

HAWAII-PHILIPPINE NEWS EDITION

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HAWAII PHILIPPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S ONLY WEEKLY FILIPINO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

FPJ WIDOW, DAUGHTER SEEK JUSTICE OVER POLL CHEATING

By Perseus ECHEMINADA

MANILA, Philippines - The family of the late movie actor and presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. welcomed yesterday the allegations of former Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol that there was massive fraud during the 2004 presidential election.

The Poe family wants people responsible brought to justice.

Sen. Francis Escudero, who served as Poe's spokesman during his candidacy, said he is pushing for the creation of a fact-finding body that would determine the true winner in the controversial polls.

Poe's daughter, Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) chair Grace Poe-Llanmanzares, said in a statement that they are hopeful but cautious on recent developments regarding Bedol's disclosures about fraud in the 2004 and 2007 elections.

"We have been saying for the past seven years that there was rampant cheating in the

2004 elections. FPJ may never be officially declared the true winner because some of the vital documents were destroyed or lost. But in my heart and in the minds of many, he (FPJ) won," Llanmanzares said.

In a separate statement aired over ABS-CBN, Susan Roces, widow of the late actor, said she welcomes Bedol's reappearance and it's now clear to her that there was really cheating in the 2004 presidential polls.

Roces said that although her husband has passed away, it is important that those responsible for the cheating that resulted in the political defeat of "The King" in the presidential polls be

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Actress Susan Roces Poe and daughter (inset) Movie Television Classification Board Chairwoman Grace Poe-Llanmanzares
Photos: bloghippines.com and www.quotednews.com

DFA Welcomes US House Support for Phl on Spratlys

By Pia LEE-BRAGO

MANILA, Philippines - The Philippines welcomed yesterday the introduction of a resolution by the United States' House of Representatives supporting the Philippine position of a peaceful, multilateral and rules-based settlement of the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) disputes in accordance with international law.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario welcomed US House Resolution 352 calling for "a peaceful and collaborative resolution of maritime territorial disputes in the South China Sea and its environs and other maritime areas adjacent to the East Asian mainland" by select members of the US Congress.

"We welcome the support of US con-



DFA Sec. Albert del Rosario

gressmen to the Philippines position with respect to the West Philippine Sea issue," Del Rosario said in a statement.

In a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Philippine Em-

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Philippine Choir Wins 2011 Choir of the World

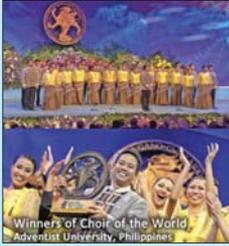
from www.goodnewsphilpinas.com

The Adventist University Choir from the Philippines was recently crowned winner of the 2011 Choir of the World competition at Liangollen International Musical Eisteddfod held in North Wales from July 4-10, 2011.

For the second consecutive year, the renowned Pavarotti Trophy belongs to the Philippines. Last year's winner was the University of Santo Tomas Singers.

The standard of competition at this year's competition was higher than ever with the Ad-

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Winners of Choir of the World, Adventist University, Philippines

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EDITORIAL

Homelessness Should Be Temporary,
Not Long-Term Lifestyle

When most people think about the homeless, stereotypical images come to mind—the drug addict wandering grimy city streets or the mentally ill ranting at imaginary phantoms. But high unemployment, the high cost of housing, and a stubbornly depressed economy are pushing a new, diverse population over the edge to homelessness.

In addition to the traditional at-risk groups of single mothers, senior citizens, runaway teenagers, drug addicts and the mentally ill, the new homeless includes families living paycheck-to-paycheck, unemployed workers unskilled for today's rapidly changing job market and even employed workers not making enough money for rent.

This new population is not the traditional, chronically homeless, but people who view their situation as temporary. For many of them, how they got to the streets is as unexpected as suddenly losing their job.



LOOKING AT THE NUMBERS

According to the state's Homeless Programs Office, there are about 15,000 people annually who are homeless in Hawaii at least part of the year and 6,000 homeless at any given day. The state Department of Education has identified 2,973 public school students who are homeless, up from 1,739 the year before. It is estimated that another 9 percent of homeless children between the ages of 9 to 17 are not attending school.

In a report by the University of Hawaii's Center on the Family, 9,781 people received outreach or shelter services on Oahu last year, up by 5 percent. For the entire state, 13,886 residents accessed outreach and shelter services. This is the sixth year Hawaii has posted increases in the number of homeless people.

While governmental agencies continue to improve their system of tracking the homeless, experts believe the current numbers are conservative considering the difficulty gathering data from this transient population. It is believed there is a large percentage of homeless who are "out of sight" and uncounted.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The public's viewpoint of the homeless situation is both compassionate and realistic. Gone are the days when people believed putting up shelters and affordable housing alone will cure society of homelessness. Most in our community realize it is a complex problem with a series of related issues that lead some to homelessness. On top of that, due to budgetary constraints, most in our community also realize there are limitations to what government can do to minimize the problem.

The first step is identifying who the homeless are in order to address the different needs. The second would be to maximize efforts in a coordinated fashion among government, private, charitable and religious organizations.

The best method to combat homelessness is to provide affordable housing before families become homeless. Providing permanent affordable housing is most effective to help individuals on the cusp of being homeless, specifically people who could achieve more stable circumstances with a little help in the right intervention.

One project to tap—the state's recently completed new affordable housing that includes apartments and townhouses: 30 long-term townhouses and 20 transitional studios designed for low-income residents. The minimum qualification for this project is annual earnings of less than \$59,520 for a household family of four or

less than \$47,640 for a couple.

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development also provides rental assistance for qualified individuals through various homeless programs. The federal government renewed \$10.2 million in grants to keep 34 homeless programs running in Hawaii.

Due to greater demand for affordable housing, the city's housing department that closed its doors in 1998 is slated to reopen in July this year. Mayor Peter Carlisle is budgeting \$2.5 million to fund what he calls "an affordable housing partnership with the state."

TEMPORARY, TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Transitional housing in the form of shelters is better suited for the most vulnerable of the homeless population, the traditional at-risk group who need rehabilitation, drug treatment, or psychiatric counseling.

Gov. Neil Abercrombie's plan to get homeless people off the streets and parks, and into safe zones and shelters, is a good plan. Not only will it free up public beaches, streets and parks from the homeless who use them for their own private use, the shelters are a safer environment for the homeless to get their basic needs met such as food and rest. Having the homeless check in at shelters also gives the state a better idea of what homeless people's needs are and more accurately determine their numbers. The shelter is a better place to offer job training and workforce development programs.

Homelessness should not be a way of life, but a temporary situation from which people could lift themselves out from. The state's new, bold plan to get the homeless off the streets and into shelters should be commended. Churches and charitable organizations should cooperate with the government and realize that old methods of simply providing food at various urban

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OPEN FORUM

The Myth of Privatization

After picking up your magazine and reading your Opinion Column entitled "Hawaii's Economic Crisis is Getting Worse and Government is Taking More" (July 2, 2011), I really feel I have to respond. There is a lot of misleading stuff there—and no wonder, one of the sources of information cited is the CATO Institute, a right-wing think tank founded by the Koch Brothers, who have their own agenda for the direction of our country.

I'd like to focus on Danny de Gracia's assertion (from CATO) that one study showed that "the closer one lived to their state capitol or Washington DC, the higher their incomes were and the less likely one was to be unemployed." The implication is that most people living near capitol cities are government employees who make a lot of money, but the reality is not so simple. For five years my family lived on the outskirts of Washington

D.C., in three Virginia towns: Delaplane, Manassas and Reston. My husband and I worked for several companies in the area. I can assure you that most of the people living in those areas are not fat cat bureaucrats working directly for the government.

Rather, most of them either work for contractors (largely military contractors), lobbyists or companies that support the contractors. The outsourcing of government duties to private companies has exploded since the 1980s and it is they who are sucking this country dry by charging the taxpayers way more than civil servants do. I refer Mr. de Gracia and your readers to a documentary that strongly illustrates this phenomenon—"Iraq for Sale" which is available on Netflix. Just one interesting example from the film—a soldier complains that the private company outsourced by the military for laundry does a terrible job and

charges taxpayers \$100 per bag (basically like a duffel bag) of laundry. He also says that soldiers are not allowed to do their own laundry even if they want to.

My own recent experience further makes this point. Years ago I was a home tutor for a pregnant girl who needed to finish high school at home. I was hired directly by the school and paid a reasonable wage (around \$7 to 9 per hour, which was pretty good for the mid-1980s). They also paid me for materials, mileage and if I remember correctly, prep time, which can be considerable for a tutor. It was fair and really didn't cost the school system all that much.

This past spring, I signed on to be a tutor at a Hawaii public school. These days, tutors must be hired by private companies rather than by the school because of No Child Left Behind. The private company I worked for

was based in California and we corresponded only by phone and e-mail. They provided me absolutely no support other than to direct me to a website from which I could print out worksheets, which really got stale and boring for the students, so I bought some materials with my own money.

Basically the job of the company was to administer the program and I did all the work. They paid me \$20 per hour but nothing for materials, prep time or other expenses. If the student did not show up, I did not get paid, although I usually spent at least an hour per student preparing for the lesson.

Worst of all, I looked at the company's contract on the school system website and learned that the school (yes, we the taxpayers) was paying this company \$50 per hour of tutoring accomplished. In other words, the company was skimming \$30 per hour of taxpayer money

off the top! Another company that I had considered charges Hawaii schools \$68 per hour and pays its tutors "between \$12 and \$22 per instructional session," according to its web site.

You can view these contracts on the school system's web site: <http://doe.k12.hi.us/nclb/vendors/index.htm> and scroll about one-third of the way down.

The myth that privatization of government services will serve people better and be cheaper is rampant in this very brainwashed society. I challenge anyone to name an example of a privatized function that does either. Look what has happened to health care since it was privatized.

Watch out, these cultures are coming for government programs like Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, as well as our roads, water systems and other infrastructure—and much more!

VICKI DUNAWAY
Honokaa

EDITORIAL

Still, Impunity

A year into the Aquino administration, human rights continue to be violated with impunity by government forces in the Philippines, according to the US-based Human Rights Watch. The Armed Forces of the Philippines lamented the report, saying the group failed to take note of reforms implemented to improve the rights record of the AFP.

Reforms will discourage human rights violations. But Human Rights Watch attributed the impunity largely to the failure of the government to bring to justice violators of human rights, particularly those involved in killings and enforced disappearances. Since President Aquino assumed power, Human Rights Watch has chronicled seven cases of unexplained killings and three cases of enforced disappearances.

Since the restoration of democracy in 1986, hundreds of left-wing militants, legal professionals and journalists have been killed or gone missing, never to be seen again. The AFP has consistently denied involvement in extrajudicial killings, insisting that victims identified by human rights watchdogs were killed in legitimate counterinsurgency operations. The most notorious of the military officers suspected of involvement, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, became a party-

list congressman upon his retirement from the AFP.

Palparan is now under investigation for the disappearance of two students of the University of the Philippines when he was military commander for Central Luzon. He has denied any involvement in the case. The probe into the disappearance of activist Jonas Burgos has also been revived. The AFP under Aquino has vowed full cooperation, but the trail appears to have gone cold in the two cases, as in the many other killings and disappearances attributed to state forces.

President Aquino must see to it that this is not because AFP officers are covering each other's backs. The only son of Benigno and Corazon Aquino is unlikely to tolerate state-sponsored violations of human rights. He must see to it that witnesses are given protection and victims' relatives assisted in their quest for justice. Discipline must be imposed on paramilitary "force multipliers" that have not been disbanded. The AFP as well as the Philippine National Police must be encouraged to undertake a thorough housecleaning. Ferreting out the bad eggs in the AFP, PNP and paramilitary units will make them better and more suited to fulfilling their roles in a democracy. (www.philstar.com) ■

(cont. from page 2: HOMELESSNESS...)

locations rather than at designated shelters only perpetuates a lifestyle of long-term homelessness. Shelters provide not only a physical haven, but some semblance of a "lifestyle structure" with rules and work that the homeless must become better accustomed to if they are to successfully reintegrate back into mainstream society.

With a growing population of the

homeless in Hawaii, there needs to be changes. It should not be so easy for the homeless to get a meal at some location and then carry on with old habits that got them in their situation in the first place. At the same time, the general public should also be aware that the homeless is an increasingly diverse population with a great number of them hoping for and working towards a better life. ■

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HEADLINES (CONT.)

(cont. from page 1; FPJ...)

held responsible for their crime.

She said they will await the results of the ongoing investigation and the future action of President Aquino on the reported election fraud.

Roces said it's no longer important to the family if FPJ will be granted a posthumous award as winner of the 2004 elections, but what is important is that the massive fraud will be proven with the allegations of Bedol.

She said it is also important that millions of Filipinos who voted for FPJ know the truth.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Escudero, on the other hand, said it is time to set the record straight and put closure to the 2004 electoral fraud issue.

(cont. from page 1; DFA...)

bassy in Washington said Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, who chairs the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs, introduced the resolution on Friday, together with co-sponsors Rep. Don Manzullo, chairman of the House subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, and Rep. Eni Faleo-mavaega, ranking member of the same subcommittee.

The US House resolution also had 27 co-sponsors - 18 Republicans and nine Democrats.

The resolution supports the Philippine position that condemns the use of force and overt threats in resolving the disputes.

"Indeed the Philippines strongly believes that a rules-based approach provides the key to validating our claims and advancing the peaceful and fair settlement of the dispute in the West Philippine Sea," Del Rosario added.

One of the provisions stated that, "Secretary of State Hillary Rod-

He said the fact-finding body he is proposing would be just like the previous commissions created during the previous administrations, except that this would carry a mandate granted by Congress.

Escudero has filed Joint Resolution No. 11 for the purpose of creating the fact-finding commission, which if accepted and passed by the House of Representatives, could pave the way for its immediate implementation.

By proposing the creation of the body by way of a congressional resolution, Escudero is hoping to avoid the fate of the Truth Commission created by President Aquino through his Executive Order 1.

The creation of the Truth Commission was challenged before the Supreme Court where it was declared unconstitutional.

The timing of Escudero's pro-

posal coincided with the emergence of Bedol and after former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao governor Zaldy Amintuan claimed that the 2004 and 2007 elections were rigged to favor former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the other candidates of the administration.

The alleged cheating in the 2004 elections became one of the most controversial issues that faced the country as it implicated the former president of being the ultimate beneficiary of vote rigging.

Wiretapped conversations between former Commission on Elections commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and several politicians, including one that sounded like Arroyo, came out in what became known as the "Hello, Garci" controversy, which contained details of election cheating that year.

Arroyo won over her closest rival Poe, due in great part to the results in the ARMM.

"The ghost of 2004 has continuously haunted our democratic system and electoral processes. We need to establish a fact-finding commission, define its powers and functions to enable it to make recommendations on who to recognize as the true fifteenth president of the republic," Escudero said.

While admitting that the results of the 2004 elections could no longer be changed, he said the findings of the proposed commission could help uncover the truth about the allegations and close that chapter in the nation's history.

"This move is geared toward setting the record straight and correcting history. It is not about prosecuting or persecuting former President Arroyo. This is about un-

covering the truth and to serve and give corresponding recognition to FPJ if indeed it can be given by that commission," Escudero said.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, meanwhile, urged Bedol, Ampatuan and even Garcillano, if he decides to enter into the picture, to "collaborate and cooperate together in favor of the truth about the mockery of our country's electoral process as institutionalized by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo."

"Then, it will finally unravel what the Filipino people have known all along, albeit short in details. While it may not cure the fraudulent Arroyo presidency, it could very well land her and those responsible for the mockery of the elections of 2004 and 2007 in jail for life for the crime of electoral sabotage," Lacson said.

(www.phlistar.com)

ham Clinton has told Philippine Foreign Secretary Del Rosario during his visit that the (US government) is determined and committed to supporting the defense of the Philippines."

It also mentioned that Del Rosario affirmed that the Philippines, although a small country, is "prepared to do what is necessary to stand up to any aggressive action in our backyard."

There was also a provision saying that the US stated last June 23, that it was ready to provide hardware to modernize the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Earlier, the US Senate approved a resolution introduced by Sen. Jim Webb deploring the use of force by China in the South China Sea and calling for a peaceful, multilateral resolution to maritime territorial disputes in Southeast Asia.

China, however, slammed the passage of the US Senate resolution condemning the use of force in the West Philippine Sea (South

China Sea), saying it turns a "blind" eye to facts.

Del Rosario met with Webb, chairman of the subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific affairs on the foreign relations committee in Washington, a few days after the resolution was filed.

The Philippines' preparedness to take action in the territorial dispute was conveyed during Del Rosario's meeting with Clinton at the US State Department.

They discussed the situation in the West Philippine Sea, and shared the view that recent incidents there were a source of concern and could undermine regional peace and stability.

They agreed to consult closely on ways to protect their respective countries' shared interest in maintaining freedom of navigation, respect for international law, and unimpeded lawful commerce in the West Philippine Sea.

The Philippines said on Wednesday that China's rejection of Manila's suggestion that both countries elevate their dispute in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) is an indication that Beijing may not be able to validate its territorial claims.

Del Rosario said the Philippines articulated to China during his visit to Beijing that it is prepared

(cont. from page 1; FOUR...)

to defend its position in the West Philippine Sea as Manila "suggested" that both countries go to the ITLOS to resolve the dispute.

to defend its position in the West Philippine Sea as Manila "suggested" that both countries go to the ITLOS to resolve the dispute.

P-NOY: NO BILATERAL TALKS

Meanwhile, President Aquino yesterday ruled out bilateral talks with China over the disputed oil-rich Spratly Islands, insisting there is no other forum to settle the issue but the United Nations tribunal that has authority over the Law of the Sea.

"I think that (UN body) is the only recourse left open to us. You don't actually go to China to ask them to define what the Philippine rights are as far as the West Philippine Sea is concerned," he told reporters in an informal interview in Malacanan.

China, according to foreign ministry spokesman Hong Lei in Beijing, will always maintain that the South China Sea dispute should be resolved "through negotiations between directly concerned countries."

Aquino, who is scheduled for a state visit to Beijing either late August or early September, said the Philippines "want to establish first precisely who is in the right in terms of the definition of the rights imbued under the UNCLOS" (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea).

The tribunal is an independent judicial body established by UNCLOS to handle disputes.

and Mixed choir competitions—resulting in the English choir's second place finish.

Guest of honor Julian Lloyd Webber, one of the world's leading cellists, also performed a selection of scores during the concert. Visitors at the Eisteddfod ground were also treated to an impromptu outdoor performance in the afternoon.

Since its introduction in 1987, the Choir of the World competition has become established as the highlight of the week. Winners of the Mixed, Chamber, Barbershop, Male and Female choirs during the week

"So where do you go? You have to go to the body where everybody is a signatory practically to, and that is the UN, and specifically the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea," the President said, emphasizing that he will raise this issue when he visits China this year.

In a related development, Malacañang yesterday clarified that the arrival of the newly acquired cutter from the US Coast Guard will not affect the country's ties with China.

"We don't think so (that we're sending the wrong signal to China). This has long been mentioned by the President in his speech during the turnover of command at the Navy," Palate deputy spokesperson Abigail Valte told government-run radio dzRB.

"And this is part of our efforts to modernize our equipment and our capability to guard our territory," Valte added.

The cutter will be deployed to secure the country's territorial waters in the West Philippine Sea, according to Navy chief Vice Admiral Alexander Pama.

A former USCG cutter, the Hamilton Class vessel, which is also classified as Weather High Endurance Cutter, will first undergo refinements in its weapon and electronic systems upon its arrival before deployment for maritime security operations in Palawan.

(www.phlistar.com)

return to the stage in this classic competition to determine who wins the title of Choir of the World.

This year, more than 4,000 competitors from over 50 countries participated in the event, including performers from South Korea, China, Moldova and Slovakia.

The Pavarotti Trophy is named after the great Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti who competed on the Eisteddfod stage in 1955 when his choir from Modena won the Men's Choir competition. In 2005, Pavarotti added his name to the Choir of the World Competition. ■

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NEWS FEATURE

Telltale Signs: The Dragon and the Mosquito

by Rodel RODIS

On July 8, hundreds of Filipino Americans demonstrated in front of all six of China's consular offices in the U.S. to protest China's dispatch of its giant oil rig to the Spratly Islands which is within the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone of the Philippines. On that same day, the front page of the Manila dailies featured a photo of China's Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi and Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario, both smiling, with a caption that stated their agreement not to let the Spratly dispute affect friendly relations between the two countries.

China had invited Secretary Del Rosario only on July 7 to come to Beijing on July 8, the day before the global protests against China's incursion in the Spratly Islands. While the timing of the July 8 events may lead some to conclude that there was a connection, it likely was just a coincidence.

The Beijing photo-op may have been China's psy-war response to the U.S. Senate's unanimous approval of the resolution on June 27 deploring China's use of force against Vietnamese and Philippine ships in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea).

The bipartisan resolution authored by Sen. Jim Webb and Sen. Jim Inhofe "reaffirms the strong support of the United States for the peaceful resolution of maritime territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and pledges continued efforts to facilitate a multilateral, peaceful process to resolve these disputes."

It was China's way of telling the Americans: "What disputes are you Yankees talking about? We are committed to peaceful process. Right, Philippines?"

The Xinhua news press release accompanying the Beijing photo-op stated: "Both ministers exchanged views on the maritime disputes and agreed not to let the maritime disputes affect the broader picture of friendship and cooperation between the two countries." Xinhua news also reported that Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping, widely viewed as China's top leader in 2013 when current President Hu Jintao steps down, also met with Secretary Del Rosario and he described their meeting as "productive".

But "productive" is not how Secretary Del Rosario described it when he returned to Manila after the two day photo-op. When asked at a news conference if China had assured him that it would stop military intrusions into the West Philippine Sea even as it promised to continue

to dialogue with the Philippines regarding the territorial dispute, Secretary Del Rosario said "no".

Del Rosario said that he proposed to China's officials that their maritime dispute be adjudicated by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, an independent judicial body established by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to handle disputes. But China said "no".

"While we base our claim on international law, specifically UNCLOS," Del Rosario said, China officials base their claim on "historic rights," referring to the 120 A.D. map of the Han Dynasty that identifies the Spratlys as the Nansha Islands. As Ted Laguatan pointed out, by that absurd argument, Italy can also lay claim to most of Europe as they were all in the ancient maps of the Roman Empire.

The only agreement reached in Beijing, Del Rosario said, was "we agreed to disagree."

Certainly Beijing did not agree to recall back to Shanghai the \$892 million deepwater semi-submersible drilling platform (Ocean Petroleum 981) that China Daily reported as having left Shanghai on May 24, 2011 bound for somewhere in the South China Sea. According to the China press, this is "the world's most advanced super oil rig", capable of operating at a water depth of 3,000 meters and drilling depth of 12,000 meters, with nine power generators on the platform that can provide electricity for nearly 200,000 people, which took China three years to build, is set to start operating in August, 2011.

At its peak, China expects to draw \$50 billion worth of oil annually from what FilAm protestors at the China consulate rallies said was "Phillipine soil! Phillipine oil!" Imagine what the Filipino people could do with this \$50 billion revenue. Consider that 10 million OFWs (many who labor at virtual slave wages and conditions) only collectively remit \$17 billion a year.

China is already counting on the future oil to be drawn from the Spratlys to fuel its massive energy needs. Because of what is at stake for China's future, it is deploying its lone aircraft carrier, newly-purchased from Russia, to the West Philippine Sea to protect its oil rig.

In an ominous note, Ellen Tordesillas reported in her July 11, 2011 column that "Hardliners in the Chinese Military Academy are raring to teach China's neighbors "a lesson" for intruding into the South China Sea, which they consider part of their national territory."

These "hardliners", according



Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, right, meets with Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario in Beijing, China.

to Shen Hong-Fang, professor and senior research fellow at the Center of Southeast Asian studies at Xiamen University, believe that "it is the right time to adopt necessary measures to teach some countries a lesson."

Shen told participants at the two-day Conference on the South China Sea held in Manila last week that they believe it justifiable "for China to launch a war against the invaders." Shen reiterated previous declarations of China's officials that the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea) is a "core national interest," just like Tibet and Taiwan.

While this Spratly issue is the

top news story of Filipino community newspapers throughout the United States this week, it has only merited occasional mention in the Manila dailies which are more preoccupied with stories about Davao Mayor Sara Duterte and the sheriff she punched as well as the Philippine bishops who unashamedly received SUVs from former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Out of the ten columns in the Philippine Daily Inquirer print edition, only one was devoted to the Spratlys issue and it was by Rep. Walden Bello, who reprinted the questions asked of him by a China newspaper and his responses.

When asked if

war with China over the Spratlys was inevitable, he responded that he did not believe so although "naval encounters are a possibility".

But, Bello wrote, "China must really climb down from its aggressive posture, otherwise, a chain of events may ensue that goes out of control... Multilateral diplomacy for a comprehensive settlement of the West Philippine Sea issue is the best way to avoid such an unintended conflict."

Unfortunately, China supports only bilateral diplomacy, one on one between itself and the Philippines. Just consider the odds: China has 2,255,000 soldiers while the Philip-

pines has only 113,000. China has 1,900 planes while the Philippines has only 257. China has a total of 760 ships while the Philippines barely has 36. Aside from its aircraft carrier, China has 21 destroyers and 68 submarines while the Philippines has not one of either. China has 42 modern frigates while the Philippines has one, Rajah Humabon, of WW II vintage.

With that kind of military superiority, why wouldn't China insist on bilateral talks? Why would China agree to multilateral diplomacy where the Philippines could count on the combined forces of the ASEAN countries and the US to equalize the odds?

China is the mighty giant dragon pitted against the tiny mosquito. The mosquito's global relatives are calling the attention of the world to the bullying of the dragon.

For more information on the mosquito's global relatives, log on to peoplepower.ph or usp4gg.org.

(Send comments to Rodel50@gmail.com or mail them to the Law Offices of Rodel Rodis at 24529 Ocean Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94127 or call 415.334.7800.)

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Applications Accepted for Low Income Rentals

KEKAULIKE COURTYARDS CORP. IS OPENING ITS WAITLIST and accepting applications for its low-income rental units located in Chinatown.

A lottery will be conducted to determine the prioritization of the waitlist. Applicants on the new waitlist will be added to the existing waitlist.

Kekaulike Courtyards consists of 76 affordable apartment rentals with studios ranging from \$485 to \$545 per month and one-bedroom

units between \$590 to \$695 per month in three- and four-story buildings. Applications for the lottery must be returned by mail only and postmarked no later than August 15, 2011 to:

**Kekaulike Courtyards
1016 Maunakea Street
Honolulu Hawaii, 96817**

The lottery to determine the priority for processing of applications will be held on September 2, 2011 at 10 a.m. Applicants are not required

to attend. They will be assigned numbers and will be notified via mail within a week.

To qualify for the lottery, applicants must earn no more than 60 percent of the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's median income for Honolulu, which is currently \$41,700 for 1 person; \$47,640 for 2 people; \$53,580 for 3 people and \$59,520 for 4 people.

Kekaulike Courtyards has a maximum capacity of 4 persons per household. For more details, please call 545-2993. ■

Public Invited to 71st Annual Na Hula Festival



Na Hula Festival

THE CITY'S DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION is sponsoring the 71st annual Na Hula Festival on August 7, 2011, at the Queen Kapiolani Park Bandstand from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Na Hula Festival celebrates the artistry and grace of the hula, Hawaii's premiere dance form. It is Hawaii's longest running annual non-competitive hula event which was created to provide a venue for kumu hula (hula instructors) to showcase their students. Currently, some of the kumu who participate in the hula festival teach at City parks, while others are from the community.

This free event will feature the Puanani Alama and Leilani Alama Hula Studios. Initially, Aunties Puanani and Leilani participated in the event as students but both have since progressed to kumu hula.

The 2011 Lei Queen, Sandra Lei Ilima Cabato De La Cruz and her princesses, will also make an appearance at the festival. Ms. DeLa Cruz is of Hawaiian-Filipino-Chinese ancestry and was born in Honolulu.

This year's festival will feature the following hula performers:

10 am - 10:50 am	Halau Hula O Nawahine
11 am - 11:50 am	Puanani Alama Hula Studio
Noon - 12:50 pm	Leilani Alama Hula Studio
1 pm - 1:50 pm	Halau Hula O Pua Aala Home
2 pm - 2:50 pm	Ka Hale I O Kahala
3 pm - 3:50 pm	Halau Hula O Hokulani

The public is invited to enjoy a beautiful, relaxing day of hula at the park. For more information, please contact Kaiulani Kauahi, Culture & Arts coordinator, at 768-3041 or via email at: kauahi@honolulu.gov ■

State to Pursue Early Learning Grant

THE STATE WILL BE APPLYING FOR THE NEW "RACE TO THE TOP - EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE" federal grant administered jointly by the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

The Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge encourages states to develop bold and comprehensive plans for raising the quality of early learning programs across America.

Terry Lock, the State's Early Childhood Coordinator, will take the lead in submitting the application. Hawaii may apply for up to \$50 million, a cap based on its share of the national population of children from birth to five years old from low-income families.

"We are investing in our young children so that their current and future well-being is not an afterthought," says Gov. Neil Abercrombie. "The competition for this funding will be fierce but our administration is committed to working with the community to make permanent changes that will im-

prove the lives of our keiki."

The Early Learning Challenge Grant competition will support states' efforts to:

- Increase the number and percentage of low-income and disadvantaged children in each age group of infants, toddlers and preschoolers enrolled in high-quality early learning programs;
- Design and implement an integrated system of high-quality early learning programs and services;
- Address the health, behavioral and developmental needs of high-need children to improve school readiness; and
- Ensure that any use of assessments conforms to the recommendations of the National Research Council's reports on early childhood.

Hawaii's application for the Early Learning Challenge will be aligned with the State's K-12 "Race to the Top" grant award and will build on strategies first articulated in the "Framework for a Comprehensive Early Childhood

System," written by the Hawaii Early Learning Council in December 2010.

The Early Learning Council was created by the Legislature in 2008 to develop and administer Hawaii's early learning system. Key elements of the framework are early education and health services, parent education and family support, and workforce and professional development.

"The Early Learning Council's framework represents the collective vision of hundreds of people across our state—but to make this happen we are in desperate need of public and private investments," says Dr. Robert Peters, Chair of the Early Learning Council. "The members of the Early Learning Council are committed to working with Gov. Abercrombie to build capacity and improve high quality early learning for all young children with a focus on those most at risk."

Awards in the Early Learning Challenge will go to states that are leading the way with ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling and comprehensive early learning education reform. ■

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City to Evaluate Sludge Hauling by Mid-August

THE CITY ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL INVESTIGATE THE FEASIBILITY of hauling sewage sludge from the Sand Island Wastewater Treatment Plant to the Honolulu Wastewater Treatment Plant starting in mid-August.

According to Mayor Peter Carlisle, the City will haul no more than one 5,000 gallon truck load per day from Sand Island to Honolulu, on intermittent days, for no more than 30 days. Future testing may also include hauling similar loads to the Wai'anae and/or Kailua treatment plants.

Prior to testing, a public informational meeting will be held on August 1, 2011 at 7 pm at in the Mission Memorial Auditorium. The Department of Environmental Services (ENS) will also set up a hotline for callers to report problems encountered during the feasibility testing.

Mayor Carlisle also ordered an environmental assessment of the potential of hauling additional loads of sludge for a sustained period. According to ENS officials, sewage sludge processed at the Sand Island plant currently exceeds the capacity of the single Sand Island digester. The efficiency of the plant

was improved in 2008, which led to increased amounts of sludge being removed from the wastewater.

By early 2010, the digester was reaching its designed capacity. The mayor's proposed budget provided for funding a second sludge digester for the Sand Island plant but a vote by the City Council on June 3 eliminated \$26 million for the project.

"If funding for a second digester had not been removed, some limited trucking of sludge would have been a remote contingency during the interim construction period," says ENV director Tim Steinberger. "It is more likely now and on a sustained basis, which is why test runs are necessary."

According to Carlisle, the City will have no choice but to truck sludge to other treatment plants on Oahu "if circumstances go south at Sand Island."

"As an absolute last resort, if trucking is not available, the City must issue a moratorium on sewer hookups to limit the volume processed by the existing digester," he says. "A moratorium unnecessarily harms the economy during a time when jobs are essential. To do nothing would be irresponsible." ■

IMMIGRATION GUIDE

Deport Me If You Can - Gay Filipino TNT



by Atty. Emmanuel Samonte TIPON

Jose, a Filipino from Zambales, has come out of the closet – as a gay man and as a TNT – with a flourish. He wrote an article in the New York Times on June 22, 2011 titled "My Life as an Undocumented Immigrant" detailing his life as a TNT in the Bay Area from the time he was smuggled by a coyote using a fake name and a fake passport in 1993 when he was 12. Not only that, he went on Comedy Central television last week and was interviewed by Stephen Colbert.

In his article, he explained that he came out of the TNT closet because "I'm tired of running. I'm exhausted. I don't want that life anymore."

But in his interview, he appeared confident and combative. He mocked U.S. immigration law and policy. Jose called it a "broken system." But if it is a broken, who broke it? The millions of illegal aliens who broke the law and have no right to be in the United States in the first place. Colbert told Jose "Stand up and raise your right hand." Jose complied. "Now raise your left hand." Jose complied again. "Now turn around and turn yourself in." Jose put his hands down and laughed.

So, what is the Honorable Secretary of Homeland Security and her go go Immigration and Customs Enforcement going to do about Jose? Will they deport him? Or will they be afraid of the New York Times or Comedy Central? Millions who have read or heard about Jose are watching and waiting. They are not laughing.

However, Jose better not land

in Hawaii. Here foreign born people arrested by the police who report them to ICE without need of an Arizona-type immigration law are placed in removal proceedings if they have committed immigration violations. Even anonymous reports of immigration offenses by disgruntled relatives and "friends" are acted upon by ICE.

UNDOCUMENTED ALIEN HAS DOCUMENTS COMING OUT OF HIS EARS

While there was mixed reaction to Jose's outing, the strongest condemnation came from another Filipino, Michelle Maglalang Malkin, a best-seller author and syndicated columnist who said: "With great fanfare and elite media sympathy, Jose Antonio Vargas publicly declared himself an 'undocumented immigrant' last week. 'Undocumented' my you-know-what...

He had documents coming out of his ears. The Times featured full-color photos of Vargas' fake document trope – including a fake passport with a fake name, a fake green card and a Social Security card his grandfather doctored for him at a Kinko's. He committed perjury repeatedly on federal I-9 employment eligibility forms. In 2002... an immigration lawyer told him he needed to accept the consequences of his law-breaking and return to his native Philippines. Following the rules would have meant a 10-year bar to re-entry into America. Making false claims of citizenship is a felony offense. Document fraud is a felony offense."

Before DHS gets around to arresting and placing Jose in removal proceedings – if it will ever do – he better retain an excellent lawyer. There are certain pre-arrest strategies that can be done. If Jose is placed in detention, it is not easy to maneuver. Aliens who have committed immigration violations should be aware that Immigration judges

do not like aliens who are combative or who mock immigration laws or advocate reform. They are more sympathetic to those who appear contrite and remorseful and who have done things that benefit the community rather than simply TNT.

Getting liberal legislators to file a private bill will not work. The equal protection of the laws defenders will not vote for it. The Pro-Obama liberals did not even try the private bill route when his aunt was placed in removal proceedings. It can buy time, though.

How about Jose marrying another gay guy who is a U.S. citizen? ■

(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: filam-law@uhoos.com. Websites: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com, and www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. Listen to the most witty, interesting, and informative radio program in Hawaii on KNDD at 1270 AM dial every Thursday at 7:30 a.m., rebroadcast at www.tlko.com.)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Spratlys' Peace and Sovereignty Mission: What Difference Did It Make?

by Rommel C. BANLAOI / Thursday, July 21, 2011

MANILA, Philippines -- UNPERTURBED BY STRONG WARNING FROM CHINA, four members of the House of Representatives landed to Pag-Asa Island yesterday in a visit that was ambiguously called "peace and sovereignty" mission.

Though not officially sanctioned by the Congress, the four congressmen, namely, Walden Bello (Akabay Party List), Kaka Bag-ao (Akabay Party List), Teddy Brawner Baguilat (Ifugao) and Ben Evardone (Eastern Samar), was accompanied by Lt. Gen. Juancho Sabban (chief of the Western Command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines), Palawan Governor Baham Mitra and Kalayaan Mayor Eugenio Biton-On.

The Office of the President said that the mission was "unofficial" and should not heighten the on-going tensions in the Spratlys. Funding of the said mission came from the national coffers but from the private pockets of "patriotic" Chinese-Filipino businessmen including Starbucks king, Jun Lopez of the Tantoco family.

While the mission has been described as "non-provocative" by the concerned lawmakers, China

regarded it as a "provocative mission", which can undermine regional peace and stability.

There are academic talks in Beijing that while the Philippine government did not officially sanction the mission, the presence of the Palawan Governor, the Kalayaan Mayor and even the Commander of the Western Command of the AFP delivered a message that the visit was "officially tolerated" to assert Philippine sovereign rights in the West Philippine Sea and territorial integrity in the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG).

But what difference did the mission make insofar as Philippine positions in the KIG were concerned?

The mission did make a difference.

First, the mission took place despite the stern warning from China. The recent visit to Spratlys by Philippine lawmakers aptly demonstrated that the activity was an internal affair of the Philippines that China had nothing to do about, except to express its disdain through a diplomatic protest. The mission also delivered a message that China should not interfere to the domestic affairs of the Philippines.

Second, the mission indicated that the Spratly issue is strongly



AFP Western Command chief Lt. Gen. Juancho Sabban, right, Mayor Eugenio Biton-On, 2nd right, and Philippine Congressman Walden Bello, 3rd right, walk along the shores of Pagasa Island, part of the disputed Spratly group of islands, in the South China Sea located off the coast of western Philippines Wednesday

becoming a civil society concern in the Philippines with the involvement of the private sector that funded the visit, not to mention the participation of two Congressmen representing the Akabay Party with a strong civil society backing.

The visit, therefore, meant that official claims of the Philippine government over the Spratlys are getting the ownership of the wider Philippine society.

Third, the raising of Philippine flag, the singing of Philippine national anthem and the reciting of Panatanga Makabayan (Pledge of Nationalism) by lawmakers, local government officials, military per-

sonnel and officers, and residents of Pag-Asa Island were strong symbols of growing Philippine unity to defend Philippine ownership of the KIG.

Fourth, the mission took place while China and members of the Association of Southeast Asian

Nations (ASEAN) were crafting the guidelines on how to implement the 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC).

The mission conveyed a message that while the Philippine government has embraced multilateral cooperation to resolve the Spratly Disputes, it reserves its sovereign rights to act unilaterally to protect what it deems as part of its national territory.

It remains to be seen how China can further react on the aftermath of the mission.

But there is no doubt that the mission could affect the agenda of the planned visit to China this year of President Benigno Simeon Aquino III.

The challenge now to the Filipino lawmakers who visited Pag-Asa is how to convince their colleagues in the Congress to pass the needed law that will strengthen Philippine legal claims of the KIG and its surrounding waters in the West Philippine Sea. (www.philstar.com) ■

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TRAVEL & TOURISM

Under the Shade of the Acacia in Anilao

RENDEZVOUZ by Christine DAYRIT

Too much reflection destroys spontaneity." Applying this maxim to wanderlust and sudden travel, and you may just find yourself with even more fulfilling sojourns than thoroughly planned itineraries.

Two weekends ago, my quick odyssey to the tree-lined and beach-combed Anilao, one of the country's diving meccas, was no exception to this rambunctious state of mind. Those instant bursts of spontaneity came when dear friends proposed that we all drive to the mountains and explore this quaint dive resort over an hour out of the city! After we planned out the route from Manila to Anilao via Tagaytay, we packed our bags, and off we sped for a unique road travel conquest once again.

Winding down the lush forests, we admired the ecological sights that led us through the picture-perfect views of the lush mountains and the watery avenues of Taal Lake. The sight of such eco-luxury treasures never cease to amaze as we reveled in the breathtaking crater of Taal Volcano in front of us and the thick verdant forests where historic Japanese trails beckon to trekkers, hikers and even treasure seekers. As the gorgeous sun sank into the horizon, leaving a trail of crimson and golden streaks of its luminescence, we observed the placid Laguna de Bay. Off we were to our home away from home for the



Learn how to dive as you savor the serenity under the majestic acacia tree that dominates the entire property.

weekend where the quaint and cozy Acacia Resort in Anilao, Batangas beckoned.

True to its name, a magnificent acacia tree, with its mighty boughs spread majestically in the middle of the boutique haven, greets you and instantly recaptures your fondness for this charming sanctuary by the sea. With the twinkling stars above to light our way, we heard the cacophony of the sounds of nature performing their welcome melody for us. We shared a hearty buffet meal of fresh salad with tangy Thai dressing, sautéed cabbage, tunasalpicao, and mini mango crepes with sweet cream and retreated into our well-appointed suites spacious enough to accommodate a family of four or five. Cool

air conditioning, yellow lights, 300-thread-count crisp beddings, comforters and a spacious bathroom with marble tabletop and Zen spa fixtures will surely satisfy the most discriminating of travelers.

"This is a very luxurious resort for divers," I declared to ace photo-journalist/expert diver Yvette Lee who led our group to this seaside sanctuary.

Yvette retorted, "This is very practical for divers like us, everything we need is just within reach.

The gracious owner of Acacia resort, Chito Aquino, set this up in a very practical, very functional manner not to mention it is quite luxurious. There is Wi-Fi connection everywhere, the dining area is near the rooms, the swimming pool for dive lessons is just below, adjacent to the dive center for equipment and the marine-rich waters for dive lessons and dive escapades invite one and all just a hop in front of the resort!"

For the duration of our stay in Acacia, our friends Kahili Macan and Leo Alcantara merrily recalled and recited Joyce Kilmer's poem, "Trees," which became our bedtime rhyme as we retreated to slumber land.

Many resorts located in Anilao offer dive services, but this one has a unique value proposition because it offers luxury accommodations for travelers, whether divers or not. Not everyone in the family or group may dive, but there are still a variety of activities for the non-divers to engage in. One can go snorkeling, island hopping, or have a cook fest in the resort if you wish. If these activities do not suffice, simply rest under the shade of the gigantic acacia tree

and pray and reflect. You can also watch a film or TV show of your choice in the dining area, sip a tangy amaretto sour or piña colada and bask in the beauty and grace of the tropical paradise.

At the break of dawn, I spent quiet time reading my Bible as I viewed the sunrise from the deck of the resort and marveled at the Creator's Hand in manifesting such eco-luxury. "Be still and know that I am God," my consciousness echoed to my soul. Reflect on who and what matters most. We often forget what we should remember and remember what we should forget.

I looked forward to having refresher courses in diving in the Acacia pool. Somehow I felt secure in the mighty shade of the delightful tree that has been standing there for centuries.

After breakfast, we met our boat driver and his colorful banca by the beach. Soon enough we were skimming along the blue waters under breezy and sunny skies.

We circumnavigated the cove and positioned ourselves for our introductory dive. The water on the surface was cheerfully cold but as we dove down 30 feet, the warm silver bubbles seemed to percolate throughout the body and a rainbow of angelic fish and eclectic corals greeted our team of dive enthusiasts. Twin Rocks is one of the most successful marine sanctuaries due to its proximity to the shoreline and adjacent dive resorts.

As we neared the two underwater monoliths, the water in front took on an ominous dark shade. My nervous breathing gave way to excited squeals when I realized that the humongous shadow was caused by an immense school of jacks. The last time I had such a heavenly encounter of this nature was in the waters of Palau in Micronesia!

The current brought us directly



Gladys Cathedral Rock: The first check-out and fun dive of Manila-based divers is usually done at Cathedral Rock

into their school and their numbers overwhelmed me. Speeding about like large silver torpedoes, I watched their mouth gulp in the plankton rich waters, as their large black eyes seemed larger than life. I finned against the current in an attempt to stay with them a little longer until I gave in to exhaustion and drifted with the current over a Technicolor reef.

These sudden bursts of electrifying color were just as satisfying as this sudden trip to Anilao reputed to be among the world's best dive sites. Yvette had been diving and photographing these treasures of the sea for decades. Even as she has gone diving in unique dive destinations like Tubataha, Sipadan, Galapagos, she is quick to quip that Anilao still tops most of them when it comes to critter photography.

Other famous sites in the area include Kirbys, Bahura, Beatrice Rock and even a site called Basura because of the amount of garbage in the water that has turned into residues for creatures that are much sought after by photo enthusiasts.

Kudos to the dive community here of resort owners, dive groups and private individuals whose conservation efforts and sheer determination to improve tourism services are truly laudable.

Check out the Acacia resort. Here, the "inn-timate" settings of eco-luxury just outside the metropolises are a great escape for discerning travelers.

Think no further; just pack your bags and head this way. Sudden trips like this may be just what you need. Life is short; follow your passions and wanderlust instincts. Who knows, it may just bring about that much-coveted impetus for you to savor the joy of abundance of the ocean and what lies beneath and far beyond. To borrow a line from the intrepid explorer Paul Gauguin: "Closer than you imagined, more than you dreamed." It is time to experience this jewel of a resort gently nestled under the shade of the glorious acacia tree in Anilao. (www.philstar.com) ■



Holy anemone: Several species of magnificent anemone fish abound in Anilao waters.



Beatrice Rock: One of the area's famous sites is overrun with coral and pink anthias fishes

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Comelec Detains Bedol

by Sheila CRISOSTOMO/
Wednesday, July 20, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - **FORMER MAGUINDANAO ELECTION SUPERVISOR LINTANG BEDOL**, wearing a bulletproof vest, surfaced yesterday after four years in hiding to begin serving a six-month jail term for direct contempt, and to face the certainty of further grilling for his role in alleged massive poll fraud in 2004 and 2007.

Amid media frenzy, Bedol arrived at the Comelec main office in Intramuros at around 9:25 a.m. accompanied by his lawyer Roberto Ullado and security escorts from the Department of the Interior and Local Government. He surrendered to the DILG last Friday.

"Attorney Bedol has been turned over to us. So officially, Attorney Bedol is now in the custody of the commission," Comelec chairman Sixto Brillantes said. "Today, the service of his sentence starts."

Bedol was brought to Brillantes' office and presented to the media shortly after. He refused to answer questions, and merely wanted to reporters, saying, "Hello. Kumusta kayo lahat (How is everybody)?"

Brillantes said the Comelec was already in possession of an affidavit executed earlier by Bedol. The poll body is examining the affidavit, Brillantes said.

Bedol's lawyer said his client "voluntarily surrendered to the DILG last Friday upon securing a copy of the 'alias' warrant of arrest" issued by the Comelec.

Ullado said the former Maguindanao election official stayed at the DILG during the weekend. He said Bedol was turned over to the Comelec only yesterday for "security reasons."

The Comelec decided to send Bedol to Camp Crame in Quezon City where he will serve his jail term.

"The final decision of the commission en banc turned out to be a unanimous vote except for commissioner (Rene) Sarmiento, who is abroad. It (detention) will be in the Philippine National Police (PNP) Custodial Center in Camp Crame," Brillantes told reporters.

The Comelec will send its own security personnel to guard Bedol round-the-clock "just to actually show the fact that he is under custody of the Comelec" even if he is in Camp Crame.

Superintendent Cesar Maginsio, head of the Custodial Center at the PNP headquarters in Quezon City, said Bedol is locked up in a three-meter by three-meter room with a wooden bed. He arrived at the camp around noon.

The poll body had considered detaining Bedol at Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan, Taguig City but had to eventually settle for Camp Crame to prevent his possible contact with members of the Ampatuan family, principal suspects in the 2009 Maguindanao massacre.

"We don't want to be there together. We just want to make sure. They might be in contact there. The media should know that in statements they gave, there appears to be some communication (between them)," he added.

Televised revelations of poll fraud by Bedol and former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao governor Zaldy Ampatuan came only days apart from each other, sparking accusations by the opposition that their coming out was part of the Aquino administration's grand scheme to pin down Arroyo for poll fraud.



Former Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol wears a bullet-proof vest as he greets members of the media at the COMELEC main office in Manila.
Photography by Edd Gomban

DILG'S HELP

Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said Bedol called the DILG to volunteer information regarding poll anomalies in 2007 as well as seek protection.

"Bedol said he will make an affidavit, can you accommodate me there?" Robredo said, quoting Bedol as having asked a DILG personnel over the phone.

"He claimed he is interested in settling his problem with the Comelec or else he will always be on the run," Robredo told a press briefing.

He said the DILG took custody of Bedol last Friday, and informed Brillantes of the development.

The DILG chief said two other individuals have expressed intention to corroborate Bedol's statement. He said the two are already in Metro Manila.

Robredo stressed that he never met or spoke with Bedol when the latter was in the DILG to prevent insinuations of conspiracy.

"We will never be a part of any script. He volunteered and I think insinuation that there's a script is misplaced," said Robredo.

Robredo said Bedol's affidavit was a reiteration of his statement that he was under instructions to make sure that three then opposition senatorial candidates - Aquino, Panfilo Lacson, and Alan Peter Cayetano - did not get votes in Maguindanao.

However, the election materials were lost while being transported, according to Bedol.

In the alleged manipulated results, Luis 'Chavit' Singson topped the race followed by now Sen. Miguel Zubiri.

Bedol claimed former Comelec chairman Benjamin Abalos, commissioners Rene Sarmiento and Nicodemus Ferrer authenticated fake election materials.

SEPARATE TESTIMONIES

At Malacañang, spokesman Edwin Lacerda said Bedol's testimony should be taken separately from that of Ampatuan's.

Lacerda also stressed that Bedol's decision to surface was not a quid pro quo arrangement with Ampatuan, who is facing a number of charges, including conspiracy in the Maguindanao massacre case.

The camp of former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was claiming that Ampatuan offered Bedol and himself as witnesses in the electoral fraud so the former governor could get out of jail.

Bedol is not an accused in the Maguindanao massacre case and there are speculations that it was Ampatuan who hid him at the time Congress and authorities were investigat-

(continued on page 11)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Noy Signs Law on Faster Release of Retirement Benefits

by Delon **PORCALLA**
Wednesday, July 6, 2011

MANILA, Philippines – GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE retired from public service will now get their retirement benefits and gratuities a month after they relinquished their posts, thanks to a law President Aquino signed recently.

In a statement, Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr. said retiring state workers no longer have to worry about unnecessary delay in their lump sum entitlements as this has been addressed by Republic Act 10154 that Aquino signed last July 15.

The new law requires all state agencies to release the retirement benefits within 30 days after the actual date of retirement. It also provides for penalties for unjustified delays in the release of these benefits.

RA 10154 covers all branches, agencies and/or instrumentalities of the government, including govern-

ment-owned and/or -controlled corporations (GOCCs), but excludes personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

The law shall be applicable both to applications for compulsory retirement and optional or early retirement as authorized by law.

Under the law, the employer-agency, the Government Service Insurance System, Home Development Mutual Fund and the Department of Budget and Management are directed to ensure that all the benefits of a retiring government worker are released on time.

"Government officers and employees have spent the best years of their lives in public service and it is only appropriate that they be extended what is due them under our laws without unwarranted delays," Ochoa said.

Ochoa said the new retirement law "is consistent with the 1987 Constitution for the protection of the rights of workers and the promotion

of their welfare, as it is likewise in accord with the GSIS Act of 1997."

To ensure compliance with the 30-day prescribed period, the law orders retiring employees to submit their requirements to the concerned government agency at least 90 days before the effective date of their retirement.

In the event an employee has a pending case and his retirement benefits are being lawfully withheld due to possible financial liability, the head of the agency handling the case is directed to terminate or resolve the case three months prior to his actual retirement date.

Failure to resolve the case within the prescribed period without justifiable reasons will cause the immediate release of the employee's retirement benefits without prejudice to the ultimate resolution of the case.

RA 10154 shall take effect 15 days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in two newspapers of general circulation. (www.philstar.com)

P-Noy Working to Make Country Top Tourist Destination

by Delon **PORCALLA**
Wednesday, July 6, 2011

MANILA (Xinhua) – PRESIDENT BENIGNO AQUINO III SAID ON TUESDAY that his administration is working hard in order for the country to be a top tourist destination.

"Under our administration the tourism sector is finally getting the attention it rightfully deserves. At the bottom line is a better life for the Filipino people. Tourism means jobs, as every person visiting this country means more opportunities," the President said in a speech delivered at the 6th Ambassadors and Consuls General and Tourism Directors' Tour.

The Chief Executive cited the Puerto Princesa Underground River in the western Philippine province of Palawan as one of the must-see tourist spots. The Underground River is one of the major contenders in the search for the New Seven Wonders of Nature.

Aquino said infrastructure projects are also underway to enhance the capabilities of the country's aviation facilities that

will make traveling easier for the visitors.

He said the tourism department has targeted 77 tourism development areas across the country adding that the success of such efforts depends on infrastructure developments that will serve as the foundations of progress.

"We have taken steps to liberalize aviation as well, which will effectively allow our tourists' access to friendlier airfares and to more plane rides to our tourist destinations. We are making it easier and less tiring for them to reach their destinations," the President said.

He also noted the increase of tourists in the country saying that the numbers will continue to rise with the continuing efforts being exerted by the administration.

"We have 3.2 million visitors in the period of July 2009 to June 2010, and the most recent reports bare that the visitors count within the same period during this administration has risen to more than 3.7 million," the President said. (www.philstar.com)

(cont. from page 10; COMELEC ...)

ing electoral fraud in 2004 and 2007.

"First of all, Zaldy Ampatuan is a separate issue. We've already mentioned our position there. And I think, it's not even something that we can think about. We are not negotiating that. Zaldy Ampatuan's freedom? No. I don't think that possible, even probable. That can't happen," Lacierda said.

"In fact, we are waiting for him (Bedol), allegedly he executed an affidavit. We have not seen the affidavit. We don't know what he's going to say before the public," Lacierda added.

Lacierda said their expectations were based on what had been stated by Bedol in his statements before the media.

"We expect him to, of course, reveal these details. But, we just have to wait for them to substantiate the claims that he made. And according to (Justice) Secretary Leila de Lima, she's going to assess and evaluate the testimony of Mr. Bedol," Lacierda said.

Lacierda said the possible charges that could be filed against those possibly involved in cheating in the 2004 and 2007 elections would depend on De Lima's assessment of Bedol's claims.

Lacierda pointed out the important thing was to know the truth about the 2004 and 2007 elections and Bedol could be listened to as he had been claiming knowledge of what exactly happened.

He said it would be up to the family of the late actor and presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. to determine their legal remedies in case electoral fraud in 2004 was proven.

"I understand the family of the late FPJ wants the electoral officials or those involved to be pun-

ished. I don't know if that is still possible, I would leave that to the legal minds, election lawyers and experts to venture an opinion on that," Lacierda said.

Lacierda also denied that President Aquino had secretly met with Ampatuan in prison. "Why should there be a need to meet with Zaldy Ampatuan?"

Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) chair Henrietta de Villa, for her part, said Bedol should give his account of poll irregularities in a sworn affidavit and supported with evidence. She also said the former Maguindanao poll official should still be made to face charges for his role in election fraud in 2007.

"It would be good that Comelec would pursue the charges filed against him and he should issue a sworn statement and not just words. He should state what he knows and identify the others (who allegedly took part in the poll cheating)," De Villa said.

"We all know that there was really no true election that took place in this province," he said.

De Villa also said that while she agrees with Comelec's pronouncements that it can no longer undo the proclamation of Arroyo, there's still a need to unearth the truth.

"But the thing is (we should) get to the bottom of it, what happened in 2004. Even if it had no longer undo, if there was a wrong proclamation, we would still have to find out who perpetuated this," she said.

Election lawyer Romulo Macalintal, who had served as legal counsel for Arroyo and even for some members of the Ampatuan family, said there appeared to be no evidence of massive poll

cheating in 2004 because no cases had been filed.

"When Namfrel (National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections) says there was cheating, were they able to file cases? What cases were filed and were there resolutions? We cannot just say that there was cheating, if there were evidence then there should have been appropriate action of the concerned agencies," Macalintal said.

"I am inhibiting myself from making a statement... I just hope that Comelec and the concerned individuals would move forward," he said.

But he said the prescribed time for filing of cases against Mrs. Arroyo in connection with the 2004 elections has already lapsed.

He said a case should have been filed five years after the alleged cases of poll fraud. Such rule, however, does not apply to the 2007 elections since under the Election Sabotage Law, the prescribed time has been extended to 20 years.

"What is important here is if they have documents in their possession and not just stories. Because if we only have stories, we know that these things happened and there were already investigations, but the outcome was still not that clear," Namfrel secretary-general Eric Alvia said on Bedol's and Ampatuan's revelations.

"There were evidence presented but these were not pursued. Let us not even look at what motivated the two (Bedol and Zaldy Ampatuan) to come out, what is important is that they present the documents to prove what they are saying," Alvia said.

"There was an election but we cannot call it a fair and clean election," he said. (www.philstar.com) ■

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

'Garci, Come Out'

by Sheila CRISOSTOMO/
Thursday, July 21, 2011

MANILA, Philippines - COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS CHAIRMAN SIXTO BRILLANTES

yesterday called on former Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to come out and shed light on alleged irregularities in the 2004 presidential race.

"I used to have his number, but now I can no longer contact him. I just want to tell him to come out and help me uncover what really happened in 2004," Brillantes said at a press briefing.

"Commissioner Garcillano, please come out. Anyway we now have a different administration," he said.

In a wiretapped phone conversation, a male voice widely believed to be that of Garcillano assured a

woman who sounded like President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of more than one million votes over top contender Fernando Poe Jr.

The conversation occurred during the canvassing of votes in the 2004 elections. The woman called the man "Garci." The controversy came to be known as the "Hello, Garci" scandal.

According to Brillantes, Garcillano's testimony is vital to the investigation into the alleged manipulation of the 2004 polls.

The poll chief said they are validating reports that Garcillano is in Subic, Cagayan de Oro or Bukidnon, where he once ran for local office but lost.

Brillantes also said that they would be conducting a separate probe on the possible role of Com-

elec director for Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Rey Sumalipao in the "Hello, Garci" scandal.

Sumalipao was among the poll officials allegedly mentioned in the Garci tapes.

"He's the one who requested that. He wants an investigation to be done so that he could clear his name. So we'll be looking into this," he added.

GARCI AS WITNESS?

Malacañang is open to Garcillano possibly coming out and revealing more details about the massive election fraud in 2004.

"It is something that we would like to see. We need closure, and closure can be done by the perpetrators themselves. Garci was the one. The 'Hello, Garci' thing had a very massive impact on the legiti-

macy of the Arroyo government," presidential spokesman Edwin Lacierda said.

"And certainly if Mr. Garcillano can reveal the truth, wouldn't it be better for Filipinos to have closure on this issue?" he asked.

"It's something like, there's an expectation that since Lintang Bedal reports to Garci (then he may also have something to do with the case). So inilipag na rin ng taumbayan na baka si Garci ay ililataw na rin (The people think Garcillano may also resurface). But we have no feelers," Lacierda pointed out.

"I think it's something that we really welcome. It's something that now that people are coming out and revealing the truth," he said. "It seems like people are asking also, is Garci coming out? But if you're asking if there are feelers, none that I know of."

The presidential spokesman said the administration is ready to entertain anyone who can provide information regarding the alleged massive cheating in the 2004 and 2007 elections.

"Certainly everybody, (including) media. We will welcome everyone in the revelation of the truth... anyone who will bring light to the fraud of 2004 and 2007," Lacierda said.

Lacierda also assured potential witnesses of protection. He said people are coming out to volunteer leads "because of the confidence that this government will bring closure, and that this government was not in any way a participant in the electoral fraud in the past two elections."

"Certainly, yes we will promise to bring closure. And that's maybe the incentive why people are coming out now," he said.

(www.philstar.com) ■

MAINLAND NEWS

Ellen DeGeneres' Filipino Housekeeper Now on TV

by Manny TOPACIO

THE HOUSEKEEPER OF THE FAMOUS TALK SHOW HOST, ELLEN DEGENERES is now on television. Luzviminda Casimiro, better known as "Mindy" to her friends now has a regular TV Segment on the Ellen DeGeneres Show.

It all started late last year, 2010, when Ellen DeGeneres asked Mindy if she wants to watch movies especially in DVDs. When Mindy responded to Ellen that she would enjoy that very much Ellen gave her a bunch of DVDs that include The Black Swan, Inception, The King's Speech, True Grit, So-

cial Network, Toy Story 3 and 127 Hours. Ellen told Mindy to watch the movies and let her know later what she thinks about them.

Mindy was surprised since all the movies were newly-released and not yet available on DVD. After several days, Ellen told Mindy a TV crew is coming to interview her about the movies she watched. Ellen advised Mindy to just be herself and to tell the TV crew whatever she thinks of the movies that she has previewed.

Earlier this year, 2011, a few weeks before the Oscar Awards Night, Ellen DeGeneres presented to the public the first Television ap-



Mindy Casimiro

pearance of her housekeeper, Mindy, in a segment called Mindy's Movie Minute. The segment features Mindy talking about movies she previewed. The idea was an instant success and has become a popular segment to the ever popu-

lar Ellen DeGeneres Show. Mindy was an instant celebrity to her friends. The success of this segment did not stop there. It was followed by Mindy's Reality Roundup, where Mindy discusses really shows like Survivor, The Real Housewives, Jersey Shore and 30 Best and Worst Beach Bodies.

Mindy, is a pure blooded Filipino, who came all the way from Tarlac, Philippines. She is married to Joel or "Boyet" Casimiro. Both are employed by Ellen DeGeneres for almost four years now. They are the so called "encargado" of the house, Boyet as a driver and

who take care of the private car and commercial truck. Mindy is the one in-charge of maintaining the house clean. Together, they attend to some chores that Ellen sometimes tells them to do. Mindy and her husband, Boyet is not new working with this kind of celebrities. Before working with Ellen, they used to work with the producer of Will and Grace.

You can catch Mindy on the Ellen DeGeneres Show on NBC Monday through Friday or you can log in into www.YouTube.com and search for Mindy's Movie Minute or Ellen DeGeneres Housekeeper on TV. (www.asianjournal.com) ■

Filipino Maid Testifies vs UAE Employer

from AP/
Thursday, July 21, 2011

PROVIDENCE, Rhode Island — A FILIPINO MAID TESTIFIED ON MONDAY THAT SHE FEARED the United Arab Emirates naval officer who brought her to the United States where he with-

held wages, took her passport and told her not to speak with outsiders while working for him in the state of Rhode Island.

Elizabeth Cabilla Ballesteros was the first witness called to testify in the trial of Col. Arif Mohamed Saeed Mohamed Al-Ali, who has

pleaded not guilty to charges that he lured Ballesteros to the US, failed to pay her and kept her confined in his house. Chief Judge Mary Lisi is presiding over the bench trial in the US District Court in Providence.

Ballesteros became emotional and wiped tears from her eyes at times while describing her time working for Al-Ali. She said Al-Ali warned her against escaping from the East Greenwhite home where he lived with his wife and five children.

Ballesteros testified Al-Ali told her: "Do not talk to anybody. Do not think to escape because the whole Navy is in support of me."

Ballesteros traveled to the United States with Al-Ali in July 2010 after working for the family for three years in the United Arab Emirates. Al-Ali was in Rhode Island to train at the Naval War College in Newport.

Ballesteros testified that she attended a picnic on Aug. 6, 2010, with Al-Ali and his family, and encountered a Filipino woman there. She said she gave the woman a piece of paper with her cellphone number on it.

"I told her, 'Ma'am, please help me,'" said Ballesteros, who testified that she worked on weekdays from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. and on weekends from 8 a.m. to 1 a.m. "I really wanted to be rescued... I felt, God help me. God help me because I really don't know what to do."

She also said the night before she left the UAE for the United States with Al-Ali and his family, the naval officer summoned her to his bedroom, where he made her sign a document affirming her receipt of 12 monthly payments of \$1,600.

"He put it on my lap. He held my arm. He forced me to sign it," Ballesteros said through an inter-

preter. "He told me it was for his safety."

She said she was not paid, and when she confronted Al-Ali about the \$1,600 salary in her contract, he told her it was "just a piece of paper."

Prosecutors say Al-Ali sent two monthly payments of \$200 each to Ballesteros' family in the Philippines before she escaped in October 2010.

During cross-examination by defense attorney Robert Corrente, Ballesteros acknowledged she did not read her contract with Al-Ali before signing it. She also said she did not contact authorities, friends or families when Al-Ali had her sign a document attesting she had received 12 monthly payments of \$1,600.

Corrente's cross-examination of Ballesteros is expected to resume on Tuesday. (www.philstar.com) ■

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LEGAL NOTES

Immigration Authorities Must Exercise Discretion



by Reuben S. SEGURITAN

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Director John Morton recently released a guidance memo to ICE personnel regarding the apprehension, detention and deportation of aliens. The June 17, 2011 memorandum reminds them to regularly exercise "prosecutorial discretion" in order to prioritize the use of the agency's limited resources, such as personnel, detention space, and removal assets, and to ensure that

the aliens it removes reflect its enforcement priorities.

Prosecutorial discretion refers to a law enforcement agency's authority to decide to what degree to enforce the law against a particular individual. If discretion is favorably exercised, ICE in effect decides not to exercise the full scope of enforcement authority that is available to it.

The guidance builds on ICE's March 2, 2011 memo which placed highest priority to aliens that are national security or public safety risks. Recent illegal entrants and fugitives or those who obstruct immigration controls are given second and third priority, respectively.

The exercise of prosecutorial discretion can take many forms, such as the decision whether to issue or cancel a notice of detainer,

or whether to issue, reissue, serve, file or cancel a deportation notice. Discretion may be exercised in deciding whom to stop, question or arrest for an administrative violation; settling or dismissing a proceeding; or granting deferred action or parole or staying a final order of removal.

ICE officers, agents and attorneys are required to consider all relevant factors, including the person's length of presence in the U.S. particularly while in lawful status; circumstances of arrival in the U.S. and manner of entry; pursuit of education in the U.S.; service by the person or an immediate relative in the U.S. military; criminal and immigration history; ties and contributions to the community; ties to the home country and conditions in the country; and eligibility for relief from removal, such as asylum, being a victim of domestic violence or human trafficking or a relative of a

U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident (LPR).

"Prompt particular care and consideration" is called for when a case involves veterans and members of the U.S. army, long-time LPRs, minors, elderly individuals, pregnant or nursing women, individuals present in the U.S. since childhood and those with serious mental or physical disabilities or health conditions.

Negative factors that will be considered include risks posed to national security, a serious or lengthy criminal record, being a known gang member, or having an egregious record of immigration violations, including a record of illegal reentry and having engaged in immigration fraud.

While prosecutorial discretion may be exercised at any stage of the enforcement proceeding, in order to preserve resources ICE officers, agents and attorneys are

asked to exercise it as early as possible and even before a request from the alien or the alien's advocate or attorney.

A related memorandum by Mr. Morton focuses on victims and witnesses of crime and individuals pursuing legitimate civil rights complaints. The memo, also dated June 17, 2011, states that it is against ICE policy to initiate removal proceedings against such individuals, and reminds its agents to exercise discretion on a case-by-case basis, noting the deterrent effect that detention and deportation actions by ICE may have on a person's decision and ability to report crimes or protect his/her civil rights and liberties. ■

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

MAINLAND NEWS

Fil-Ams Protest Chinese Intrusion of Spratlys

by Joseph PIMENTEL/
Saturday, July 9, 2011

A SPIRITED AND VOCAL GROUP OF FILIPINO AMERICANS gathered outside the Chinese Consulate in Los Angeles and protested China's intrusion of the resource rich Spratly Islands.

More than 150 Fil-Ams, joined by Vietnamese and American protesters, picketed outside the Chinese Consulate holding up signs that denounce China as a bully and chanted "Who's Oil? Our Oil! Who's soil? Our soil!"

"Wake up Filipinos!" said Rocio Nuyda, secretary of US Pinoyros for Good Governance (USP4GG), the group responsible for organizing the protests.

"The Philippines is under siege. This is a big intrusion on the Philippines. China has shown a disregard for our sovereignty. We are the rightful claimants of this land."

The protest was part of a worldwide gathering of Filipinos concerned about the ongoing dispute over the Spratly Islands -- a group of tiny islands in Southeast Asia, about 150 miles South of Palawan.

The islands are full of natural resources under the sea floor, said Nuyda.

"Why do you think China is doing this? The island is rich in gold, black gold, oil and natural gas. Some say the resources are as large as the deposits in Nigeria and

Saudi Arabia."

China and the Philippines are among the handful of Southeast Asian countries that claim the Spratly Islands as their own.

For decades, China has claimed the island as theirs and has placed several military bases to occupy certain islands. The Philippines has geographical claim over the Spratlys because of the islands close proximity to the nation. The RP government cites the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, saying the islands are within the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone.

Other countries that lay claim to the islands include Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam.

In May, the Philippines accused China of entering its waters around the Spratly Islands and have sought help from the US government.

The US Senate recently passed a resolution calling for all parties involved to resolve the dispute in a peaceful and multilateral way.

The protest on Friday, though, is just the beginning, said Nuyda.

Nuyda said she was surprised by the large turnout, with only a week's worth of preparation.

"Honestly, I was only expecting 40, maybe 50 people to show up. More than 150 people came," she said. "It just shows how important

this issue is in our community."

John Mina of the Filipino American Library participated in the protest.

"As Fil-Ams we need to voice our concern of what's going on between China and the Philippines," he said.

Retiree Celia Velasquez agreed. She said China shouldn't drill oil that belongs to the Philippines.

Nuyda said it's important for more Fil-Ams to participate and protest China.

"Regardless of your organization, religion, and politics, we are all Filipinos," she said. "It's our moral obligation to stand up for what is ours." (www.asianjournal.com) ■

GLOBAL NEWS

ASEAN, China Approve 'Guidelines' for Disputed Sea

from www.philstar.com
Wednesday, July 20, 2011

BALI, Indonesia (AP) — SENIOR CHINESE AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN OFFICIALS say they have agreed on guidelines to govern behavior in the hotly disputed and resource-rich South China Sea.

Chinese diplomat Liu Zhenmin called it a "milestone document."

For years, Beijing has resisted calls for a binding code of conduct that would require disputes in the waterway to be solved peacefully and without threats of violence.



But in a rare sign of cooperation, Zhenmin and officials from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed Wednesday that the two sides would work together toward reaching that goal.

The South China Sea, a busy shipping lane believed to be rich in oil and natural gas, is claimed in entirety by China, Taiwan and Vietnam and in part by the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei.

(www.philstar.com) ■

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PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE

Memorial Service Babaen Dagiti Dalluyon — Maysa A Tradision



DAYASADAS

by Pacita C. SALUDES

I ti Memorial Day wenno uray ania nga aldaw, mabaln nga aramiden ti uray asino daytoy a panglagip kadagiti patpatgen a napanen iti sabali a biag.

Japanese tradision kunada ngem uray met dagiti Filipino a mamati adu metten ti manger-aramid itoy a palagip. Patien kadi nga idanon ti dalluyon ti baybay dagiti an-anekek ken babalikas nga ipaw-it ti dalluyon?

Kastoy no di yo pay pinadas Kakaili. Mangisagana ti lantern nga adda agdardarang a candela a manglitugot kadagiti sinurat a bal-

balikas a nagtaud ti rikna, pakumusta ken iliw kadagiti patpatgen a napanen iti sabali a biag ken addan iti ballasiw daytoy a lubong.

Maysa a lantern a mangkarga kadagiti sassanek ken iliw ti nagawan "LAGIP KADAGITI NAGA-GAWAN" a maipaw-it kadagiti dalluyon ti baybay, a mailnngan iti kaadaywan a madanon ti manglitugot ket ipaw-itin kadagiti dalluyon!

Wen kasla di nakappapati ngem pudno! Kadagita a panawen kas paneknek dagiti nakapadases, umayda kadagiti arapaap ken tagtagainre a masungbatanda ti pudno a pannakarikna ken uray kadagiti arapaap laeng dagiti managduada.

PITO-PITO-PITO ITI TAWEN ANIA TI NADLAWYO?

Ipalagipmi latta dagiti narigat a madlaw bayat ti makalitan. Umuna, daytoy a buluan isu ti

nangsakup ti aldaw ti INDEPENDESIA. JULIO 14 a panagwaywayas ti Filipinas ken America nga pinagbalinda la ket ngarud a (FRIENDSHIP DAY).

Ti madmadlaw dagiti manglitugot daytoy nga aldaw ta nagbalin kano a nagsasat a panagkallaysa dagiti agaayan - ayat. Di ngamin malipatan ti sangalubngan, 7-7-7 Pito-Pito-Pito no diyo nadlaw adda nakallagalap a nasayaat no diman nakaupay a pasamak. Lagipenyo man? Ania ti inarammidyo iti daytoy nga aldaw a nakallagalap iti biagyo. Lagipen yo no manen no mamansan nga tawen.

CONGRATULATIONS to the New Officers of the Oahu Filipino Community Council. More Power to you! We expect another successful year for the leadership of President Maria Etratal Good Luck!

DANIW

Mangibati Iti Lagip

No ania dagiti inaramid A nakaparmay naballitukan a lagip Dagiti gapuanan wenno naisawang Nakaay-ayo man wenno nakas-ang Iti likudan, nayurit a linabag Balikas makaidagit wenno makaparagsak

Adda iti garit nga inyabelmo Makasari man wenno makaay-ayo Ladawan dayta di malipatan alintalao Dita maimaldit dintu pulos mapunas Nakaiyuritan ni lagip a di malkab Sika dayta naimes wenno nayupit Mangpatpaladot nadarisa a lagip

Tangadem kangato wenno kababa Taliawen sigikan ken likudan A nakaadawan laglagip a pakabuklan Ipatgedka no nangipategka lilaenda ka ammoon ti nangilala Nakas-ang no naduktalan nga agrarabaw Lalo no awanankat naullo a dayaw A mangartap dila a nagaraw

Ni lagip agpadpado ni lidadawanna Naruot wenno nawada a dana Naraman ken natamnya a temple Taliawen kayat a sublien Aglalo no makapasalun-at makaparegta. ■

GLOBAL NEWS

Pirate Video: Danes, Filipinos Plead for Release

from www.philstar.com
Wednesday, July 20, 2011

NAIROBI (AP) — A MARITIME INDUSTRY GROUP POSTED VIDEOS YESTERDAY ON YOUTUBE showing two Danes and four Filipinos held hostage by Somalia pirates pleading for the

Danish government and the ship's owner to help win their freedom.

Pirates seek millions of dollars to release the ships and crews they hijack off the coast of East Africa. The pirates have made such hostage videos before, but rarely, if ever, are the videos posted on

YouTube.

One of the Danish crew members, Soeren Lyngbjoern, is seen asking for the government and company to help free the crew, which was taken Jan. 12. A pirate holding the camera asks questions while three masked men holding weapons

stand in the background.

Lyngbjoern said the crew are often afraid, and that he is suffering from problems. An imprint on the video indicates it was shot last Thursday, though The Associated Press could not independently authenticate the tape or when it was shot.

"I don't think I live for much more," he said in a shaky voice that sometimes cracks with emotion.

Pirates hijacked the Danish cargo ship MV Leopard in the Arabian Sea between Yemen and Somalia. Its crew consists of four Filipinos and two Danes and is operated by the shipping company Shipcraft. Six men are seen in the video, which was shot outdoors near brush.

A second hostage seen in the videos says the Leopard was carrying military equipment.

Shipcraft said in a statement yesterday that speculation in the Danish press that the company has not been working toward the release of the hostages is not true.

"Shipcraft has since January — and with the advice from renowned security advisers and in close consultation with all relevant parties, among others the appropriate authorities — been negotiating for the fastest possible release of our crew," the company said, adding that it could not share details because it could have a negative impact on the dealings.

Shipcraft said that the crew is "under unbelievable pressure, mentally as well as physically."

The group that posted the videos, Save our Seafarers, de-

scribes itself on its website as one of the biggest maritime industry groups with 25 maritime organizations as members.

Bill Box, the campaign manager, said the group was sent a link to the footage and reposted the video to YouTube to raise awareness of the human and economic cost of piracy.

Box said some photos the group previously posted are meant to convey the "psychological and physical terror facing hostages."

"The footage is harrowing but brings into the sharp focus the terrible situation facing seafarer hostages in Somalia," he said, adding that it also prompts people to visit the website and join the campaign for international action to combat piracy.

Pirates have been holding hostages longer in apparent hopes of winning higher ransoms. The average ransom is now around \$5 million.

A spokesman for the EU Naval Force, an anti-piracy force, said the group's records show that pirates hold 19 ships and 417 hostages.

In other piracy developments, officials responsible for a small Emirati oil tanker hijacked Saturday said they have lost contact with the ship but are hopeful it will be released soon.

Omar al-Khair, general manager of the Emirates International Shipping, the vessel's manager, told The Associated Press there were 17 crew on board the United Arab Emirates-flagged MV Jubba XX. Besides the Sri Lankan captain, he

(Continued on page 15)

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

AMBASSADORS/CONSUL GENERALS AND TOURISM DIRECTORS TOUR (ACGDT)
 July 17-23, 2011 • For details, call Sheila Tarrosa @ 595-6316 Ext. 105

Emma Calvo, 833-5236

August 20, 2011 • Club House @ 94-833 Awaneli St., Waipahu • Contact: George Carpenter, 554-0495

CONFEDERATION OF ILOCANO ASSOCIATION "SAMAHANG ILOCANO" INTERNATIONAL, INC. HAWAII CHAPTER, INSTALLATION OF 2011-2015 OFFICERS / SATURDAY

FILIPINO NURSES ORGANIZATION OF HI'S 38TH ANNUAL NURSING EXCELLENCE RECOGNITION & BANQUET / SATURDAY
 August 13, 2011, 6pm • Tapa Ballroom, Hilton Hawaiian Village • Contact: Nancy Walsch, 778-3832

ILOCOS SURIAN ASSOCIATION OF HAWAII, DINNER AWARDS AND FUNDRAISING / SATURDAY

August 27, 2011 • Coral Ballroom, Hilton Hawaiian Village • Contact: Danny Villaruz @ 778-0233 or Maria Etrata @ 392-2962

July 23, 2011, 6pm • Pacific Beach Hotel • Contact: Romeo Garcia, 368-2312

CONGRESS OF VISAYAN ORGANIZATIONS, 24TH ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONVENTION & GALA / SATURDAY

August 13, 2011 • Maui Beach Hotel, Maui • For details, call Jun Colmenares @ 510-734-4491

VINTAR NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI GLOBAL NETWORK, REUNION & REAFFIRMATION OF OFFICERS / SATURDAY

September 24, 2011, 6pm • Hibiscus Room, Ala Moana Hotel • Call Gliceria Agraan @ 676-1567 or 671-7774

81ST ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF BATALENA CATALINA SOCIETY / SATURDAY
 July 23, 2011, 6pm • Club House @ 94-065 D, Waipahu Depot St. • Contact:

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GLOBAL NEWS

Four Pinoy In Forbes' Heroes of Philanthropy List

EACH YEAR, FORBES CHOOSES FOUR PEOPLE EACH FROM 12 COUNTRIES for its Heroes of Philanthropy, an annual list of citizens, who "have a large vision of how best to help society."

drink conglomerate RFM, spends half his time working for Go Negosyo, a non-profit program that helps budding entrepreneurs start and run a business. More than 230,000 have participated in Go Negosyo's seminars and training. Profits from his five books also go to Go Negosyo.



Joey Concepcion



Jesus Tambunting

This year, Filipino business tycoons Jose "Joey" Concepcion, Jesus Tambunting, Lucio Tan and Stephen Zuellig made the cut for the Philippines.

Tambunting, 74, is chair of Planters Development Bank and the former ambassador to the UK. He is involved not only in education and cultural projects but also serves microfinance foundations like PinyoME, Bayan and Maryville Urban Development Foundation.



Lucio Tan



Stephen Zuellig

According to Forbes.com, the goal is not to rank the biggest monetary donors or wealthiest givers. Instead, the aim is to call attention to a mix of notable people and causes throughout the region and to encourage more giving. Those included on the list range from the wealthy to the unknown. Forbes also clarified that they do not consider those who are philanthropists for a living.

Tan, 77, the second-richest billionaire in the country, meanwhile, has a foundation that repairs and builds freshwater basins in Luzon. He also sent 700,000 bottles of water to tsunami-ravaged Japan, among other charitable contributions.

Lastly, Zuellig, 94, retired chair of the Zuellig Group, shifted the mission of the Zuellig Family Foundation to public health advocacy in 2008. According to Forbes, its staff works with civic leaders in nine municipalities to lower infant and maternal mortality rates and otherwise improve health care. (Good News Philippines) ■

5,000 OFWs in Afghanistan Help to Keep Jobs

by Evelyn MACAIRAN/
 Thursday, July 21, 2011

Echano, a senior logistics manager of a United States company based in Afghanistan, said.

MANILA, Philippines - AN ESTIMATED 5,000 FILIPINO WORKERS in Afghanistan are set to send their third letter to President Aquino this week reiterating their request that the Dec. 31 deadline for them to finish their contracts be lifted so they would be allowed to extend their stay in the war-torn country.

They have five months to change the President's mind.

The OFWs also expressed their willingness to waive their protection rights and pay additional taxes to the Philippine government, to enable them to keep their jobs.

The appeal was made by the undocumented workers in Afghanistan after the Philippine embassy in Pakistan, that has jurisdiction over Afghanistan, issued a memorandum last Feb. 11, telling "all concerned contractors/subcontractors, non-governmental entities, and private agencies that the government of the Republic of the Philippines has decided to exempt Filipino nationals inside US/NATO military bases and who are working on US-sponsored projects in Afghanistan from the current travel/deployment ban to allow said Filipino nationals to finish their contracts until 31 December 2011."

"Hopefully, this would be the last letter we would be sending to President Aquino. We hope that he would remove the Dec. 31 deadline clause so that we would be allowed to stay in Afghanistan," Carlo

Echano said their previous letters

ransom yet, he said.
 The tanker was carrying between 3,500 to 4,000 tons of refined fuel when it was hijacked, said Ali Alawi, operations coordinator at Jubba General Trading Co., the ship's Emirati owner. It was headed from the Emirati city of Umm al-Quwain to

Seek Noy's

prompted Aquino to send former General Roy Cimatu to the US facility in Afghanistan and check on the conditions of the Filipinos.

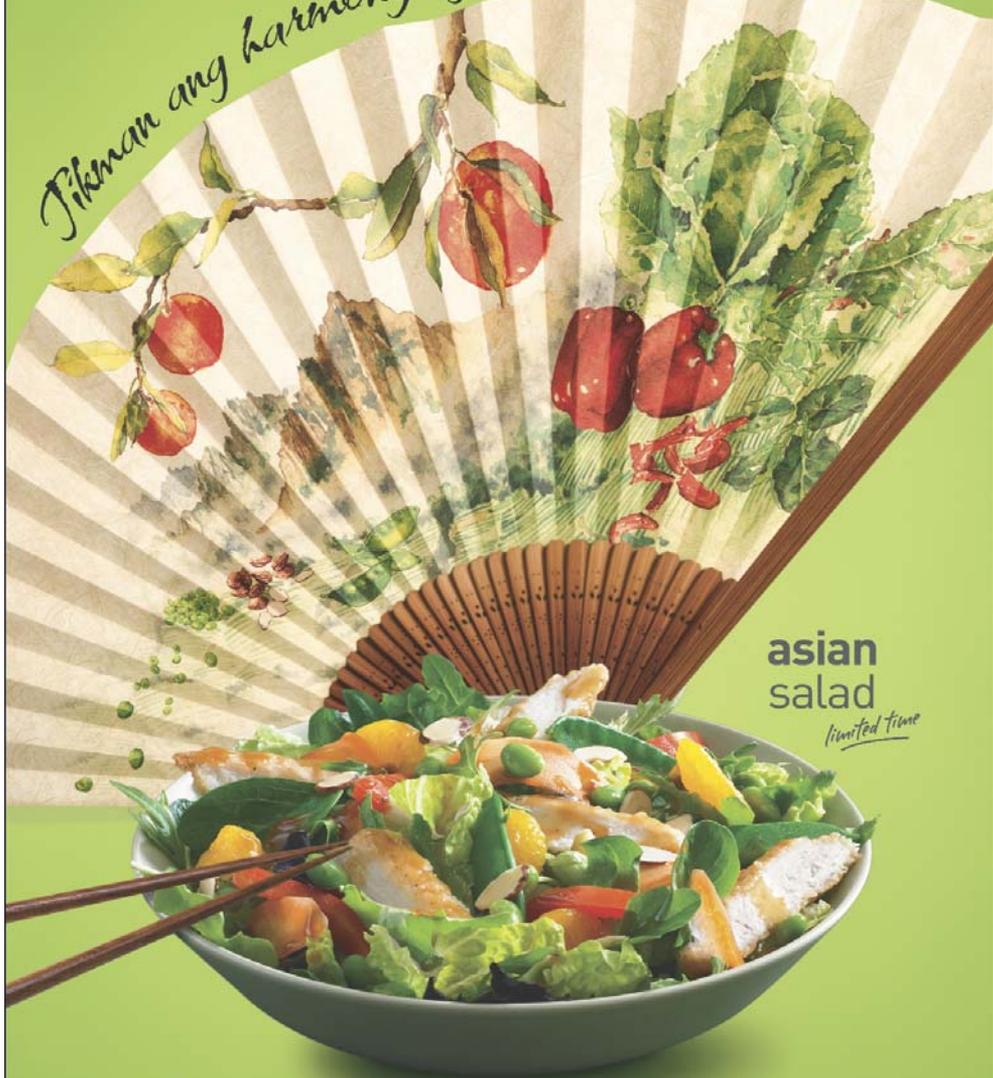
"Cimatu's assessment was that it was safe to stay and work inside the US bases," he said.

Cimatu and Department of Foreign Affairs-Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs (DFA-OUWMA) executive director Ricardo Endaya reportedly said that security protocols and hardened bunkers were more than enough to protect overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in case of rocket attacks.

The workers employed by US contractors are covered by a minimum \$50,000 insurance policy and their excellent working conditions including their salaries are higher compared to regular wages in the Middle East, the Afghanistan-based workers said in a statement. (www.philsstar.com) ■

the Somali port of Berbera.
 Al-Khair said the companies last had contact with a crew member by satellite phone shortly after the hijacking Saturday off the coast of Mukalla, Yemen. They have been unable to reach them by since. (www.philsstar.com) ■

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