken and rice. (www.philstar.com) ■

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### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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#### 2010 FILIPINO FESTA'S "LAKBAY KULTURA" / SATURDAY

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### GLOBAL NEWS

### Filipina Agricultural Researcher Wins Japan Agriculture Award

**MARIA LEBATA-RAMOS, A RESEARCHER** for the Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (SEAFDEC), was recently honored with the 2009 Japan International Award For Young Agricultural Researchers.

The award is given annually to deserving agricultural researchers by the Japanese Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries Research Council. Dr. Lebata-Ramos was recognized for her contributions to the development of technologies for the mitigation of food and environmental problems.

Officials from the Philippine Embassy in Tokyo praised Dr.



Maria Lebata-Ramos

Lebata-Ramos' accomplishments and hope that the award will inspire young Filipino researchers to follow in her path. (DFA) ■

ruption) indicator, the Philippines ranking has actually improved by six notches, from 39th to 33rd, above the 37th rank of the median country out of the 73 countries in the LIC list of the MCC," Romulo said in a statement.

Comparing the results with last year's MCC scorecard, Romulo pointed out that the country would have showed improved performances had it not been elevated to a higher income category.

The failing marks, he stressed, resulted chiefly from the country's transition from a low-income country (LIC) in 2008 to lower middle-income (LMIC) in

"The award is a reaffirmation of her achievements in fisheries and marine research that serves to promote food productivity, food security and environmental and marine conservation," says embassy staffer Gina Jamorlin.

SEAFDEC provides sustainable fisheries development on fisheries and aquaculture technologies and practices, post-harvest technology, international and intra-regional fish trade, fisheries management concepts and approaches, policy and advisory services and international fisheries issues. (DFA) ■

2009, based on its improved income per capita.

"The country's failing grades in some areas is the result of technicalities in evaluation, such as the country's rise from a low-income country to a lower middle-income country. Higher income countries are measured using more stringent standards," Romulo said.

"The improvement in the country's income category is a clear reflection of the Philippine government's sustained commitment to economic and governance reforms amidst the global financial crisis," he added. ([www.phstar.com](http://www.phstar.com)) ■

(cont. from page 10; RP Unlike ...)

Manila later this week.

The results of the corruption test will greatly impact on the decision of MCC Board of Directors at their quarterly meeting scheduled for Dec. 9 when they select eligible developing countries for compact funding.

While acknowledging the MCC's scorecard of the Philippines showing below the median scores in a number of indicators, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo blamed the country's low scores to "technicalities in evaluation."

"On the CoC (Control of Cor-



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