

HAWAII



FILIPINO CHRONICLE

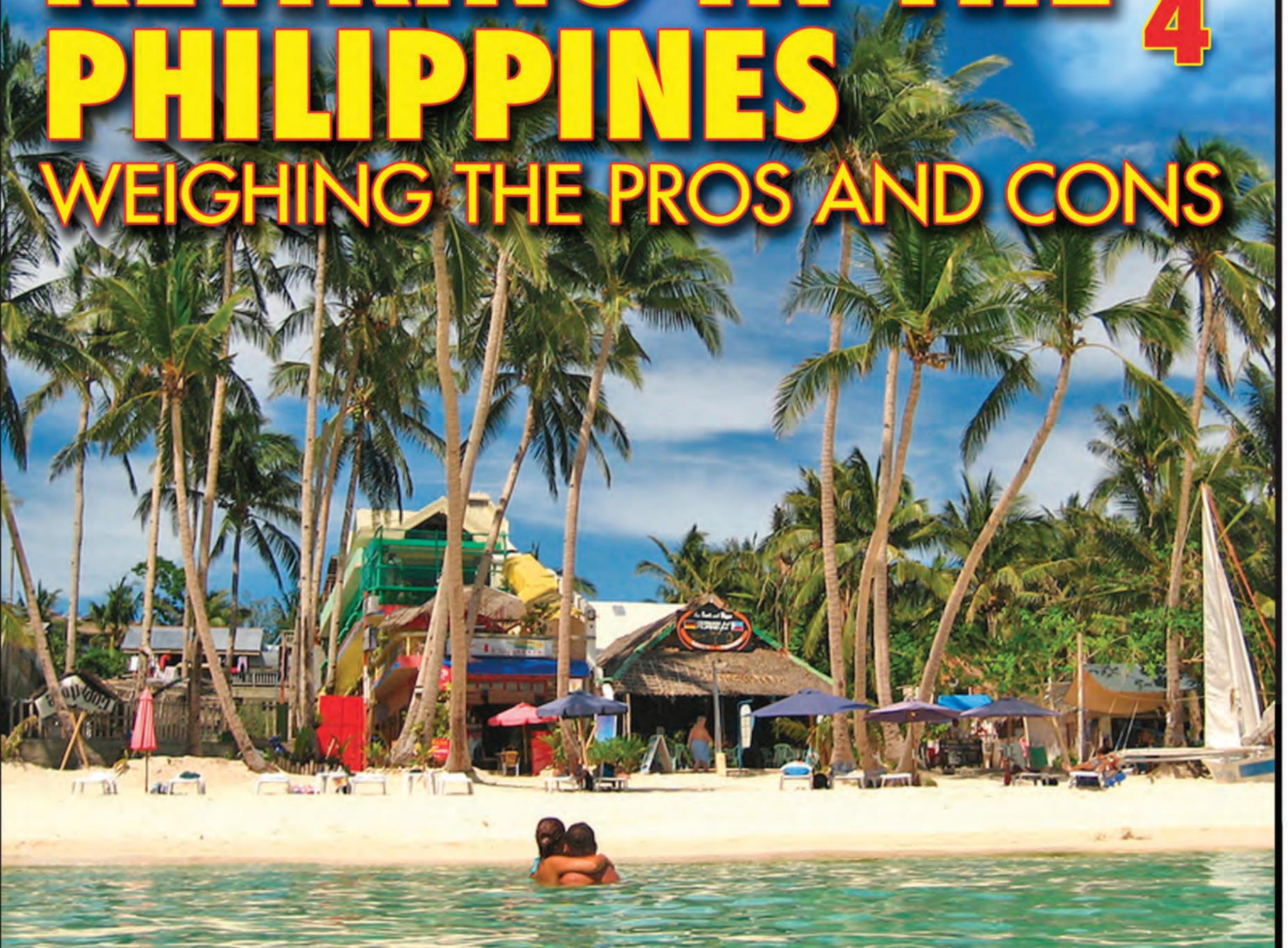
HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER

◆ MAY 12, 2012 ◆

RETIRING IN THE PHILIPPINES

WEIGHING THE PROS AND CONS

COVER STORY PAGE **4**



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

3



LEGAL NOTES

LONG DELAYS AND HIGH DENIAL RATES BELIE IMMIGRATION REPORT

13



GLOBAL NEWS

PHILIPPINES IS THE WORLD'S BEST COUNTRY IN "BUSINESS ENGLISH"

15



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

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EDITORIAL

Supporting Medicare Portability

For many Fil-Am baby boomers, the thought of retiring in the Philippines is quite appealing. After all, there's no place like home—particularly when the cost of living is so affordable. Housing, food, transportation and other costs in the Philippines are quite reasonable. On average, a retiree can live very comfortably at US\$2,000 per month in a fully furnished home complete with a household helper.

Despite the appeal, some Fil-Ams hesitate at taking the plunge simply because their Medicare benefits cannot be used beyond U.S. borders. However, a national advocacy organization called U.S. Medicare PH, Inc., is lobbying Congress for a Medicare Portability Bill that would allow Medicare to be used in the Philippines for eligible Fil-Ams who are considering medical treatment there.

Such an arrangement would bring relief for the Medicare system which is facing financial problems due to the rising cost of healthcare. In fact, it's estimated that the U.S. government can save \$5,000 per year in health care expenses for each Fil-Am senior who returns to the Philippines to take advantage of the country's affordable health care services. If an estimated 200,000 Fil-Am baby boomers end up retiring in the Philippines as expected, the U.S. would save a staggering \$1 billion per year. The proposal would also benefit the Philippines by generating jobs, boosting the economy and encouraging many Fil-Am retirees to return home and permanently retire there. In Guam, a bill is in the works to allow Guam Medicare beneficiaries to use their health-care benefits in the Philippines.

The proposal, however, isn't without its critics who cite very real concerns, including the potential for fraud. In the U.S., Medicare fraud accounts for about \$60 billion a year in losses due to fake Medicare claims. To prevent fraud, only accredited Philippine hospitals should be allowed to participate and be required to have safeguards in place, such as computerized health records to minimize errors.

President Benigno Aquino III will push for Medicare Portability in a scheduled meeting later this summer with U.S. president Barack Obama. The proposal stands a good chance if Obama can be convinced that fraud is preventable if Medicare is allowed in the Philippines. We hope that the potential financial benefit will prompt the Obama administration to carefully consider the proposal. As we see it, Medicare Portability deserves Obama's support and is a 'win-win' solution for both the U.S. and Philippines.

Happy Mother's Day!

Few words in the English language conjure up images and memories of warmth, happiness, home and security as the word 'mom.' While motherhood is a wonderful responsibility, it can also be downright exhausting. The typical, modern day mom must balance the pressures of a full-time career with the demands of a growing household.

Moms are often the first ones out of bed, especially on weekdays, to get the children organized and ready for school. They then work all day long, pick up the kids, prepare dinner, supervise homework, clean the house and many other chores that need to be done. And if that isn't enough, moms still must find the inner strength to anchor the family and provide moral guidance. She somehow manages to do it all—day in and day out—and often without enough appreciation.

The typical Filipino mom does more than provide love—she dedicates herself entirely to her child. As her child grows, she challenges and pushes the child to mature into adulthood. She stands beside her child through the ups and downs of life, providing protection, guidance, warnings and the occasional smack

FROM THE PUBLISHER



is for the million things she gave me...

Many of you are intimately familiar with the words to that beloved song. With



Mother's Day 2012 right around the corner, we at the Chronicle would like to wish all of you moms out there a very special and Happy Mother's Day! Many of you will be taking mom out to a special Mother's Day brunch. But if you're looking for a change of pace, perhaps preparing her a special meal would be more to your liking. If so, you may want to consider a special baked pork chops recipe in our Food & Leisure column on page 8. Mom would surely appreciate the time and effort taken to cook her a special meal!

Our cover story for this issue is about retiring in the Philippines. Contributing writer Gregory Garcia delves into the pros and cons of retiring in the Philippines which is a desire for many Filipino-Americans ages 65 and older. After toiling for years to pay the mortgage, send their children to school and make ends meet, they are more than ready to enjoy their Golden Years back home with family and friends. While the pension of a typical Fil-Am retiree is more than enough for him or her to live quite comfortably in the Philippines, some are still hesitant to return home. To find out why, please read Gregory's very interesting and informative cover story beginning on page 4.

In other news, several Zumba instructors will be holding a special fundraiser on May 12, 2012 at Farrington High School for Gail Gabriel—a cancer patient of Filipino ancestry. Gabriel is a local girl and Farrington alum who was recently diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer and is battling to overcome this disease. In case you didn't know, Zumba is a Latin-inspired dance/exercise program that has become very popular among fitness enthusiasts in Hawaii. So if you like to Zumba and want to help out for a good cause, please mark May 12th on your calendar. To read more about Gabriel and how to help her financially, turn to our story on page 5.

We hope that you will take some time to read the other informative and interesting columns we have provided in this issue, including "Legislative Update" (page 3); "Immigration Guide" (page 7); "Legal Notes" (page 13); and Philippine Language (page 14).

In closing, we'd like to thank our readers for their faithful and continued support of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle. Please feel free to contact us at: filipinochronicle@gmail.com if you have story suggestions, concerns or questions regarding Hawaii's vibrant Filipino community. We would love to hear from you.

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

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

upside the head for good measure. She is always caring, sacrificing everything for their children. She goes above and beyond the call of duty in the best interests of her children.

In light of all that our moms have done for us, let's remember her in a very special way this Mother's Day. Tell her how much you appreciate all that she's done for you. Say it from the heart and make her feel like the most amazing person in the world. If you are fortunate enough to still have her with you, remember to keep treating her special not just on Mother's Day but for all the other days of the year as well.

So Happy Mothers Day, to our moms. We hope you enjoy your special day. You truly deserve it!

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

2012 Legislative Session Highlights



By Senator Will Espero

The recently ended 2012 Legislature funded many projects for West Oahu addressing health care, transportation, education, and the military. Capital improvement appropriations will provide plans, designs, land acquisition, construction, equipment, and ground and site improvements for many needed facilities in our region. Schools received significant amounts for construction, repair, and maintenance. Below is a brief overview of some highlights.

HEALTH CARE. The closure of Hawaii Medical Center led West Oahu residents to the next nearest facilities for emergency medical care. Wahiawa General Hospital will get \$1.25 million to modernize and expand its emergency department, and the Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center will get \$2 million to upgrade its emergency services building. HB1953, Emergency Medical Care, funds \$1 million for on-call availability of emergency care and ambulance services to Ewa Beach (up to 16 hours/day) and Nanakuli (24 hours).

TRANSPORTATION.

The Department of Transportation was given \$200,000 to study the feasibility of extending the zipper lane to Kapolei, west of the Kunia on-ramp, HB2684 Zipper Lane. Kualakai Parkway will be extended to Roosevelt Avenue, \$15 million. This extension will assist the new Kapolei shopping center. Road improvements near U.H. West Oahu on Farrington Highway total \$1,250,000

UH & SCHOOLS.

The University of Hawaii's new West Oahu campus will receive funds for planning and designing of two new facilities, the Academy of Creative Media and an allied health building, along with various other improvements. Funding was also given for plans, design, and/or construction of three new public schools: East Kapolei High, \$2,300,000; Kapolei II Elementary, \$40,000; Royal Kunia Elementary, \$150,000.

Several public schools will receive funds for facilities, equipment, improvements, upgrades, and other needs: Ewa Elementary - \$9,600,000 (new 8-classroom building); Ewa Beach Elementary - \$1,480,000 (electrical upgrades); Honowai Elementary - \$190,000 (new stairway); Kaleiopuu Elementary - \$1,175,000 (electrical upgrades & ramp); Kapolei High - \$4,665,000 (locker room/shower); Waikele Ele-



mentary - \$969,000 (performing arts stage in cafeteria; resurfacing basketball court; playground); Waipahu High - \$1,200,000 (athletic field and retaining wall).

MILITARY. An Army National Guard consolidated facility at Kalaeloa will be renovated; \$709,000 (utilities, access road, parking area, security fencing, renovations and others). The 29th Brigade will receive \$483,000 for a new combat team readiness center. Army Guard facilities will be renovated, \$516,500. Federal funds will also be used for the Kalaeloa National Guard projects. Various upgrades and improvements will also be made at veterans cemeteries statewide, \$3,544,000.

TOURISM. For 5 years, I have been working with the state Office of Aerospace Development on space-related initiatives. This year the Legislature funded \$1.8 million for the construction of a Pacific International Space Center for Explorations Systems (PISCES) facility on the Big Island. With SB112 sponsored by myself, Hawaii will apply for a spaceport license (\$250,000 appropriation), beginning a new era in space tourism for our state. Another one of my bills created an advisory group for the purpose of eventually building an educational center and tourist

destination built around the WWII Honouliuli Internment Camp in Kunia. This effort was appropriated \$100,000.

OTHER. The Hawaiian Home Lands Trust Fund was given \$30 million for construction and other obligations. An electrical distribution system between Roosevelt Road and Tripoli Road, the Kalaeloa East Energy Corridor will be built, \$3.5 million. Kunia Agricultural Park will undergo utility, road, grading, drainage, and other improvements with possible subdivision, \$1 million. The successful Weed and Seed program was funded \$336,000 thanks to SB2261 continuing efforts to reduce crime, drug abuse, and gang activity through prevention, intervention, and neighborhood revitalization projects, programs, and activities.

These are some of the projects and highlights of a productive 2012 legislative session. For more information, please contact me at 586-6360 or senespero@capitol.hawaii.gov

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Enrollment For Jr Paramedic Program Now Open

The Emergency Services Department will present the Junior Paramedic Program in two sessions this summer.

The Junior Paramedic Program offers students an opportunity to learn lifesaving skills, experience emergency response practices and appreciate the duties of the City and County of Honolulu's emergency professionals.

Students will receive classroom and hands-on mentoring during the two-week course and will achieve CPR and first aid certification. Officials hope that the program will inspire students to consider a career as a first responder or in a related field, and to work for the City.

The program is open to teens ages 14 through 18. Only 20 students will be accepted for each session and enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. Sessions will be held from 8 am to 4 pm on the following dates:

- Session 1: June 18-29, 2012
- Session 2: July 9-20, 2012

The deadline to apply is Friday, June 1, 2012. Please call the Honolulu Emergency Services Department at 723-7809 to enroll.

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COVER STORY

Retiring in the Philippines

Weighing the Pros and Cons

By Gregory Garcia

The Philippine Retirement Authority (PRA) was established in 1985 by virtue of Executive Order No. 1037, which was signed by then-President Ferdinand Marcos.

According to the agency's website, the PRA is mandated to "attract foreign nationals and former Filipino citizens to invest, reside and retire in the Philippines with the end-view of accelerating the socio-economic development of the country, contributing to the foreign currency reserve of the economy and by providing them the best quality of life in the most attractive package."

If the Philippine government wants to attract foreigners to retire in the country, then there is probably no better time to do it than right now. Throughout the developed world, the number of retirees is on the rise. In the U.S. alone, some 10,000 people are retiring every day.

One factor contributing to this "tsunami" of Americans reaching retirement age is the fact that the first generation of Post-World War II baby boomers turned 65 in 2011. Over the next 20 years, the numbers are expected to further inflate as more than 70 million Americans who were born between 1945 and 1965 will be

entering their retirement years.

Among these American seniors, some 400,000 are Filipino-Americans, a large number by any account. They are a very attractive market for the Philippine government, since many Fil-Ams know the Philippines by heart and all the good things it can offer.

The PRA, adopting the Department of Tourism's "It's More Fun in the Philippines" campaign, has recently stepped up its marketing efforts to promote these selling points to foreign and Fil-Am retirees. The impressive list includes the country's natural wonders, great climate, low cost of products and services, exciting leisure facilities and attractive investment opportunities—clearly the things one can only find in retirement heaven.

Coming Home

According to Hawaii resident Tess Bernales, exactly why a native-born Filipino would want to retire in the Philippines is more than the balmy climate, laidback lifestyle and affordable cost of living that many other

retirees often wax lyrical about.

"It is because Filipinos would want to come home. Home is where you feel that you are unconditionally loved and accepted," she says.

Although she is not yet certain if she would in fact end up retiring in the Philippines, Bernales already has a good idea what she would be doing if ever she does.

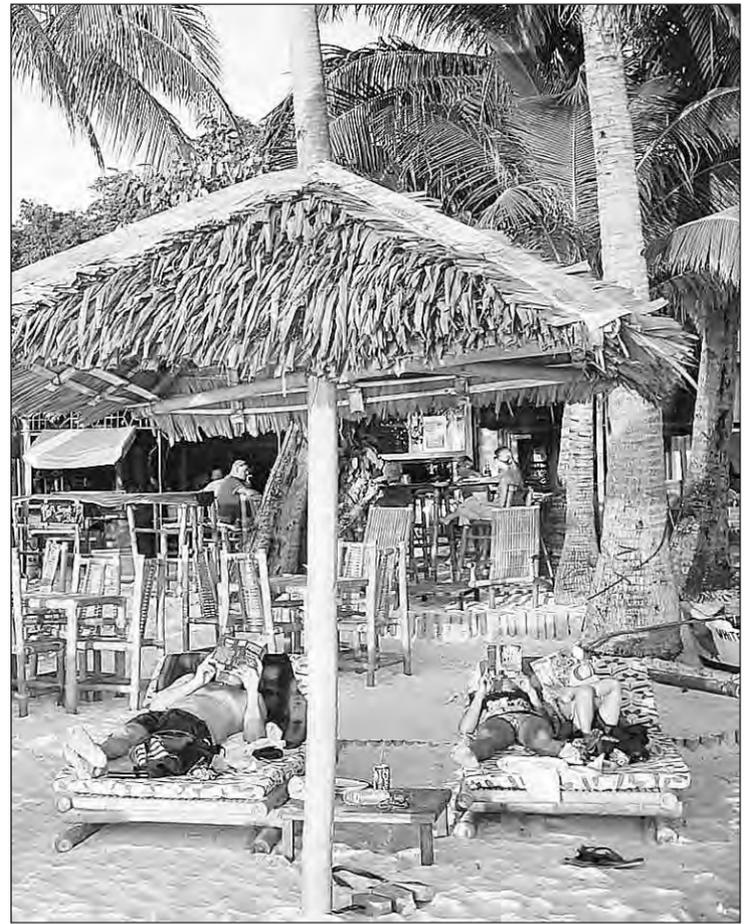
"I would probably look into doing activities that will embody my desire to help the poorest of the poor. Retirement is not only winding down and doing things in your 'bucket list' or waiting for the time when you meet your Creator. For me, retirement is doing things that will be personally fulfilling and at the same time help the less fortunate," she says.

California resident Valentin Ybiernas also sees the Philippines as his first home. He points out that Filipinos are blessed to have the option of returning to their homeland, while most Americans are not afforded the same choice.

"When one gets old in America, one ends up in a nursing home. You might as well retire in the Philippines because you will have the luxury of having relatives and friends with you unlike here in the U.S. Your kids become so busy with work, so despite all the money, luxury and even the sophisticated medical equipment we have, it can be sad growing old here. The modern culture here is not very friendly for old people," he says.

Another Filipino-American, Marita del Rosario, who now lives in Lipa City, Batangas, speaks on a more practical note.

"The prospect of enjoying a simple lifestyle motivated us to live in the Philippines. With the retirement income that we are receiving now, we don't have to struggle each month to survive.



We have more than enough to live comfortably," she says.

She says that living in the Philippines has also helped her live the bucolic lifestyle she has always dreamed about.

"I have always wanted to have a house on a farm, raising pigs and chicken, and also to have my own organic vegetable garden."

When asked if she ever misses her old life in the States, del Rosario says she misses her family more than the hectic way of life she left behind.

"Of course, I miss the U.S. But it is only because my children, my grandchild and my extended family are all residing in the States. But other than that, I don't miss the hustle and bustle of life in the U.S.," she says.

Bernales is of the same mind, saying she'll really miss more her friends, the activities they do together and the enjoyable little things that make up her daily routine.

"If ever I retire in the Philippines, I will surely miss Hawaii, my community, the friendships that I have formed and the routine that I have settled into, like going to daily mass and having coffee at McDonald's afterwards. I will also miss other activities, including those that foster social responsibility and community spirit

among the Filipinos of Hawaii and the Philippines. We Filipinos are very flexible. Changes in my routine will be an adjustment but they won't be insurmountable," she says.

For Ybiernas, Filipino seniors who are planning a homecoming should prepare things ahead of their retirement date so that things will run smoothly for them.

"One has to prepare in advance and visit the Philippines many times so they can plan ahead if and when they retire in the Philippines and know when to say 'it's time to go home.' For the most part, it may boil down to where you are most happy and comfortable. Of course, this is a dilemma that we Filipinos face because we have these options available to us," he says.

The Medicare Challenge

While many Filipino-Americans contemplate the idea of retiring in the Philippines, some 25,000 foreign citizens—mostly from China, Japan, Korea and the U.S.—are already spending their retirement years in the country.

One of the key reasons why many of these retirees are happy and comfortable in the Philippines is because of its very af-

(continued on page 5)



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COVER STORY

(from page 4, RETIRING...)

fordable health care and medical services. Specific services that cost thousands of dollars in the States, for example, may cost just a few hundred dollars in the Philippines.

Most Filipino doctors, nurses and other medical staff are also known to be competent and caring, aside from the fact that there is growing number of hospitals in the country that are as well-equipped in terms of medical facilities as hospitals in developed nations.

But despite these benefits, many Fil-Am retirees are still loath to pack their bags to spend their retirement years in the Philippines because they cannot bring their Medicare coverage beyond the U.S. border.

According to advocacy group U.S. Medicare PH Inc., there are more than 400,000 Filipino-Americans who are 65 years old or older and around half of them would want to retire in the Philippines. These senior Fil-Ams will be able to bring with them their Social Security pensions but won't be covered by their Medicare insurance.

U.S. Medicare PH Inc. is currently lobbying to convince the U.S. Congress and President Barack Obama to allow Medicare coverage for Fil-Am retirees who want to live in the Philippines. The group estimates that U.S. taxpayers can save as much as \$5,000 per year in health care expenses for each Fil-Am senior who chooses to return to the Philippines to take advantage of the country's affordable health care services. This amounts to a staggering \$1 billion of savings if all the 200,000 individuals are taken into account.

"Our goal in 2012 is a change in U.S. law that allows for several demonstration hospitals in the Philippines that meet international accreditation standards to be reimbursed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for treating Medicare beneficiaries," the group says on its website.

The group adds that such well-run medical institutions can assure the accountability and quality of care, standardization of professional fees and implementation of electronic



medical records to eliminate fraud from the equation. In addition, the CMS could undertake a five year feasibility study to validate the cost savings and the quality of care the beneficiaries will be receiving.

But just how feasible is the idea? As a matter of fact, it is already happening, at least to U.S. citizens residing in Guam. Because of the island's proximity to the Philippines, Guam residents have the option of obtaining critical medical treatment in the Philippine hospitals that meet standards set by Joint Commission International. All their costs are reimbursed by Medicare. Furthermore, the Pentagon and

the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs are already reimbursing the health care costs of thousands of U.S. military retirees and their families living in the Philippines. In fact, Marita del Rosario and her husband are among them.

"If I had any major health issues and don't have any insurance, I wouldn't even consider living in the Philippines at all. But since my husband is a retired U.S. military personnel, we are able to use the insurance that the U.S. government has provided us," she says.

Another option some observers have suggested is for the Philippine government to create a medical insurance program that would be similar to Medicare and tailor-made for American retirees. But Bernales believes such a scheme may or may not ease the retirees' concerns, depending on their individual financial circumstance. For many retirees who don't like the idea of parting with their Medicare benefits, it could mean an additional burden.

"Retirees are on a fixed income. This will be an additional premium that they will pay out of their own pockets in addition to the U.S. Medicare premium that they are already paying," she says.

Bernales adds that Medicare Portability could be the only real solution for the health care worries of Fil-Ams who want to retire in the Philippines.

"Health care is the most important concern of retirees. They will definitely need quality health care as they advance in age. Having Medicare coverage is a safety net," she says.

A precedent Medicare Portability Bill is currently being drafted in Guam. If enacted into a law, it will allow all Guam Medicare beneficiaries to use their health care benefits in the Philippines. At present, only residents of Guam and Saipan who seek emergency medical treatments can avail of their Medicare benefits in accredited Philippine hospitals.

Because of Guam's and Saipan's proximity to U.S. territories, people who require critical medical procedures or advanced medical facilities can fly to the Philippines, which is located just three hours away by plane. Otherwise, the only other option for these people would be a 10-hour journey to Honolulu.

If you want to learn more about how to acquire a Philippine Special Resident Retiree's Visa (SRRV), please visit pra.gov.ph. If you want to learn more about the U.S. Medicare PH advocacy, please visit usmedicareph.org.

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Zumba Instructors to Raise Funds for Cancer Patient

Hundreds of fitness enthusiasts and dancers are expected to join 15 Zumba instructors from all over the island in a fundraiser for Gail Gabriel, a local girl who is battling stage four of lung cancer. The public is invited to join the fun-filled event, which is scheduled for May 12, 2012 from 10 am to 12 noon at Farrington High School's cafeteria.

Zumba has been one of Gabriel's favorite workout classes. The Zumba instructors teach at local YMCAs and various gyms across the island including 24 Hour fitness, BJ Penn's Gym and Curves.

Gabriel was born and raised in Kalihi, where she graduated from Farrington. She attended the University of Hawaii-Manoa and earned a degree in nursing. She later moved to Las Vegas for better career opportunities and eventually settled in San Francisco.

Gabriel is a registered nurse at the White Blossom Care Center in San Jose, California—a fa-



Gail Gabriel

cility that specializes in long term and rehabilitation care. In October 2011, she suffered from a cold that developed into a persistent cough. She went to see a doctor who ran several tests and found lesions and tumors that had spread from her lungs to her brain. The news was devastating—Gabriel was in stage four of lung cancer. What made it a lot more puzzling was that she was never a smoker.

Doctors suggested that she start several types of treatment. She has so far completed 10 radiation treatments to her head,

causing her to lose her hair and causing her to have swelled cheeks. She is now undergoing chemotherapy every three weeks, causing symptoms of numbness and tingling to her hands and feet.

Gabriel plans to fight this the cancer with everything she's got and wants to eventually get back to helping patients.

"This experience has inspired me to be an oncology nurse. I want to help others with their fight with cancer," she says. "It has made me look at life differently. Hawaii is my home, my heart. With life being so short, I know that I'm blessed nonetheless."

Gabriel's friends and family are asking the public to attend the Zumba event and hope that it will help defray some of costs of her medical bills.

Presale tickets are \$10 per person and \$15 at the door. Light refreshments will also be sold as part of the fundraiser. For more details, please call Mel Mateo at 590-8843 or Tricia Jacalne at 393-6040.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

City to Phase Out Drop Off Recycling Bin Program

City officials are phasing out the old drop-off bin recycling program and renewing efforts to expand curbside and condo recycling. On May 1, the City placed signs on community recycling bins around Oahu to notify the public that the program will end June 30, 2012 and that many of those drop-off bins will be removed starting June 15th.

Fortunately, the closure of

the City's service contract for the drop-off bins will not leave schools without recycling service. Honolulu Disposal Service will maintain approximately 50 schools/bins as active community recycling centers, at no cost to the schools. Under the new arrangement, however, the schools will not receive revenues generated from the recycling.

Other schools committed to developing sustainable school campuses—collecting and recy-

cling paper, plastic, glass and metal from campus facilities—are working to establish collection service with another independent recycling company. Rolloffs Hawaii, which provides trash service to most Oahu public schools, is launching a pilot school recycling program with plans for further expansion.

Residents in condominium and apartment buildings have an opportunity to recycle con-

veniently as well. Collectors and haulers offer no-cost pickup for valuable recyclable materials such as glass, plastic, metal, newspaper and cardboard. And the City offers to reimburse Association of Apartment Owners (AOAOs) for startup costs associated with recycling equipment and tenant education.

Over the years, the recycling bin program strengthened community support for recycling. However, with decreased

public use, the once cost-efficient system is no longer viable. By closing the program, the City will save about \$1.5 million annually and refocus resources to further develop more convenient recycling options for Oahu residents.

More information about recycling services and programs can be found at www.opala.org or call the City's Recycling Branch for assistance at 768-3200.

City Launches New Effort to Address Homelessness

City officials have announced a new effort to address homelessness in urban Honolulu by creating specially-focused transitional housing. The new Pathways Project is designed to serve homeless people with challenging special needs, such as mental illness, addictions and physical disabilities.

Honolulu Mayor Peter Carlisle says that government and the private sector have invested considerable effort and resources in addressing homelessness, but there remains a

population whose disabilities or chronic conditions make it difficult for them to participate in traditional shelter programs.

“Through The Pathways Project, the City and a nonprofit homeless service agency will be inviting neighborhoods in urban Honolulu to join in developing a community-based solution to assist those with special needs and reduce the impacts of street homelessness,” says Carlisle.

The City has issued a Request for Proposals to invite agencies interested in partnering on the project and will pro-



vide \$3.5 million from its Affordable Housing Fund to acquire and/or renovate an existing structure to provide transitional housing for homeless persons with special needs.

A specific project site has not been identified. Funds will be awarded to a nonprofit agency that will be responsible for working with neighborhoods

in urban Honolulu to obtain a community consensus that The Pathways Project is an acceptable means to address homelessness in their neighborhood.

A specific project site will be identified to implement the project only after a positive community consensus has been achieved.

Homeless persons with special needs are among the most visible of Honolulu's homeless population, with a large population centered in urban Honolulu between Waikiki and Kalihi.

National studies have shown that appropriate transitional shelter programs, specifically designed to serve the unique needs of this population can be successful in transitioning them to long-term housing.

Proposals from nonprofit agencies should be submitted to the City by May 30, 2012. The City will select an agency sometime in June 2012, and the community planning effort to identify a site will be launched thereafter.

More information about The Pathway Project is available by calling Keith Ishida, executive director of the Office of Housing, at 768-4510.

PICTORIAL NEWS



City Councilmember Romy Cachola (center) presents an honorary certificate to Farrington High School Principal Al Carganilla and Vice Principal Angie Koanui on the occasion of the school's 75th Anniversary celebration held on the campus grounds last April 21, 2012. Hundreds were in attendance for the special occasion, including many former alumni.

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Mental Health Conferences Set for May

With May designated as Mental Health Month, the Consumer, Family & Youth (CFY) Alliance is sponsoring a series of six conferences statewide with the theme “Got Mental Health? The Transformation Continues.”

Conference dates and locations are as follows:

- May 23 Kulana Oihi (Molokai)
- May 24 Kauai Community College
- May 25 Maui Community College
- May 29 McKinley High School
- May 30 Chiefess Kapiolani Elementary (Hilo)
- May 31 West Hawaii Civic Center (Kona)

Registration for all conferences begins at 8:30 am. The

opening plenary is at 9:30 am and all conferences end at 2 pm. A nominal fee of \$5 covers lunch and materials.

The conferences will provide attendees with educational opportunities that focus on mental health and wellness. Workshops may include the Copeland Center Wellness Recovery Action Plan; suicide prevention; behavioral health services in Medicaid; trauma informed care; social security insurance updates and more. An update of the CFY Alliance and news of a newly formed 501(c)(3) will be shared at lunchtime plenaries.

The deadline to register is May 15, 2012. For a registration form, please call 453-6618 or send an email to: CFYAlliance@gmail.com. To learn more about the conferences, contact Carol Medina at 453-6618 or e-mail her at: carol.medina@doh.hawaii.gov.

Funding for the conferences is provided by the Olmstead Grant, the State Council on Mental Health Block Grant, and the Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

The CFY Alliance is an organization of adult and youth consumers, families, communities and programs that share information and come together with a sense of commonality on mental health issues, concerns and policies to create a unified voice. The Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant administered by the State Department of Health supports the development and implementation of CFY meetings, conferences and trainings to assure collaboration, share opportunities and improve communication and coordination of activities for individuals living with mental illness.

IMMIGRATION GUIDE



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

Do We Enforce Our Laws to Please Mexico?

An apparent parallelism in the legal battlefield is the Obama administration's suit against Arizona to stop it from enforcing a law requiring police officers to check the immigration status of persons they have stopped if they have a reasonable suspicion that the person is in the country illegally.

Did the administration's lawyers do a "due diligence" check to ascertain whether the suit was really winnable, not simply obey what their client wanted?

So why did the federal government sue Arizona? During oral arguments on April 25 in *Arizona v. United States*, No. 11-182, Solicitor General Verrilli, the government's lawyer, argued that diplomatic relations with Mexico would be undermined by Arizona's law. A visibly irritated Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia asked: "So we have to enforce our laws in a manner that is pleasing to Mexico?"

When Verrilli said no, but persisted that the Arizona law involved foreign relations and that foreign relations is vested in the federal government, Justice Scalia demanded: "Why don't we solve the foreign relations problem by simply deporting these people [who are in this country illegally]?"

Not about racial profiling

At the start of the oral arguments, even before Verrilli could open his mouth, Chief Justice John Roberts said: "No part of your argument has to do with racial or ethnic profiling?" "That's correct," replied Verrilli. The court wanted to limit the discussion to the legal issue involved, not to argumentum ad populum (arguing by appealing to the people).

The sole issue in the case is whether a state has the power to enact a law to discourage and deter the unlawful entry and presence of aliens within its borders.

Under a doctrine known as pre-emption, when the federal government has enacted a law

on a particular subject, generally the states cannot enact laws relating to the same subject. The Obama administration says that since the federal government has the exclusive power over immigration and enacted an immigration law, the states cannot enact laws affecting immigration. However, there are several provisions in the Immigration and Nationality Act providing for federal and state cooperation in its enforcement, including deputizing local police officers. When Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents conduct a raid, they usually ask local police for assistance. The Supreme Court previously upheld an Arizona law revoking the license of employers hiring illegal aliens. More significantly, a unanimous Supreme Court upheld the authority of local police to ask the immigration status of persons lawfully detained. *Muehler v. Mena*, 544 U.S. 93.

A justice asked whether a police officer who sees a bank robbery should do nothing because bank robbery is covered by federal law.

Another Justice pointed out that Arizona's law simply authorizes a police officer to call federal authorities to ask for the immigration status of a person it has stopped; it does not authorize the officer to deport the person, so what's wrong with that?

The Chief Justice wryly observed: It seems that the federal government does not want to know who is here illegally.

When Verrilli said that Arizona has no power to exclude aliens within its borders, a Justice interrupted him saying "But Arizona is not kicking out aliens. States can police their borders."

Justice Kennedy observed that Arizona was simply cooperating with federal authorities in enforcing federal immigration laws and asked if it was wrong. He is expected to cast the deciding vote in this case.

"You can see it's not selling very well," Justice Sotomayor told Verrilli who could not satisfactorily answer the other Justices' questions. She is the only Latina Justice in the Supreme Court.

As we have been repeatedly saying, one can generally predict the outcome of a case by the questions asked by the judges in the same manner that you can predict the outcome of your courtship by the questions asked by the object of your affection.

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

PHILIPPINE NEWS

It's Official: Erap for Manila Mayor

by Jose Rodel Clapano
Thursday, May 10, 2012

MANILA, Philippines - "I'm done with the presidency in Malacañang. Now, I will be moving to the city hall of Manila."

Former President Joseph Estrada confirmed yesterday he is running for mayor of Manila in next year's elections, but only for one term.

Estrada drove his famous "Jeep ni Erap" from 1 Polk Street in North Greenhills, San Juan to his new house at 589 Mangga Avenue in Altura, Sta. Mesa, Manila to ceremonially launch his candidacy.

Former senator Loi Ejercito, daughter Jackie and Vice Mayor Isko Moreno joined him.

"I will now sleep here tonight. I will start living here today," Estrada said.

The 5,000-square meter property with a swimming pool is the ancestral residence of the Legardas in Manila and used to be the headquarters of former President Ramon Magsaysay.

Wearing "Erap para sa Masa" t-shirts and waving placards with the words "Bawal ang dirty sa Maynila," referring to the Dirty Harry moniker current Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim earned for his controversial anti-crime campaign, Manila residents welcomed Estrada as their new neighbor.

In a press conference at his new house, Estrada said he would be dedicating the last years of his life to Manila.

"I'm now 75 years old. I might still be here for another three years. Then I will give the post to (Vice Mayor) Isko Moreno," Estrada said.

"Me Erap na, Me Isko pa," he said.

"This is a historical event for myself because it's here in Sampaloc that I am declaring my candidacy... Title is not important. What is important is that your heart and soul is for public service," he said.

He also noted that he became a superstar because of the movie "Asyong Salonga," the story of a notorious Tondo,

Manila gang leader, adding that he was born in Tondo.

Estrada said his late father, a civil engineer, also served as head of the public services department under four Manila mayors.

"God has destined that I should be here in Manila, where I should last serve," he said.

Estrada's declaration came despite the objection raised by his two politician-sons - Senate President Pro-Tempore Jinggoy Estrada and San Juan Rep. JV Ejercito.

"My sons said I should rest because I have nothing to prove anymore. But any public service is not a demotion. I will give my remaining days in life here in Manila, to serve the people of Manila. Erap cannot repay his debt of gratitude to the poor Filipinos in life or in death," he said.

"We have to bring back the old glory of Manila as the country's capital city. It will not be hard for me to do this with Vice Mayor Isko Moreno at my side," he said. (www.philstar.com)

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FOOD AND LEISURE

Recipe File: Why Not Cook for Mom on Mother's Day?

from www.philstar.com



MANILA, Philippines - Every mom, even just once a year, must experience being cooked for and served by her loved ones. Mother's Day is an excellent time to do this — the spouse and the kids should work together to bring mom to heights of gastronomic bliss.

Culinary expert Dorothy Ferreria and Glad, reliable brand of kitchen bags and wraps, share with you recipes that you can prepare for mom on Mother's Day. With some help from Glad Cook 'n' Bake, kitchen tasks will be much easier, and the results more lip-smacking. Glad Cook 'n' Bake is a greaseproof paper with double-sided non-stick coating, which helps ensure healthier dishes for mom and the family because you can skip oil during frying or baking. It also saves time in washing the dishes since the pans are easier to clean without the grease. Glad Cook 'n' Bake can be used in other healthy methods of cooking, poaching or boiling because it keeps all flavors and juices in and it's wet-strong and won't break.



BAKED PORK CHOPS WITH BLEU CHEESE SAUCE

INGREDIENTS:

6 pieces boneless pork chop

rock salt to taste

coarsely ground black pepper to taste

Breading

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 egg beaten with 1 tablespoon milk or water

1 cup breadcrumbs mixed with

1/2 cup grated cheddar cheese

Bleu Cheese Sauce

1 cup all-purpose cream

1 tablespoon chopped spring onions

50 grams bleu cheese, crumbled

fine salt to taste

coarsely ground black pepper to taste

PROCEDURE:

1. Place pork chop in between Glad Cook 'n' Bake sheets and pound with a mallet to make the slices thinner and tender. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
2. Dredge the pork chops in flour, then dip in egg wash and then coat with the breadcrumb mixture.
3. Line cookie sheet with Glad Cook 'n' Bake. Arrange the assembled pork chops on the cookie sheet and bake at 375° F for 30 minutes or until done.
4. To prepare the sauce, combine the ingredients in a bowl and chill for at least an hour to allow flavors to develop.
5. Serve with sauce on the side.

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

**SWS: 4.8 M Families
 Experience Hunger**

by Helen Flores
 Wednesday, May 9, 2012

MANILA, Philippines - An estimated 4.8 million families said they experienced hunger at least once in the past three months, the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey showed.

The survey conducted among 1,200 respondents from March 10 to 13 found 23.8 percent of the respondents experiencing hunger, higher than the 22.5 percent (4.5 million families) in the survey last December.

SWS said the latest hunger rate surpassed the highest record of 23.7 percent in December 2008.

Last week, the SWS also reported a 10-point increase in self-rated poverty from 45 percent (9.1 million families) to 55 percent (11.1 million families). It was the highest so far under the Aquino administration.

SWS said overall hunger also increased across geographical areas, except in the Visayas, where it fell by 14.7 points to 10.3 percent (about 399,500 families) from 25 percent (957,000 families).

It rose by seven points in Mindanao to 26.7 percent (1.3 million families); five points in the rest of Luzon to 28 percent (about 2.5 million families); and by 2.3 points in Metro Manila to 24.3 percent (estimated 691,000 families).

SWS said the increase in overall hunger was due to slight increases in "moderate" as well as "severe" hunger.

Hunger refers to involuntary suffering due to the lack of anything to eat, the SWS said.

Those who experienced hunger "only once" or "a few times," including those who did not state the frequency of the hunger they felt, are categorized under moderate hunger.

Severe hunger, meanwhile, refers to those who experienced hunger "often" or "always."

Moderate hunger rose from 17.7 percent to 18 percent or an estimated 3.7 million families from 3.6 million families last December.

Severe hunger, meanwhile, jumped 1.1-point to a near record-high of 5.8 percent (1.2 million families) from 4.7 percent or an estimated 955,000 families. The latest figure was below the six percent record-high in March 2001.

The survey also showed that hunger was at 32.4 percent among the self-rated poor or more than double the 13.5 percent among those who said they were not poor.

The figures were almost similar to last December's 33.6 percent hunger rate among the self-rated poor and the 13.3 percent among the not poor.

SWS said 37.3 percent among the self-rated food poor claimed to have experi-



enced hunger in the first quarter. This was triple the 13 percent among the not food-poor and food-borderline families.

Those who experienced severe hunger likewise increased to 9.2 percent from eight percent among the self-rated poor but fell to 1.7 percent from 2.1 percent for the not poor/borderline families.

Among the self-rated food poor, severe hunger rose from 9.1 percent to 10.5 percent.

Moderate hunger among self-rated poor families, however, dropped to 23.2 percent from 25.6 percent last December.

Moderate hunger fell by 14.3 points in the Visayas to 7.7 percent, by 0.7 point in Metro Manila to 16.3 percent, but up by five points to 22 percent in the rest of Luzon and by four points to 20 percent in Mindanao.

The SWS said the figures were higher than the 13-year averages for all areas, except in the Visayas.

Severe hunger also dipped slightly in the Visayas to 2.7 percent from three percent, while it rose three points in Metro Manila and eight percent in Mindanao. It remained at six percent in the rest of Luzon.

Increase due to oil price hikes - Soliman

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman said the increase in the number of Filipinos who went hungry could be due to oil price increases in the National Capital Region and the disasters that struck Mindanao.

"We will intensify the supplementary feeding program and cash for work, especially in the identified areas of the survey," Soliman said in a text message to The STAR.

Soliman said the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program now has 2.9 million family-beneficiaries.

"We are also fast-tracking the rehabilitation of earthquake and typhoon survivors through provision of core shelter units as well as livelihood assistance to enable them to achieve normalcy in their lives," Soliman said.

Unrest due to poverty

A party-list lawmaker, meanwhile, warned yesterday of possible unrest owing

(continued on page 11)

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Ombudsman Summoned

by Christina Mendez
Thursday, May 10, 2012

MANILA, Philippines - Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales and four others have been ordered to appear before the Senate impeachment court and testify in the trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona on Monday.

Morales was also directed to bring with her the original and certified true copy of the complaints against Corona filed before the Office of the Ombudsman and the documents from which the complainants based their accusations that Corona had foreign currency accounts with an aggregate value of \$10 million.

"Fail not," read the one-page subpoena ad testificandum et duces tecum.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, presiding officer of the impeachment court, issued the subpoena to the Ombudsman to shed light on a case filed by Akbayan party-list Rep. Walden Bello, former Rep. Risa Hontiveros, Emmanuel Tiu Santos, and Harvey Keh against Corona in connection with his alleged \$10-million deposits.

Although Bello is covered by parliamentary immunity, Enrile said he was summoned because "he has waived his inter-parliamentary immunity from a compulsory process by this court because he complained to the Ombudsman."

Bello, who is in Vienna, Austria attending a conference, said he is prepared to testify because "the people have the right to know the truth behind Corona's wealth."

The Senate president did not issue subpoena for the other complainants Ruperto Alerosa, Gibby Torres, Albert Concepcion, Earnest Francis Calayag,

Moses Mikhael SD, and Tristan Daine Brioso Zinampan.

In their request for subpoena, Corona's lawyers Jose Roy III and Dennis Manalo said the prosecution has "maliciously presented in evidence Corona's bank accounts to prove that he did not disclose all his personal properties in his statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALNs) for the years 2002 to 2010."

"They also surreptitiously imply that CJ Corona has foreign denominated accounts, which were not disclosed in his SALN," the defense's subpoena said, arguing that the complaints involve matters and issues already pending before the impeachment court.

Million-dollar question

In what could be a complete turnaround from the defense's earlier statements that the \$10-million complaint should not have bearing on the present impeachment complaint, Corona's camp asserted that "the veracity of the charges... and Keh's statements before the media that CJ Corona has dollar and euro accounts, definitely have bearing on these proceedings..."

Corona's team said the Ombudsman and the complainants have to testify "in order to prove that CJ Corona does not have foreign denominated accounts amounting to US\$10 million and for them to explain why an investigation is being conducted on matters already within the jurisdiction of the honorable impeachment court."

While the \$10-million deposit was not mentioned in the impeachment case filed against Corona, Enrile said there was no need to amend the complaint.

The impeachment court is looking into three of the eight



Ombudsman Carpio-Morales

Articles of Impeachment against Corona.

Article 2 accuses him of betrayal of public trust and/or culpable violation of the Constitution for his non-disclosure of some of his alleged properties and bank accounts in his SALN.

According to his lawyers, Corona vowed to answer all allegations but only after the \$10-million deposit is brought before the impeachment court.

While Enrile reiterated that the Chief Justice will be accorded due respect when he testifies in the trial, the presiding officer added that "it is up to the Chief Justice to defend himself or not."

"We are not going to be abrasive or be disrespectful. We will grant him all the courtesies due him as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court," Enrile said.

The Senate president, however, refused to give any categorical answer when asked about the possibility that the Chief Justice and his lawyers might just focus his testimony on the \$10-million bank accounts.

"Well, it's up to them. I will not teach them how to defend their client. They cannot control the decision of the court," the Senate president said.

Delaying tactic

But Bayan Muna Rep. Neri Colmenares, a member of the prosecution panel, said the con-

dition set by defense lawyers that the Ombudsman and other hostile witnesses should first testify before Corona takes the witness stand could be a "delaying tactic."

"I have never seen an accused in a case imposing conditions on a court. The demand for the testimony of the 11 complainants (in the case against Corona in the Ombudsman's office) is intended to delay," he said.

He added that it was clear from the statements of defense lawyer Roy before the impeachment court on Tuesday that Corona's testimony would depend on the weight of evidence to be presented by the Ombudsman and the complainants in the case against the Chief Justice that she is investigating.

He said that the impeachment tribunal is already wasting two days just because Corona's camp wanted to prepare for its hostile witnesses.

On Tuesday, Roy said Corona, if he testifies, would debunk allegations that he has dollar deposits in several banks totaling \$10 million.

The Ombudsman had written Corona to answer such accusations contained in a complaint filed with her office.

But Enrile said Corona, if he testifies, should explain not only the allegations in the complaint pending with the Ombudsman's office but also his five dollar accounts in Philippine Savings Bank, which bank president Pascual Garcia III had confirmed.

(continued on page 15)

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(from page 10, SWS...)

to the continuous rise of hunger in the country.

"Hunger and unrest is inevitable in a country where government policies reveal an indifference to poverty. President Aquino is courting unrest and disgust by deliberately ignoring and refusing to prioritize measures that will give Filipino families much needed relief from the onslaught of poverty," Gabriela party-list Rep. Luz Ila-

gan said.

"That more and more Filipino families are going hungry can only be the result of the Aquino government's refusal to grant higher wages amid incessant increases in food prices," she said.

She said the National Statistics Office earlier confirmed that basic commodity price increases - including fish, dairy products, non-alcoholic beverages and selected fruits - contributed heav-

ily to the three percent inflation rate last April.

She said removing the value added tax on petroleum products alone could have made a huge difference.

"By bringing down the prices of gasoline and diesel by as much as P6.00 per liter or the price of an 11-kg LPG tank by P90, Filipino families will have more to spend for food and other basic needs," she said.

(www.philstar.com)

MAINLAND NEWS

Rising Pinoy Filmmaker Set to Produce Her First Feature Film in Hollywood

from AJPRESS

Wednesday, May 9, 2012

LOS ANGELES—Only two months after completing her graduate education in film and television production at the University of Southern California, independent filmmaker Lea Dizon has been approached to produce her first full length feature film titled *Impulse Control*. The film, set to shoot in late 2012, focuses on a world where people lose the ability to control violent impulses, and a family that must

fight the outside world while making sure not to fight amongst themselves.

Lea is working on the project with USC alumni founded company Fifth Floor Balcony Pictures, an organization focused on promoting and harnessing the energy and enthusiasm of young talent. Dizon says, "In school there is an excitement: an atmosphere of getting things done no matter what. It is easy to lose that once you are out of the school environment because it becomes so much more difficult. We hope to



Filmmaker Lea Dizon

act as proof to our peers and the industry that the youthful spirit we all felt in film school can be powerful and profitable in Hollywood."

Co-founder of the company Matthew Breault says "Lea had

developed a reputation as someone who gets things done in USC. She was the clear choice as someone who had the experience and ability to push this project forward.

The film centers on a man who has lost his job and home in the current economic crisis before being launched into a violent new world. The co-writer of the film, Alex George Pickering, comments, "It is an idea that young filmmakers and anyone affected by the recession can relate to. A lot of the rage and dissatisfaction we were seeing in protests during the occupy movement inspired

our characters."

As part of getting word about the film out, the team has enlisted the help of Kickstarter, a crowd-funding website. When asked about this route, Dizon says, "Though we have some funding in place, I think sites like Kickstarter are hugely important in making independent films today. Not only do they help raise the all-important funding we need, they also raise awareness about the film. They literally kick start your fan base and generate excitement, not just for your project but for the direction the film is moving in."

For more information visit www.impulsecontrolfilm.com.

Postal Service: Will Keep Rural Post Offices Open

from www.philstar.com

Thursday, May 10, 2011

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bending to strong public opposition, the nearly bankrupt US Postal Service on yesterday backed off a plan to close thousands of rural post offices after May 15 and proposed keeping them open, but with shorter operating hours.

The move to halt the shuttering of 3,700 low-revenue post offices followed months of dissent from rural states and their lawmakers, who said the cost-cutting would hurt their communities the most. In recent weeks, rising opposition had led Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe to visit some rural areas in a bid to ease fears about cuts that could slow delivery of prescription drugs, newspapers and other services.

In an election year, the angst over postal closings also extended to nearly half the senators, who in letters last week urged Donahoe to postpone closing any mail facility until Congress approves final postal

overhaul legislation. The Senate last month passed a bill that would halt many of the closings; the House remains stalled over a separate bill allowing for aggressive cuts.

"I could live with this plan, and I think the majority of people could," said June Nygren, who runs the Jersey Lilly Saloon & Eatery in the tiny Montana town of Ingomar. Donahoe visited the rural town of about 80 people last month, which welcomed him with a spread of home-made baked goods and a packed school gymnasium as people pleaded for their post office to stay open.

"I felt he really paid attention, and apparently he did," Nygren said.

At a news briefing, Donahoe said he hoped the latest plan will help allay much of rural America's concern about postal cutbacks. He prodded Congress to act quickly on legislation that will allow the agency to move ahead with its broader multi-billion dollar cost-cutting effort and return to profitability by 2015.

"We've listened to our cus-

tomers in rural America, and we've heard them loud and clear — they want to keep their post office open," he said. "We believe today's announcement will serve our customers' needs and allow us to achieve real savings to help the Postal Service return to long-term financial stability."

While no post office would be closed, more than 13,000 rural mail facilities could see reduced operations of between two hours and six hours, but only after a review process that is expected to take several months. An additional 4,000 rural post offices would keep their full-time hours.

The agency also will announce new changes next week involving its proposal to close up to 252 mail processing centers.

After the Postal Service gets regulatory approval and hears public input sometime this fall, the new strategy would go into place over two years and be completed in September 2014, saving \$500 million a year by reducing full-time staff.

Under the plan, communities would get the option of keeping their area post offices open, but with reduced hours. Another option would be to close a post office in one area while keeping a nearby one open full time. Communities could opt to create a Village Post Office, one set up in a library, government office or store such as Walmart, Walgreens or Office Depot.

"At the end of the day, we will not close rural post offices until we receive community input," said Megan Brennan, the Postal Service's chief operating

officer.

The latest move comes as the Postal Service is pushing Congress to pass cost-saving postal legislation that includes an end to Saturday mail delivery.

The Senate-passed bill would give the Postal Service an \$11 billion cash infusion but also impose a one-year freeze on shuttering rural post offices. It would cut about half the planned closings of mail processing centers, give affected communities new avenues to appeal closing decisions and bar cuts to Saturday delivery for at least two years.

At the time it was passed, the Postal Service denounced the Senate bill as "totally inappropriate" because it would keep unneeded facilities open.

In the House, hesitancy among rural lawmakers is helping to stall a separate bill that would allow for far more aggressive cuts, including a more immediate end to Saturday delivery.

Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., a co-sponsor of the House bill, said the plan announced yesterday doesn't cut costs enough. He noted, for instance, that additional cuts can be made in more densely populated urban communities, which should also be prodded to consider Village Post Offices or other alternatives that save money.

"The smallest 10,000 post offices collectively cost USPS less than \$600 million to operate each year," he said. "To achieve real savings creating long-term solvency, the Postal Service needs to focus on consolidation

in more-populated areas where the greatest opportunities for cost reduction exist."

Most of the 3,700 post offices that had been under review for possible closing had been in rural areas with low volumes of business, with most having only two hours of business a day even though they are open longer. Currently the post office operates more than 31,000 retail outlets.

The agency said its new plan will save more, mostly by weeding out full-time postmasters who don't have labor contract protections and replacing them with part-time workers. It plans to discuss possible buyouts with 13,000 postmasters who are now eligible for retirement. More than 80 percent of postal costs in rural areas are labor-related.

The Postal Service has been grappling with losses as first-class mail volume declines and more people switch to the Internet to communicate and pay bills. The agency has forecast a record \$14.1 billion loss by the end of this year; without changes, it said, annual losses will exceed \$21 billion by 2016.

If the House fails to act soon, postal officials say, they will face a cash crunch in August and September, when the agency must pay more than \$11 billion to the Treasury for future retiree health benefits. Already \$13 billion in debt, the health payment obligation will force the agency to run up against its \$15 billion debt ceiling, causing it to default on the payments.

The agency plans to release its latest quarterly financial results on Thursday.

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LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

Contrary to its mandate, the USCIS does not always adjudicate cases in a fair or timely manner.

This is according to the country's largest association of immigration law practitioners, the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA), based on the experience of its members in representing businesses in applying for immigration benefits.

This statement was made in connection with its challenge to a recent report which found that immigration service officers (ISOs) experience undue pressure, allegedly from USCIS leadership, to approve visa petitions.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a federation of more than 3 million businesses, also disputed the finding that USCIS is making it easier for petitions to

Long Delays and High Denial Rates Belie Immigration Report

be approved. In a statement, it demonstrated that the report's conclusions are inconsistent with the experience of the business community.

The report was released last month by the Department of Homeland Security Office of the Inspector General (OIG). It found that there exists a culture of "get to yes" within the USCIS wherein ISOs are sometimes pressured to issue approvals. Following the report's release, the House Immigration Subcommittee called a hearing on February 15, 2012.

Fraud and outside influence aimed at the approval of visa petitions of clearly ineligible applicants would doubtless undermine immigration benefit adjudication and understandably be a cause for concern. However, statistics and testimony of witnesses at the hearing disprove the report findings.

As AILA raised at the hearing, if indeed there is undue pressure to grant petitions then it follows that approval rates must

also be high. The opposite seems to be true, however.

For instance, based on data from USCIS itself, in the last four years there has been a dramatic increase in the denials of L-1 and H-1B petitions.

The National Foundation for American Policy analyzed the numbers and found that between 2007 and 2011, the denial rate of L-1B petitions rose from 7% to 27%. The L-1B category is used by multinational companies to allow personnel with "specialized knowledge" to work in the United States. The AILA notes that the change in approval rates took place without a corresponding change in the law or regulations.

At the same time, H-1B denials jumped from 11% in 2007 to 29% in 2009. In 2011 the denial rate was down to 17% but this is still higher than in the past.

The same trend could also be seen in L-1A petitions (managers and executives of multinational companies) and O-1A

petitions (aliens with extraordinary ability in the sciences, education, business or athletics).

Longer delays also ensued from the increased use of "Requests for Evidence" which officers use to obtain more information instead of granting or denying the petition right away.

The president of the USCIS officer's union testified at the hearing that there is no culture of getting to yes within USCIS. The Inspector General himself said that they found "no conspicuous fraud" in immigrations benefit adjudications.

The methodology for the study was also criticized as weak and unscientific by AILA and the Chamber of Commerce. They believe that the OIG drew conclusions from a very small and self-selected sample.

The OIG interviewed only 147 managers and staff and received only 256 responses to an online survey, which represent only 2% of the total number of personnel involved in immigration benefit adjudications. Even

Rep. Zoe Lofgren, a ranking member of the Subcommittee, called the report "amateurish".

The AILA and Chamber of Commerce gave examples of actual experiences that contradict the report's findings of undue influence. These cases highlight the arbitrary standards being applied by the USCIS and the burdensome requests and lengthy processes that U.S. businesses are subjected to. As some of those experiences illustrate, the negative trend in adjudication has also led to the loss of jobs of U.S. workers.

Indeed just by looking at the statistics and experience of businesses, it appears that the USCIS instead suffers from what some have termed a "culture of no". Perhaps the USCIS should instead realize the need to develop a culture that would bring the United States where it needs to be in today's global economy.

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

GLOBAL NEWS

Fil-Am to Carry Olympic Torch

by Joseph Pimentel
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

A Filipino American cancer survivor from Atlanta was chosen as one of 8,000 people to carry the Olympic torch as it makes its way to London for the opening of the 2012 Olympic Games. FilAm Rodolfo Sebastian Carlos, a thyroid cancer survivor, originally from Paranaque City, Philippines will carry the torch and "serve as an inspiration to the youth of his birth country, the Philippines, to keep on chasing after their dreams," the Philippine Embassy announced last week.

"Mr. Carlos' inspiring story as a cancer survivor and passion to share his knowledge of Filipino martial arts to others in the community indeed makes him a fitting candidate for this honored pursuit," said Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose L. Cuisia, Jr.

Carlos, an employee at the



InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) in Atlanta, Georgia, was selected by the London Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) as part of the committees "Moment to Shine" campaign. The campaign encouraged members of the public to nominate someone with best personal stories or who have made a real difference in their school or local community.

According to the Philip-

pine Embassy, Carlos, who holds graduated degrees from Boston University and Cornell, was diagnosed with thyroid cancer shortly before starting work at IHG. As the cancer weakened him, he gained strength by practicing Filipino Martial Arts (FMA). Since then, he's defeated his cancer and with the help of his brother has been active promoting FMA and sharing their knowledge to various branches of the military, police, and community watch volunteers.

The Embassy said that Carlos hopes to not only serve as an inspiration to the youth of the Philippines, but also "bring awareness to thyroid cancer

and inspire fellow survivors to give support to those who are currently battling this disease; and, promote awareness of Filipino martial arts and a lifelong physical culture lifestyle of living strong."

Carlos will be passing on the Olympic torch in Willenhall in the United Kingdom on June 30.

Four Other Pinoy Torchbearers

Carlos is among five other

Filipino torchbearers. The others include: UK residents 19-year-old Steven Cheung, an Olympic Youth Ambassador for Waltham Forest and 30-year-old Reymund Enteria, an occupational therapist. The other two are from the Philippines: 29-year-old Joven Mallo, a sales and services Assistant at Crowne Plaza Manila, and 47-year-old Marcy Reyes, an executive housekeeper of Holiday Inn.

(www.asianjournal.com)

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PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE

Aldaw Ti Ina: Ruknoy Ken Daton



ILOKO
By Amado I. Yoro

BABAI, wen, maysa a babai - INA
Aldaw Dagiti Inna ita a Maikadua a Domingo iti bulan ti Mayo:

Kuna ni Mannaniw, ti daniw ti kapintasan a sagut iti Ina, kas iti Ina, ti duayya ken panagtagibi ken panangpadakkel iti anak ti kangayedan nga akem ti Ina.

Ti daniw ket isu ti maglantip ti aweng, ti ayug, ti daeg ken ti pintas ti langit ken ti daga...

Ti musika, nailaga iti daniw kadagiti riniwriw a sonata ken samiweng ti birtud ti duayya ken panangidanggay a mangisala iti anak... ti maladaga

Nasapaak a naulila iti ina ti tawenko a sangapulo ket dua. No ibagak a diak nananam ti pamateg ti inak gapu iti nasapa nga ipupusayna, siakon ti kasukiran nga anak. No ibagak a naulilaak iti pamateg ti inak, diak pabasonen dagiti situasion ken

pasamak. Ti pagraemak unay iti biagko, naipasngay ken naadnaan ti gundaway a maki-gasangasat iti biag itoy a lubong. Pagyamanak met iti daydi tatangko, dua ti akemna idi naulilakami a lima nga agkakabsat. Isu ti pannakainami, agluto, agbugbog ti pamakan kadagiti tarakenmi a baboy.

Maysa kadagiti ikitko a Martina wenno Ikit Siding, a kabsat ti amak ti kasingedan a nangtartaripato kadakami.

Ita a tawen, selebraran ti adu a nasion iti lubong ti Aldaw ti Ina iti maikadua a Domingo daytoy a bulan, nga isu ti Mayo 13, 2012. Iti Mayo laeng, adda aganay a 70 a nasion ti mangselebrar iti Aldaw dagiti Inna.

Kas maysa kadagiti kabassitan ken kapatgan a panangsubad ti ayat ti ina, maysa daytoy a daniw [anonymous author] a para ken ni INA.

- Tarigagayak kenka iti umdas a raniag ti init a mamagtalinaed ti kinasayaat a kababalin Uray kaipapananna a kakuyog ti aglabas nga aldaw iti panagsalog
- Tarigagayak kenka iti umdas a dungngo ti tudo iti panangpresiar ti ad-adu pay nga aldaw ti init
- Tarigagayak kenka iti umdas

pay a kinaragsak a mamagtalinaed iti nabiag nga espiritum iti agnanayon a panagbiagmo

- Tarigagayak kenka ti umdas pay a sanaang ti saem no dadduma isuda ti mangpadakkel wenno mangpabilleg kenka ti ragsak ti biag uray iti kabassitan a ragsak
- Tarigagayak kenka ti umdas nga urnong iti gagayem ken pagayam a mangpennek kadagiti kalikagummo
- Tarigagayak kenka ti umdas a pukaw a mangapresiar iti amin nga adda kenka iti ikutmo gapu iti kinapategda
- Tarigagayak kenka umdas a kablaaw a liwliwam a manglasat iti panagdaliasatmo kadagiti adu a kalsada ti biagmo aginggana iti maudi a panagpakada

Apay nga adda Mother's Day?

Isu ti selebrasion a nairanta a pammigbig para laeng iti patpatgentayo nga ina a nakautangan-tayo iti biag. A nagpaay a kaunaan a maestratayo. A nangubba; nangisala. A nangarakup kadatayo no maitiklebtayo. Malaksid a baby sitter wenno para aw-awir, isu ti natalged a salaknib, sadiri ken sarikedked iti panawen ti peggad ken saan.

Ti ina ti kamangtayo no adda parikuttayo. Nupay istrikto no agunget kas panangisuro; agkatkatawa no maragsakan a kibintayo iti panagubing. Isu ti kaunaan a mamagbaga no nagbidduttayo iti aturentayo iti nalinteg a dana ti biag. Isu a modelo.

Kasano a naaddaan iti selebrasion a Mother's day?

Babaen ti reperensia, adu a nasion ti mangselebrar iti Mother's Day. Uray datayo a Filipino, no dumteng ti kastoy nga aldaw, ikkantayo met iti panagyaman ti inatayo ken da lola gapu iti panangtaripatoda kadatayo idi ubbingtayo.

Nangrugi daytoy a selebrasion idi pay laeng un-unana wenno kadagiti kaunaan nga spring festivals.

Iti Greek mythology, ni Rhea ti maaw-awagan iti maternal goddess. Asawa ni Cronus. Ni Rhea ti ina dagiti amin a diosen ken diosa.

Iti daan a mitolohia ti Roma, iruknoy dagiti Romano daytoy nga aldaw iti diosa dagiti ina wenno ina dagiti diosa ken diosen nga isu ni Cybele. Agpaut iti tallo wenno uppat nga aldaw a selebrasion a nakasentro iti panagsubalit ken pananglagip iti panangpadakkel-panangtaripato ti ina iti/kadagiti annakna.

Sadiay England, nangrugi ti panangselebrar iti Aldaw dagiti Ina idi 1600s. Awaganda daytoy iti Mothering Sunday, nga agtinag wenno agpetsa iti maikapad a Domingo kalpasan ti Nangina nga Aldaw.

Ditoy met United States, ni

Julia Ward Howe ti kaunaan a nangisingasing iti pannakaadda iti Mother's Day idi 1872.

Ngem maysa a babai a saan a nagbalin nga ina, ni Anna Jarvis, ti nangidaulo iti pannakaadda iti Mother's Day iti US. Rinugianna ti seremonia kas panangidayawna iti inana idi 1907 sadiay Grafton, West Virginia. Kalpasanna, indauluanna ti kampania iti pannakaadda ti Naisangsangayan nga Aldaw dagiti Inna.

Ti Estado ti Virginia ti kaunaan a naaddaan iti holiday.

Idi 1914, indeklara ni President Woodrow Wilson a tunggal maikadua a Domingo ti Mayo ti panangselebrar itoy iti sibubukel a US.

Ti sabong a karnasion a napili kadaytoy a holiday wenno selebrasion. Napili ti carnation ta daytoy ti mangisimbolo iti maysa nga ina. Iti agdama, nabingayen dagiti dua a maris ti carnation: no puraw a sabong ti carnation, pimmusayen ti ina, idinto a no nalabaga, sibibiag pay laeng nga ina.

Di nagbayag, nagbalin a komersialismo ti panangrambak iti Aldaw ti Ina. Isu nga idi 1923, nangipila iti darum ni Jarvis iti kaaldawan a mismo ti Mother's day.

Iti agdama, uray no nagbalinen a komersial ti parambak, saantayo a malipatan a kablaawan ti inatayo iti naimbag nga aldaw wenno Mother's Day. Wenno saan, lagipentayo dagiti naimbag nga aldaw iti kinaad-datayo iti sidong ti nakautangan-tayo iti biag.

GLOBAL NEWS

Global Survey Shows Positive Gains in Press Freedom in Phl

WASHINGTON — Freedom House gave the Philippines a shout out in its global survey of media independence for continuing to make positive gains in press freedom.

It said the Philippines jumped in the world rankings to 88th place from 93rd previously.

The country also improved its rating to 42 points from 46 points previously after a major decline in 2009 — due to a reduc-

tion in violence against journalists, attempts by the government to address impunity and expanded diversity of media ownership.

Of 197 countries and territories assessed in 2011, a total of 66 were rated free, 72 were rated partly free, and 59 were rated not free.

Freedom House assigns a numerical ranking to each country based on the legal environ-

(continued on page 15)

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GLOBAL NEWS

Philippines is the World's Best Country in 'Business English'

The Philippines has been named the world's best country in business English proficiency, even beating the U.S., according to a recent study by GlobalEnglish Corporation.

GlobalEnglish recently released the results of its annual Business English Index (BEI) which measures business English proficiency in the workplace. The BEI showed that for 2012, only the Philippines attained a score above 7.0 out of 76 countries worldwide.

"The Philippines, a country with one-tenth of the population of India, recently overtook India as a hub for call centers. Over 400,000 Filipinos are now employed in call centers, roughly 50,000 more than in India," the study says.

The Philippines, which scored 7.11, was joined by Norway (6.54), Estonia (6.45), Serbia (6.38) and Slove-



nia (6.19). GlobalEnglish noted that a country's business English capability is an indicator of its economic growth and business success.

"It is not surprising that both the Philippines and Norway—the only two countries in the top five in both 2011 and 2012—are improving their economies, based on the latest GDP data from the World Bank," it says.

GlobalEnglish stressed that the 2012 BEI, which shows a lack of business English proficiency, is threatening the productivity of companies, industries and country-specific

economies this year.

"Poor Business English skills are bad for global businesses and this year's Business English Index suggests that many companies will be hard-pressed to achieve their desired performance goals during 2012," says Tom Kahl, GlobalEnglish President.

"Addressing English skills gaps and ensuring that employees can immediately perform at the necessary proficiency level should be viewed as a strategic imperative for multi-national businesses, as Enterprise Fluency, the ability to seamlessly communicate and collaborate within global organizations, can deliver significant financial upside."

Headquartered in Brisbane, California, GlobalEnglish works with multi-national companies, including Cisco, Procter and Gamble, HSBC and Pfizer to support performance in business English across the workforce around the world. (*Good News Pilipinas.com*)

(from page 14, GLOBAL...)

ment in which media outlets operate, political influences on reporting and access to information and economic pressures on content and the dissemination of news.

Each country in the rankings receives a score from 0 (the most free) to 100 (the least free) which serves as the basis for an overall press freedom designation of free, partly free, or not free.

Finland, Norway and Sweden tied

in 1st place with 10 points each in the latest ranking. At the bottom in 197th place was North Korea with 97 points.

The Asia-Pacific region as a whole exhibited a relatively high level of press freedom in 2011, with 15 countries and territories rated free, including Australia, Japan and Taiwan.

Thirteen countries were rated partly free, including ASEAN members Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand.

Other ASEAN members Cambo-

dia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar were among the 12 countries in the Asia-Pacific region rated not free.

Freedom House is a Washington-based independent watchdog organization that supports democratic change, monitors the status of print, broadcast and Internet freedom around the world and advocates for democracy and human rights. (*www.philstar.com*)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS (cont.) (from page 11, OMBUDSMAN...)

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III, on the other hand, admitted that Corona's testimony would definitely impact on his case.

"This is just an opinion, it could be a factor. Because the way he would explain the (bank) accounts and other issues would have a very strong impact," Sotto said.

He reiterated the sentiments raised by his colleagues that Corona would be the best person to explain the issues related to his bank accounts and his SALNs in general.

Ramon Esguerra, one of the Corona's lawyers, said Corona "will

rise and fall by whatever his testimony will be when he faces the senators."

He said the Chief Justice merely made good on his promise to appear before the impeachment court at the proper time when he instructed his lawyers to inform the court about his decision to testify.

He said that Corona felt that the allegations that were coming out against him had reached a point that the intention was no longer to malign but to take him out already.

Esguerra said that the Chief Justice, just like the senator-judges, also

wanted the trial to finish soon and thought that his appearance there could help accomplish this.

Most of the senator-judges have grown impatient with the trial, now nearly five months running, which has caused their legislative work to take a back seat.

A welcome development

Meanwhile, Malacañang and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) also welcomed the decision of Corona to take the witness stand. (*www.philstar.com*)

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