

**HAWAII-PHILIPPINE NEWS EDITION**

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# HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

HAWAII'S ONLY WEEKLY FILIPINO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

## PHILIPPINES TO COMPETE IN HOMELESS WORLD CUP OF SOCCER TOURNEY IN BRAZIL

By Gregory Bren **GARCIA**

**F**ootball, also known as "soccer" in America and lovingly referred to by fans as "the beautiful game," is the world's most popular sport. As proof, this year's Fédération Internationale de Football Association's (FIFA) World Cup 2010 was estimated to have drawn an epic 26 billion cumulative global viewers during the entire sporting event, or an average of 400 million viewers per match.

It's a following that constantly trumps even the Olympic Games itself. Despite the sport's popularity however, the basketball-crazy Philippines remains one of the few countries in the world that does not put football at the pinnacle of their pantheon of sports. While most Filipinos continue reading the papers' sports section for news about the Phil-

ippine Basketball Association, a little-known Filipino football team will try its luck in another "world cup" tournament in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil come September 2010.

### THE WORLD'S MOST DEMOCRATIC GAME

Writing for Time Magazine, John Carlin describes football as "uniquely democratic among team

sports." The relative simplicity of the game makes it so accessible to just about anyone, no matter the social status, nationality, ethnicity, height, sex and so on.

"You can play anywhere: on grass; on cement; on dusty, stony ground; or even (as pained mothers all over the world will attest) inside the house," wrote Carlin. The rules are also very simple; all

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Members of Team Philippines pose for a group photo after a match in the 2009 Homeless World Cup of Soccer in Milan, Italy (photo courtesy of streetsoccerphilippines.com)

## 'No Corruption in Use of US Aid'

By Paolo **ROMERO**

**M**ANILA, Philippines - The Aquino administration has assured Washington that its \$434-million aid package, approved last week, will not be tainted with corruption and will be utilized properly.

President Aquino is expected to witness the formal signing of the compact, equivalent to P20 billion, between the Philippine government and the US Millennium Challenge Corp. (MCC) when he goes to the United States next month - his first overseas trip as Chief Executive. It will not be a state visit.

US Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr. told The STAR the other night that Aquino administration officials have assured his government that in utilizing the aid, there will be "no corruption, it will be money well spent."

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima



US Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr.

and Trade Secretary Gregory Domingo left for Washington over the weekend to finalize details of the aid package, which the country can tap starting next month.

Approval of the compact by the board of the MCC, a US government agency designed to work with developing countries and chaired by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, was stalled during the Arroyo administration on US concerns that Manila was not doing enough to fight corruption.

Thomas said approval of the pact showed his government's faith in the new

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## OFWs in Islam Nations to Suffer Anew in Month of Ramadan

By Dennis **CARCAMO**

**M**ANILA, Philippines -- The number of abused and run away overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) dramatically increases during the Holy month of Ramadan where a lot of them could not bear the traditions which entail its observance, according to a migrant workers' rights group.

"It is expected that [OFWs] too would abide the cultural practices of their respective employers observing the Holy Month of Ramadan and this would be very difficult for

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Muslim faithfuls during Ramadan

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# EDITORIAL

## Immigration Reform Should Include a Pathway to Citizenship

**W**hen fashioning any type of comprehensive legislation, political strategists always look to the numbers: where do we stand on demographics and who wants what.

In the recent healthcare debate, there was strong support across the board, solid one-sided party backing, and vested interest among 40 million uninsured that made the chances for a significant overhaul seemed plausible. In spite of favorable political conditions to push forward major legislation, the end result was the signing into law a mere "pilot program" fix that only moderate Democrats could be pleased with.

Just a few months later, the Obama administration is pressed for yet another major revamping, this time of our immigration system. With looser political alliances and a fairly regional impact, it's questionable how much more successful substantively immigration reform will fair in the coming months.

The one big advantage this issue has over healthcare is bipartisan support. Both Democrats and Republicans agree that reform needs to get done. Where the consensus quickly becomes scattered is Democrats and Republicans within each of their own parties have vastly different proposals over what reform should look like.

Democrats seem uncommitted to the issue because they lack the numbers base to support immigration reform with the one but very influential exception in his Hispanic electorate. Republicans have the fiery passion to take on the issue, but in rare, surprising form is split among key groups. Its conservative Christian and big business factions are inclined to support a pathway toward citizenship for the undocumented in our country; while its larger middle-America, working class base favor outright deportation.

Considering the relatively tighter scope of this issue compared to healthcare -- determining the fate of 11 million undocumented residents among a nation of over 370 million citizens -- it's somewhat unusual for reform of this magnitude to trigger such intense feelings of urgency, fear and anger. Unless of course, deeper layers of complexities are at play.

### THE UNDOCUMENTED: SCAPEGOATS DURING ECONOMIC DECLINE

According to a recent CBS/Times poll tracking, the number of respondents who consider immigration a "very serious problem" is rising -- from 54 percent in 2006 to 65 percent this May. Prior to 2006, at the beginning stages of this exhausting recession, there really was no overwhelming national consensus that illegal immigrants posed a serious problem.

The sudden sense of real urgency surfaced in the last four years actually mirroring the trend of Americans' shrinking pocketbooks. Historically, anti-im-



migrant backlashes (which is what's really going on) follow a track of economic hardship, unemployment, mass anxiety and fear of being taken over by people who are culturally different. Immigration reform is largely an extension of Americans' desperation at lifting the economy. It is a reaction to our country's national decline.

### MYTH ONE: ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION AND BORDER VIOLENCE ARE UP

The fact is illegal immigration has been on the decline by more than 60 percent since 2000. This year, apprehensions at the border is the lowest figure in 35 years. On top of that, deportation is at a record high, estimated at 50,000 a month. The slower pace of illegal entry is a direct result of increased security budget increases since the September 11 terrorist attack. Contrary to Arizona's rightist elements that justify their new racist law due to rampant violence committed by illegal Mexicans, the F.B.I. statistics show that violence all along the Southwestern border counties on the U.S. side has fallen by more than 30 percent in the past two decades.

### MYTH TWO: THE UNDOCUMENTED ARE STEALING JOBS, HURTING OUR ECONOMY

Perhaps most ironic in this whole narrative is that economists assert that large sectors of our economy depend on illegal labor. The Department of Labor calculates that more than half of crop pickers in the U.S. are undocumented and underpaid. It's highly doubtful that undocumented workers are competing for the same jobs that most Americans would want. Importing the same amount of crops into the country currently homegrown is something we'd have to do if deportation becomes law. The damage to our economy would be devastating, raising the cost of all consumable goods, further weakening the country's economy and compromise our financial sovereignty, similar to our dependence on foreign oil.

The beneficial economic output that our undocumented population contribute far outweighs the cost that they use. Undocumented immigrants, who comprise nearly one-third of all immigrants in the country, do not even qualify to receive welfare benefits or social security, as popularly believed, and popularly rumored by anti-immigrant groups. This is one of the most damaging myths surrounding illegal immigrants because the last scenario the majority of Americans struggling to make ends meet would want is to support another class of welfare recipients.

A 2007 analysis of U.S. Census data by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, makes it clear that it is the U.S. born, U.S. citizen children of undocumented immigrants who are eligible for programs such as Medicaid. Even at that, less than 1 percent of households headed by undocumented immigrants receive cash assistance for needy families, compared to 5 percent

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COMMENTARY

# America Needs Healthcare Freedom, Not "Reform"

by Danny DE GRASIA,  
II and Lauren EASLEY

For almost eight decades to the date, American people have been repeatedly under pressure from Washington D.C. to be subject to mandatory buy-in of health insurance. On August 15, 1935, President Franklin Roosevelt established the Interdepartmental Committee to Coordinate Health and Welfare Activities for the purpose of developing a policy framework for a new health insurance regime. In 1939, Senator Robert Wagner of New York introduced S. 1620 which took the findings of Roosevelt's task force to mandate universal, compulsory health insurance. Though S. 1620 languished and was never realized, its supporters used incremental legislation to bring America to the point at which mandatory coverage would be inescapable.

On May 22, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson in a commencement speech to the University of Michigan coined a new political phrase - "The Great Society" -

which laid the foundation for greater Federal intervention in nearly all matters of private life and resurrected nationalized healthcare. In 1965, Congress passed a wave of Great Society spending bills and established Medicaid. The Federal government likewise subsidized hospitals all around the nation, funding everything from healthcare to the purchase of new equipment and even lobby furniture. The new regime, which saw both a spending frenzy and widespread fraud, resulted in skyrocketing prices for healthcare and prescription medication.

By 1970 it had become apparent that the Great Society had only resulted in debt for the Federal Government and unbearable prices for consumers. Two watershed events followed the failure of the Great Society, First and foremost, the United States, which up to that point had backed its paper dollars by gold, was forced to employ the Federal Reserve in 1971 to expand the money supply by 10% just to keep pace with spending. The result was that foreign holders of U.S. dollars began demanding gold, as

it became readily apparent to the world that America's paper money might not be backed by anything. On August 15, 1971, to prevent hyperinflation from setting in, Nixon froze wages and prices for 90 days and permanently ended the convertibility of dollars to gold.

The second major event was on December 29, 1973 when President Nixon signed the Health Maintenance Organization Act of 1973 into law in response to skyrocketing healthcare and prescription costs caused by the Great Society's market interventions. Since that day when HMOs were created, America has not been the same. Not only did the cost of healthcare and medicine continue to increase, but now a new industry - the health insurance industry - saw abuse, fraud and skyrocketing prices of its own. President Barack Obama's insistence on establishing a new healthcare regime in America via the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) as a result of supposedly evil insurance companies charging too much money and Americans not having enough access to healthcare and medicine is nothing short of a false flag. The very healthcare crisis that exists today is a result of the failure of the

Great Society and government's insistence in intervening in the private market. The only thing that Washington D.C. in its quest to see nationalized healthcare realized is the creation of powerful pharmaceutical and insurance monopolies.

More shocking is the revelation from a recent PBS Frontline investigative report that the passage of the PPACA was never about providing better healthcare options to the people but rather establishing that everyone be required to purchase insurance, thus creating a racket that even former DNC chair and presidential candidate Howard Dean called "an insurance company's dream."

Wendell Potter, former vice president of communications at CIGNA, speaking of the insurance lobby told Frontline: "They want to make sure that they get a requirement that all of us buy health insurance. They want to make sure that we are all forced by it to buy products from them. And they want to make sure that there's no alternative other than the private insurance market. That's why they're so adamantly opposed to the public option."

The solution to these decades of failure, waste and market manip-

ulations is not more "reform" but freedom. The cheapest way to make healthcare available to all is not to mandate it but to allow people to purchase it if they need it and leave it be if they don't need it and to throw government interference out. All across America, millions of people are calling for a reform of the PPACA and some eighteen states are suing the Federal government over the unconstitutional racket created by compulsory insurance. Just last week, U.S. Eastern District Judge Henry Hudson denied the Federal government its motion to dismiss Virginia's lawsuit against PPACA and some 667,680 of Missouri's voters voted for Proposition C, which nullifies enforcement of the PPACA in their state.

Now is the time for Americans to educate themselves on where our country is heading with universal healthcare. Our nation's history in the evolution of healthcare needs to stop with the progression of a nationalized pursuit, but rather take step some steps backward to see that every American individual is entitled to make their own choice.

The answer to 1984 is 1776. ■

*DANNY DE GRASIA is the president of Free and Living Conservatives.  
LAUREN EASLEY is a political activist and a former policy advisor at the Hawaii State Legislature.*

## ■ EDITORIAL (CONT.)

(cont. from page 2...)

of households headed by native-born U.S. citizens.

### RACE AND CULTURE

If we are really honest with ourselves, we must acknowledge that this "get-out-of-OUR-country" movement is a racist one and actually existed well before the current political controversy. Make no illusions that the mean-spirited intent, from vulgar to subtle, is not simply directed at illegals. They are aimed at non-white immigrants in general. Consider the new Arizona law as a case in point if there is any doubt.

The Hispanic and Asian populations are growing at the fastest rate among all groups and today collectively make up 20 percent (2008 Census projection) of all Americans. These groups are prominently represented in eight of the 10 largest cities in the nation: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Phoenix, San Antonio, San Diego and San Jose. These two groups also happen to comprise the highest number of undocumented residents. Add into the mix the population of African Americans and clearly

what we see is a different United States where in a few decades, Caucasians will for the first time be one among other minority groups. This translates to fear for the historically dominant group, and is the basis for the increasingly anti-immigrant policies this decade.

### TWO COURSES TO TAKE WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

At one extreme, lawmakers can adopt unrealistic laws requiring official registration, deportation, slow re-entry, harsh fees and strict English-proficiency standards. Or another way to proceed with reform is making achievable requirements that make compliance possible for the vast majority of those affected. Fortunately there is wisdom on both sides of our political parties regarding immigration reform. Republicans got it right in their emphasis on stronger border patrol. Democrats are correct in supporting a pathway to citizenship, or "amnesty" (call it what it truly is). What both parties must avoid is extremism in both of these reasonable pursuits.

It is not a time to regress to "nativism" - the notion that somehow those who arrived earlier have more legitimate claims to being in this country. Nativism ended as soon as European foreigners arrived and overtook the true natives of our land.

Nor should it be a time to squabble over the "illegality" of how these immigrants got here with their numbers already at 11 million, with some of the undocumented living in our communities well over 30 years. Really, how legal was it when African slaves were brought into the country, or when contract laborers were shipped in from China, Japan, and the Philippines, then decided to overstay after their contracts expired? Eventually they were given a pathway to citizenship.

Perhaps the biggest doubt of legality is the acquisition of one-quarter of the western U.S. continent from Mexico in the first place. In the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, a peace pact ending the Mexican-American war, the U.S. forced Mexico to give up 1.36 million km<sup>2</sup> (525,000 square miles) to the United States in exchange for a mere U.S.\$15

million (equivalent to \$380 million today). This massive land area included the states of California, Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and most of Arizona, all of which were largely occupied then by Mexican nationals.

In each of these historical events involving various immigrant groups, the standard of "legality" has never been clear upon entry, or at times even morally acceptable. To our

benefit, each of these pioneering immigrant groups have contributed immensely to the development of our country with very little compensation.

We must ask ourselves what's really going on and bring to surface our true motivations for immigration reform. It's a complex issue, but no less challenging to find solutions as we've done during other large migration flux into our country. ■

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# HEADLINES (CONT.)

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

his loved ones.

"We have to do construction work for the Kids International Ministries (an NGO) so we could earn a bit to send help to our families. But we are preparing very hard for Rio de Janeiro so that we would be ready for the games when we get there," he says.

When asked what his expectations for the team are for the 2010 Homeless World Cup, del Rosario says he is setting his eyes on improving the country's overall rankings from the previous editions of the tournament.

"Our main objective is to improve on our two previous campaigns. I would like to see our team making it to the top 24 bracket of the 48-team mixed and men's category that we are joining. If we could make it to the top 10, then why not! Nevertheless, we will go to Rio de Janeiro with our minds set on winning the cup. We would carry the flag on our shoulders with pride. After all, we are the best-ranked Asian country during the Milan Homeless World Cup," he says.

## REVIVAL OF PHILIPPINE FOOTBALL

Unknown to many Filipinos

today, football was quite popular in the Philippines in the early 20th century, when basketball was not yet the nation's favorite pastime. It was the time when the Filipino football sensation Paulino Alcántara Riestra created an illustrious career in European football.

Alcántara helped the Philippine Football team win against Japan during the 1917 Far Eastern Games and became known for being chosen to play for Futbol Club Barcelona, a Spanish club still popular today. Alcántara, who started playing as a striker for Barcelona at just 15 years of age, is renowned for scoring a record 357 goals, the greatest number ever achieved by any player of the club, past or present.

How his name had been forgotten in the annals of Philippine sporting history is indicative of just how much many Filipinos have become unimpressed about football. Never mind that the Philippine National Football Team, formed in 1907, is one of the oldest in Asia, or that the Philippines once ranked a high top 26 in the whole world, based on the World Football Elo Ratings of 1915.

Thanks to the efforts of the



The Philippine Homeless World Cup Team competing during the 2009 edition of the tournament in Milan, Italy. (photo courtesy of www.streetsofphilippines.com)

country's football faithful however, it looks like the Philippines is on the verge of embracing the beautiful game once more. In October 2009, the Football Alliance of the Philippines began holding the United Football League tournament, garnering much attention from the public and support from private corporations.

Earlier this year, pockets of passionate Filipino football fans gathered in jam-packed pay-per-view locations to watch the 2010 FIFA World Cup matches, much akin to how Filipino basketball fans congregated when the Boston Celtics and L.A. Lakers battled dur-

ing the NBA finals. It is a very promising time indeed, one that will hopefully lead to the revival of the golden years of Philippine football.

## FOR FOOTBALL, SELF AND COUNTRY

At the forefront of this revival of course are the likes of Rudy del Rosario and the Philippine Homeless World Cup team who are bringing not only football into the Philippines, but also Filipino sporting excellence to the world.

"It's already doing a lot of good for our players and the poor people they represent. I believe that it will do a lot of good for Philippine football, because this is a chance for us to put our country on the world football map," del Rosario says.

For Hammid Pasion, it's more than just playing a sport he loves—it's really a fulfillment of his dream to play for the country.

"I am grateful to have been chosen as one of the players of Team Philippines," he says. "It has been my dream ever since I was little. Now, I'll be playing at the Homeless World Cup and will be representing my country. I still can't believe it. I thank God for answer-

ing my prayers as well as all the other people who provided me this opportunity."

Perhaps the greatest value of being a player for Homeless World Cup is the opportunity of change that it affords its participants.

"It has really changed my life a lot," says Pasion. "I have learned to discipline myself. And outside of the game, I have learned to mingle and get along with people from different cultures and backgrounds. I am a more confident and disciplined person now."

According to del Rosario, witnessing his players' transformation is what motivates him as well as the many trainers and assistants.

"Just seeing the transformation my players have undergone and the improvements they are achieving daily are enough to inspire us all to do even more. And I can see that the same is true for the boys when I see the fire in their eyes," he says. ■

To donate to the Philippine Homeless World Cup team, visit [www.streetsofphilippines.com](http://www.streetsofphilippines.com) or contact Bill Shaw at 0063-928-780362 or [bill@thejcepmex.com](mailto:bill@thejcepmex.com), and Rudy del Rosario at 0063-920-2300486 or [abrudz11@yahoo.com](mailto:abrudz11@yahoo.com)

# HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## Volunteers Gear Up For 27th Annual Kalihi Community Health Fair

free health care.

The Health Fair has been an annual success, thanks to the generosity of many health care providers and other volunteers.

"The past 27 years have taken a lot of time and effort but we've enjoyed every minute," says Dr. Erlinda Cachola, who along with daughter Dr. Lyla Cachola-Prather, son Earl Cachola and colleagues Dr. Elizabeth Abinsay and RN Evelyn Lamata, are once again co-chairing the event. "This is the Cachola family's and the many volunteers' way of saying 'thank you' for supporting us all these years."

The health fair is not just for Kalihi but also for residents in other communities, particularly immi-



grants, the homeless, low-income or at-risk groups and others who for obvious reasons do not have access to basic medical services. A variety of free health screenings and exams will be available, including tests for blood, height/weight/blood pressure, eye, ear/nose/throat (ENT), thyroid, podiatry, breast, colorectal, diabetes, Hepatitis, kidney & lung disease, etc. Patients

with extensive medical needs will be referred to appropriate physicians.

This year's sponsors include Councilmember Romy Cachola, Ace Medical Inc., Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls, Chinese General Hospital Nurses, Clinical Laboratories, EverCare, Hawaii Filipino Healthcare, Hawaii Medical Center BCCCP/Susan Komen Foundation, Hepatitis Network, Kalakaua Lions Club, Kalihi-Palama Medical Center,

Kalihi Rehab, Ohana Medical Mission, Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii, the Filipino Catholic Clubs of St. Anthony's Church in Kalihi and Our Lady of the Mount, PT Hawaii Inc., St. Anthony's Kalpi Knights of Columbus, John the Baptist's Parish and Three For Life.

For more information on the 27th Annual Kalihi Community Health Fair, please contact Dr. Erlinda Cachola at 845-9955. ■



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## LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION

## Getting Ready to Protect the World



by Senator Will  
ESPERO

Many years ago, my father retired from the U.S. Navy after a rewarding 21-year career that capitalized on his talents as a chef. His cooking skills gave him the privilege of preparing delicious meals for the military's top officials on his tours of duty. Our family followed my dad around the country and the world, as do many Navy families. I lived in Washington, California, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Cuba, Japan, and Italy. I was born at the Naval Station in Yokosuka, Japan, and graduated from high school in Oak Harbor, Washington near Whidbey Naval Air Station. The experience of growing up in different states and countries gave me a broad exposure, respect, and appreciation of the range in culture, lifestyle, and outlook. This has helped me as a senator to listen to and consider the diversity of interests in evaluating bills before the Legislature.

I recently had the honor of

being invited to be on board the USS Ronald Reagan, which was the only carrier participating in this year's RIMPAC exercises. RIMPAC stands for "Rim of the Pacific Exercise," the world's largest international maritime exercise. The naval fleets of our Pacific Rim allies participate in this event. Its purpose is to promote regional stability through enhanced interoperability among Pacific military forces. Honing combat techniques increases our military readiness to deal with potential conflicts in the western hemisphere.

Two of the hot spots in the military theatre are the long-standing threats between mainland China and Taiwan, and North Korea.

The U.S., Canada, and Australia were the three nations in the first RIMPAC event in 1971, and have participated in every RIMPAC since then. Japan, the United Kingdom, Chile, Peru, and South Korea, have regularly participated as well. The "war games" give fleets the opportunity to practice routine skills as well as test new naval vessels and technology.

As Chair of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs, I am often invited to events highlighting our military readiness. I am proud of the hard work, commitment, and level of skills of our men and women in uniform. Their rigorous preparation makes it pos-



Senator Espero, donning protective head gear and flight vest, enjoys a tour of the USS Ronald Reagan during the recent RIMPAC exercises.

sible for the U.S. to respond effectively to conflict situations that arise around the globe, and support our role in maintaining world stability.

Along with other guests, I was flown out to the USS Ronald Reagan to tour the aircraft carrier. We watched several drills that day, in-

cluding the catapult take-offs of our jet aircraft. The experience was genuinely awe-inspiring. Hats off to the nerves of steel and precision control of our fighter pilots and the specialized, highly trained crew that support them.

We are all proud of our uniformed services. Their sense of duty and their willingness to sacrifice a "normal" lifestyle for the sake of our country and the cause of keeping the peace around the world, are admirable. I, along with many others, honor their dedication and service to our nation. ■

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### Filipino Catholic Clubs to Hold Pageant and Scholarship Awards Celebration

THE 55TH OAHU COUNCIL OF FILIPINO CATHOLIC CLUB Annual Charity Queen Pageant and Scholarship Awards Celebration will be held August 28, 2010 at St. Anthony's Church in Kalihi at 5 pm.

Hosted by St. Anthony's Kalihi Filipino Catholic Club (FCC), the event is a friendly contest between all Filipino Catholic Clubs in Catholic churches on Oahu.

The competition consists of selling various items such as Portuguese sausage, cinnamon bread, cookies, and the most popular item, marinated bangus to raise funds for scholarships for children who are seeking a Catholic education.

This year, the St. Anthony's Kalihi FCC raised the most money, thanks to pageant Queen Desiree Bucacas who sold the most items and raised the most funds. Bucacas will be crowned queen to recognize her achievements.

State Rep. Joey Manahan,

who is president of St. Anthony's Kalihi FCC, thanked all the contestants for their hard work and dedication.

"Desiree is most deserving of her title as this year's pageant queen, but I also recognize the hard work and dedication of all the princesses and churches who participate annually to raise money for this worthy cause," he says. "Congratulations to all the participants and thank you to all those who supported our efforts."

If you are interested in attending, please RSVP by calling Prudencio Pilar at 351-0728. ■

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LEGAL MATTERS

# God, Don't Destroy America Yet, Only 5 States Allow Gay Marriage



by Atty. Emmanuel Samonte TIPON

**T**hou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind; it is abomination." Leviticus 18:22.

"Then the Lord rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the Lord out of the heavens." Genesis 19:24. Why did God destroy these cities? Because "the men of Sodom [and Gomorrah?]" were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the Lord." Genesis 13-13. They were violating God's prohibition in Leviticus.

In my article "Sodomy" published in American Jurisprudence 2d by Lawyers Cooperative Publishing Co., who petitioned for me to come to America on a working visa to write law books, I wrote that

"the English word 'sodomy' originated from the name of the city of Sodom."

Gay marriage will lead to sodomy. Or sodomy will lead to gay marriage. Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

America is fortunate that there are still 45 remaining states that have not legalized gay marriage. Only five states allow gay marriage — Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, plus the District of Columbia. Candidates for the "brimstone and fire" treatment?

**GAY MARRIAGE BAN DENIES EQUAL PROTECTION?**

Is California on the brink of being thrown into the lake of fire? A federal judge's invalidated Proposition 8 banning gay marriage. Perry v Schwarzenegger, Aug. 4, 2010. However, enforcement of the order is on hold pending appeal. More than seven million Californians representing 52% of the voters approved

Proposition 8 in November 2008. Salus populi est suprema lex. The will of the people is the Supreme law. Aren't you shocked that one unelected judge overrules the Supreme Law and seven million? Which brings up the question: Should judges be elected? If judges were elected, would the voters boot out judges thwarting the people's will?

The judge, invoking the equal protection clause of the Constitution, said that "Proposition 8 fails to advance any rational basis in singling out gay men and lesbians for denial of a marriage license." Gays are not being singled out. They are being differentiated from straights. "Somos diferentes". That's the rational basis. If Proposition 8 had banned gay persons from marrying in Los Angeles but not in San Francisco, then that is a denial of equal protection. There is no rational difference between a gay person in Los Angeles and in San Francisco, except probably that they drink beer in Los Angeles but wine in

San Francisco.

The judge continued: "Rather than being different, same-sex and opposite-sex unions are, for all purposes relevant to California law, exactly the same." Really?

**DEFENSE OF ACT DENIES EQUAL PROTECTION, TOO?**

Earlier in Massachusetts, another federal district court judge declared unconstitutional a federal law, Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), 1 U.S.C. Section 7, which provides that "the word 'marriage' means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word 'spouse' refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or wife." The court held that DOMA violates equal protection. Gill v. Office of Personnel Management, Civil Action No. 09-10309-JLT, Dist Ct. Mass., July 8, 2010.

Oh, "equal protection," how many mischiefs have been committed in thy name?

These cases will eventually reach the Supreme Court. I foresee a 5-4 decision, either way. Remember Bette Midler's song: "God is watching us from a distance." ■

(ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines. He practices in Hawaii, specializing in immigration law and criminal defense. Tel. (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: filamlev@yahoo.com. Website: www.immigratonservicesusa.com. He is from Loogo City and Magsingal, Ilocos Sur. He served as an Immigration Officer. He is co-author of "Immigration Law Service, 1st ed." an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. Listen to the most funny, witty, and useful radio program in Hawaii on KNDD at 1270 AM dial every Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. and on KHBC at 1060 AM dial every Thursday at 8 p.m. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice. No warranty is made by the writer or publisher as to its completeness or correctness at the time of publication.)

## HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

### State Library System Implements New Changes

**THE HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM (HSPLS)** is reminding the public of several new administrative rule changes that recently took effect on August 5, 2010.

Library officials are advising parents to be aware that overdue fines for children have increased from 15 cents per item per day to 25 cents per item per day. The current maximum fine of \$4.50 per item for children (ages 17 years and under) will also increase to \$7.50 per item. By implementing this change, overdue fines and the maximum amount per item will be the same for all borrowers.

"There are three main benefits for converting to a uniform fee structure," says State Librarian Richard Burns. "A uniform fee structure is predictable and easy to remember. It ensures fairness to all library patrons and encourages our patrons to borrow responsibly."

Parents are encouraged to help their children keep track of due

dates for loaned library materials by logging onto the HSPLS website at: [www.librarieshawaii.org](http://www.librarieshawaii.org).

Overdue fines for DVD/Video rentals have decreased from \$1 per DVD/Video per day to 25 cents per DVD/Video per day. The rental fee and loan period for DVDs and videos are \$1.00 per DVD/Video and seven days, respectively.

Among other major rule changes that affect library customers are:

- Library Card. A new library card application and renewal form will inform parents and guardians that they will be held financially responsible for any fines, fees or charges incurred by a minor whose library card application they are signing.
- Replacement Library Card. Hawaii Resident/Military; the cost for adults has decreased from \$10 to \$5. This change makes the \$5 cost consistent for both juveniles and adults.

- Smoking is prohibited within 20 feet of any entrance, exit, window or ventilation intake. This change is in compliance with Hawaii's Smoke-Free

- Law (Act 295) of 2006.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on all library property.

For a complete listing of the

revised 2010 HSPLS Administrative Rules, please visit the HSPLS website at: <http://www.librarieshawaii.org/information/rules/admrules.htm>.

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# HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## 7th Annual I Love Liliha Festival

THE VENERABLE NEIGHBORHOOD of Liliha will be hosting the 7th Annual I Love Liliha Festival, which is scheduled for Sunday, August 29, 2010 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Organizers plan to close off a portion of Kuakini Street fronting Liliha Bakery and Pizza Hut for the day-long celebration, which includes a free health fair, a Spirit of Liliha Awards Program, lion dance and kung fu demonstration.

"Community residents and beyond seeking food, fun, and entertainment will find plenty to do at this celebration of a historical neighborhood exemplifying all that is 'local' in our islands," says festival coordinator, Colette Devou. There will be a health fair, local ven-

dors and farmers market, keiki bouncers, climbing wall, storytelling, dancers, face painting, arts and crafts, live music by the Royal Hawaiian Band, colorful people watching and more."

State Rep. Corinne Ching has been the driving force behind the event, which is meant to pump new life in the old community which is comprised of some 20,000 residents. She is scheduled to deliver the welcoming and closing remarks at this year's event.

Free parking will be available at Lanakila Elementary, Good Shepherd Pre-School and Pizza Hut. The festival is presented by the Hawaii Architectural Foundation.

Festival partners include Liliha Bakery, Longs Drugs, L&L Hawaiian Barbecue, Pizza Hut, Finance Factors and Oceanic Time Warner Cable. ■

## Library Happenings

KAPOLEI LIBRARY IS CELEBRATING its 6th Anniversary with a series of special programs and events:

- August 25, 2010 at 6:30 pm—Wanda Adams: "What I Learned from Writing 'The Island Plate.'" Adams has been writing about food for 30 years. She is the author of "The Island Plate: 150 Years of Recipes and Food Lore from The Honolulu Advertiser" and "The Island Plate II." She will provide answers to such intriguing questions as: "Why do we eat odd things like Saloon Pilot crackers and spam and other odd things?" "Why is lomi salmon a Hawaiian food when salmon aren't native to Hawaii?" and "Where did the plate lunch come from?"
- August 26-27, 2010 from 2-5 pm and August 28 from 10 am-5 pm—Beaded Bookmark Craft for Teens. "Teens are invited to design and create beaded bookmarks in the Young Adult Section. All materials will be provided for this make-and-take craft."
- August 28, 2010 from 9 am-5 pm—Friends of Kapolei Library Book Sale. All proceeds will provide funds for the library's future programs and special projects.
- August 28, 2010 at 10:30 am—Balloon Monsoon in the Children's Section. Balloon Monsoon will create a variety of balloon sculptures, including animals and characters for the keiki.

Kapolei Public Library opened in August 2004 at a cost of \$6.9 million and is the 51st branch of the Hawaii State Public Library System. The modern two-story library building is the second largest and spans 35,000 square feet.

Hawaii Kai Library will offer the following "Meet the Author" programs in September 2010. Admission is free.

- September 11, 2010 at 11 am: "Meet Author Margaret Dilloway."

She will discuss her recently-published debut novel "How to Be an American Housewife." Dilloway's novel tells the story of a Japanese woman who marries an American soldier at the end of World War II, her thorny relationship with her American daughter and the trip to contemporary Japan that changes both of their lives. The novel had its origins in the story of Dilloway's own mother, who was also a Japanese war bride and died when the author was just 20, leaving behind few details of the family, culture and experiences that had shaped her life. Originally from San Diego, Dilloway now resides in Hawaii Kai where she is working on her second novel.

- September 18, 2010 at 11 am: "Meet Author Joe Tsujimoto." Winner of the 2008 Eliot Cades Award for Literature and a finalist for the 2010 William Saroyan International Prize for Writing, Tsujimoto will read selections from his short story collection "Morningside Heights: New York Stories." The stories follow the journey of Japanese-American Kenji, from being kicked out of school in 1960s New York to teaching in Hawaii. Tsujimoto, an English teacher at Punahou School, is the author of two other books "Teaching Poetry Writing to Adolescents" and "Lighting Fires: How the Passionate Teacher Engages Adolescent Writers."

The Friends of Hawaii Kai Public Library is sponsoring these programs which are one-hour long and suitable for high school students and older.

**Aiea Library** will offer Preschool Storytime in Fall 2010 on Tuesdays at 10:30 am. The storyline program is free and will be conducted in the Meeting Room. Preschool Storytime will be offered from September 14 to October 26 and November 9 to 23, 2010.

Children ages 2 through 5, accompanied by an adult, are invited to experience stories, finger plays, songs and a simple make-and-take craft. ■

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## Fitch Affirms 'BB' Credit Rating for Philippines

by Paolo ROMERO /  
Wednesday, August 11, 2010

MANILA, Philippines (Xinhua) - GLOBAL RATINGS AGENCY FITCH RATINGS HAS AFFIRMED the Philippines' long-term foreign currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at "BB", indicating a stable outlook.

The London-based rating agency also affirmed the Philippines long-term local currency IDR at BB+ with a stable outlook, the short-term foreign currency IDR at B and the country ceiling at BB+.

Andrew Colquhoun, Head of Asia Pacific Sovereigns at Fitch, said in a statement that steady inflow of remittances from overseas Filipino workers, the stable peso and rising foreign exchange reserves helped the economy recover from last year's slowdown.

The Philippines eluded a recession in 2009 and posted an impressive 7.3 percent GDP growth in the first quarter. Remittances didn't only support consumption growth but also, together with the fast rising outsourcing industry, boosted the current account surplus.

The country's inflation is also well managed, which at 3.9 percent in July, is within the central bank's target band for this year of 3.5 percent to 5.5 percent. Fitch

said that sustained growth with low and stable inflation would support the Philippines' ratings at their current levels.

"While the credit profile has strengthened in some areas since the ratings were downgraded to current levels in 2003, Fitch waits for the newly-elected President Benigno Aquino III administration to deliver on promises to boost the chronically-low tax take and maintain fiscal discipline in the 2011 budget to support a case for any positive rating action," Colquhoun said.

The Philippines continues to grapple with a fiscal deficit, which is expected to reach P325 billion (\$7.23 billion), equivalent to 3.9 percent of GDP, this year. Thin revenues can barely cope with rising expenditures. Fitch also noted the Philippines has a relatively higher government debt at 47 percent of the GDP.

"The Aquino administration has made a crackdown on tax evasion the centerpiece of its fiscal strategy. If the new administration can deliver on its plans to raise the revenue take while maintaining a broadly disciplined fiscal policy in the remainder of 2010 and in the 2011 budget plan, it would be positive for the ratings," Fitch said.

(www.philstar.com) ■

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# PHILIPPINE NEWS

## Report: Philippine Muslim Rebels Brace for War

by Dino MARAGAY /  
Wednesday, August 11, 2010

**MANILA, Philippines (AP) — HUNDREDS OF MUSLIM GUERRILLAS HAVE UNDERGONE COMBAT TRAINING** and sought more weapons in the southern Philippines to bolster their military muscle in case planned peace talks with the government falter, a military report said Wednesday.

New President Benigno Aquino III and the 11,000-strong Moro Islamic Liberation Front have expressed readiness to resume Malaysian-brokered peace negotiations as early as September after the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. The talks collapsed in 2008, sparking massive fighting, and re-

sumed in the final months of Aquino's predecessor without reaching any major accord.

Aquino, who succeeded Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on June 30, has said efforts to turn around his impoverished Southeast Asian nation will be futile if it continues to be wracked by violent insurgencies. He has begun forming negotiation teams to resume talks with the Moro rebels and communist guerrillas.

While fresh talks loomed, the military has monitored at least nine separate combat training by hundreds of Muslim fighters and recruits in their strongholds in southern Mindanao region in the first half of the year, according to a military report that assessed national security

threats. A copy of the report was seen by The Associated Press.

Muslim guerrillas have been holding combat training and "acquisition of logistics to ensure readiness if the peace talks will not prosper," according to the report, adding the rebels plan to intensify kidnappings and extortion to gain funds.

About 230 rebels underwent training on combat tactics for three days last March in a hinterland camp called Palestine near Bulig township in Lanao del Sur province. Several guerrillas joined a month-long training on intelligence-gathering in the same camp that month while 247 regular fighters were trained on "rigid jungle warfare" for 15 days in the southernmost province of Tawi Tawi, the report said. (www.philtar.com) ■

### PICTORIAL NEWS

#### Mark Dannog, Board of Education's New Student Member



Mark Dannog, a senior at Waianae High School, is sworn in by Hawaii State Supreme Court Associate Justice Mark Recktenwald as the Board of Education's new student member on July 14, 2010. Dannog fills the seat held by former student representative Kelly Maeshiro, a 2010 graduate of Pearl City High School

## Comelec Orders Atienza to Pay Almost 10-M for Recount

by Paolo ROMERO /  
Thursday, August 12, 2010

**MANILA, Philippines — FORMER MANILA MAYOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL SECRETARY LITO ATIENZA** was ordered by the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to pay almost P10 million cash deposit as fees for the recount of votes in Manila.

Atienza earlier filed an election protest before the Comelec after being defeated by Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim in the last May 2010 elections.

During the press conference held at his headquarters in Manila, Atienza protested the "distorted, exorbitant, unjust and unconscionable" fees being imposed by the Comelec in its August 10, 2010 'Preliminary Conference Order' which was

signed by Comelec First Division Presiding Commissioner Rene V. Sarmiento and Commissioners Armando C. Velasco and Gregorio Larrazabal.

In the 13-page Order, the Comelec said "protestant is hereby directed to pay to the Cash Division, this Commission, the amount of P9,979,500.00 cash deposit corresponding to the 6,653 established precincts subject of the recount as required in Section 2, Rule 11 of Comelec Resolution No. 8804 within 5 days from receipt hereof."

The order also noted the retrieval of the ballot boxes shall be done immediately upon payment of the cash deposit and upon prior coordination with the Division Clerk of the Commission.

In protesting the fees to be imposed, Atienza said the fees was

based on the 6,653 established precincts, and not on the 1,441 clustered precincts.

"This tantamount to discouraging the search for truth," said Atienza.

"What if a protestant is poor and does not have such amount to pay for the start of a recount, would he just accept the fact that he was cheated," Atienza said.

While they are thankful and they appreciate the decision of the Comelec which came out on the date of his birthday, which was August 10, Atienza, however, decried the expensive payment for the recount of the votes.

"Why and where does the Comelec find the basis for this mathematical computation when there are only 1,441 clustered precincts in Manila. Saan mo ipupuwesto 'yong mga magbibilang ng balota ganon ito lamang ang tamang bilang ng presinto sa Manila dahil 'clustered' na nga?" asked Atienza.

"If the computation would be based on the number of clustered precincts in the city, he said the total amount that they should pay to the Comelec would only be P2.6 million.

He said the fees the Comelec is imposing on them is an initial expense and could even go up be-

cause the poll body also ordered them to shoulder the expenses for the rental of the PCOS (Precinct Count Optical Scan) machine that will be used for the authentication of the ballots.

"Kaya, marami pang babayaran gaya ng PCOS na kailangan daw naming rental. Hindi pa naming alam kung ilan. Tapos, kailangang din daw magbayad kami ng IT experts para mag-operate ng PCOS machines," related Atienza.

He said the party who raises the question on the authenticity of the ballots shall pay for the expenses for the rental of the PCOS machine and employment of the IT expert that will be utilized during the recount proceedings.

Atienza said he could not understand why the Comelec, which counted the ballots, are now not sure of its authenticity, and even wanted to rent PCOS machines to check if they were indeed genuine.

Atienza said that during their campaign period, they spent only P3 million, which was premised on a P3.00 per voter cost. There are about one million voters in Manila, he said.

"So the amount they are asking us is much, much bigger than what we spent in the campaign," noted Atienza.

Atienza also feared that the amount they will pay for the recount will not go to the nation's coffers but to the pockets of Comelec officials

and personnel to be assigned to the Revision committee.

"Kaya siguro ang ginawa nilang basehan ay ang 6,653 precincts at hindi ang clustered precincts," he said.

He pointed out that based on the Comelec computation, the Chairman of the Revision Committee will get P345,956.00 for one month recount as compared to P79,932.00 if it will be based on 'clustered precincts.'

A Recorder will get P159,672.00 in one month in contrast to P34,584.00 based on clustered precincts.

Atienza said the receipt of this payment of members of the Revision committee is prohibited by law because this would amount to receiving compensation, or double compensation.

He said this violates the law which prohibits government employees from receiving additional or double compensation.

"They will continue receiving their salary from the Comelec without doing their mandated duty while at the same time earning from the payment for the recount," said Atienza.

However, despite their protestation, Atienza assured they will pay the "prohibitive" cash deposit anytime this week.

"We will raise the money. In fact, I already got a P10,000 check as financial help from a friend," said Atienza as he pulled out the check from his front pocket.

According to Atienza, they will exhaust all possible legal means in support of their protest.

They might even ask the Commission on Audit (COA) to probe the exorbitant fees being exacted by Comelec people.

Atienza is confident he will emerge victorious after the recount which they hope to start on August 20 or before the end of this month.

Atienza's legal counsel Lawyer Romulo Macalintal said they expect the Comelec to finish the recount within one month. (www.philtar.com) ■

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# PHILIPPINE NEWS

## Divorce Bill Revived in House

by Paolo ROMERO /  
Thursday, August 12, 2010

**MANILA, Philippines - THE GABRIELA WOMEN'S PARTY-LIST GROUP** has revived a measure legalizing divorce in the country to give couples in "irreparable marriages" another legal remedy in addition to the country's existing laws on legal separation and annulment.

Representatives Luzviminda Ilagan and Emerenciana de Jesus filed House Bill 1799 or "An Act Introducing Divorce in the Philippines" that drew strong opposition and little support from their colleagues in the House of Representatives.

The bill states five grounds for the filing of a petition for divorce. According to the measure, couples who may apply for divorce include those who have been separated in fact for five years and those already legally separated for two years.

Grounds for legal separation may also apply when these same grounds have already caused the irreparable breakdown of the marriage. In addition, psychological incapacity, causing one's failure to comply with essential marital obligations, and irreconcilable differences causing the irreparable breakdown of the marriage are also recognized as grounds for divorce, the bill said.

"We cannot ignore the fact that

existing laws just do not suffice. Getting an annulment can be very expensive while legal separation will not give estranged couples the right to remarry," Ilagan said.

The measure's explanatory note further elaborates on the need for a measure to address the commission of violence in marital relations.

Official figures from the Philippine National Police in 2009 showed that 19 women fall victim to marital violence every day. Among the forms of violence and abuse against women committed in 2009, wife battery ranked the highest at 6,783 cases or 72 percent.

"For women in abusive marital relationships, the need for a divorce law is real. It is high time that we give Filipino couples, especially the women, this option," De Jesus said.

Cavite Rep. Elpidio Barzaga strongly opposed the bill, saying "the family is the foundation of a good citizenry."

"Allowing absolute divorce would undoubtedly weaken the solidarity of the family. It would also encourage married couples who have differences to immediately seek divorce, though differences can still be reconciled," Barzaga said.

He said he anticipates various religious groups to lobby against the

bill. "I still adhere to the biblical saying that what God had join together, let no man put asunder."

Parañaque Rep. Rollo Golez also objected to the bill, saying "that is like giving a married couple a Weapon of Mass Destruction that they can use against each other even for petty, solvable marital problems."

He said half of his classmates at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis ended up divorcing their spouses just a few years after getting married.

Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara warned that allowing divorce could lead to the proliferation of "gold diggers" and broken families.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Walden Bello, however, backed the measure, saying the Philippines is the only country with no divorce law.

"Let's join the 20th century," Bello said.

### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

In a related development, Sen. Loren Legarda wants amendments to the 10-year-old Solo Parents Act, giving additional benefits for single parents.

In filing Senate Bill 1439, Legarda proposed that single parents be provided a 10-percent discount on all purchases of clothing



and clothing materials for the child for two years from child birth; 15 percent discount from all purchases of baby's milk, food and food supplements; and 15 percent discount from all purchases of medicine and other medical supplements/ supplies for the child.

Legarda, who has been legally separated twice, also sought basic personal exemption from individual income tax.

"A solo parent refers to a parent who is left alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to death, detention, mental incapacity or legal separation with spouse. It also refers to women who became pregnant due to abuse," she said.

Legarda cited "double hardship" that single parents face in raising their children.

"They perform parental duties single-handedly in the face of economic turmoil that is characterized by skyrocketing prices, poverty and massive unemployment," she added.

Legarda proposed the amendments to Republic Act No. 8972, otherwise known as the Solo Parent's Welfare Act of 2000, to address the financial concerns of solo parents amidst the economic difficulties that the country is experiencing."

### RH BILL BACKED

Meantime, Agham Partylist Rep. Angelo Palmones yesterday threw his support behind the controversial Reproductive Health bill, saying that couples should be given the option to choose what family planning method to use.

"RH bill is not only about modern or natural contraceptives. It talks about the welfare of the women, it talks about the welfare of the children, it talks about the relation of population growth to the country's development," he said.

Palmones said the bill would help the government reduce the number of pregnancy-related deaths in the country. (www.philstar.com)

## Angara Urges Congress to Pass Anti-Red Tape Measure

by Christina M. MENDEZ /  
Wednesday, August 11, 2010

**MANILA, Philippines - SEN. EDGARDO ANGARA HAS URGED** his colleagues to pass the 15th Congress to pass the "Anti-Red Tape Law" in order to address worsening bureaucratic red tape in the country.

Through the Anti-Red Tape Law, Angara said all agencies and offices that provide frontline services are required to regularly undergo evaluation and modernization of their transaction systems and procedures.

If passed into law, the measure will speed up transactions in government offices by limiting the action time on simple and complex transactions. It will also limit the signatories of documents to the officers and employees directly supervising the office where a particular transaction is being acted upon.

"I urge my colleagues in the Senate to pursue this because it will ensure the efficient and effective delivery of government services by simplifying procedures as opposed to burdensome and complex regulations," said Angara, saying this is in response to President Aquino's call to speed up the business in the country during his State of the Nation Address (SONA) last month.

The proposed law would require immediate action in the handling of government

transactions and consequently will curb opportunities for graft and corruption.

Angara, president of the Southeast Asia Parliamentarians Against Corruption (SEAPAC), noted that bureaucratic red tape is one of the biggest deterrent to investment. "Many government offices over-regulate and unnecessarily lengthen the procedures for securing basic government services. Worse, some government employees require "informal payments" or bribes, more commonly known as "lagay," as a condition to any action or request," Angara said.

Angara, who is also the author of Ombudsman Law and the Government Procurement Reform Act, the biggest anti-corruption law in the country, red tape has gravely affected the efficient delivery of government services.

"This well-founded perception of inertia of government agencies and offices has not only frustrated the delivery of vital government services to the public, it has also made potential investors hesitant about doing business in the country," he said.

Because of red-tape and corruption, Angara lamented that the country showed poor performance in terms of opening and closing businesses, ranking 140th out of 181 in the Doing Business 2009 survey. (www.philstar.com)



Sen. Ed Angara

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## FEATURE

# After 79 Years, Another Pinoy Sings at La Scala

by Rosalinda OROSA

**M**ANILA, Philippines - The first Filipino to make it to the La Scala Opera House in Milan, Italy, was bass-baritone Jose Mossesgeld Santiago Font who, in 1928, portrayed the role of Sparafucile in Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Almost 80 years later, tenor Arthur Espiritu of Morong, Rizal, succeeds Santiago as the second Filipino in La Scala, appearing in 2007 as Fernando in Mozart's *Così Fan Tutti*.

In Friday's press conference at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, the modest, unassuming Espiritu surprisingly belittled his La Scala engagement, saying, "It doesn't take much to get into La Scala. You send your resumé, your CD and if they like your voice, you're in."

Yet when Espiritu, loaded with international awards, sang for the press, his brilliant performance - voice rising and ringing resonantly - was undentable proof that only the finest vocal artists make it to the sacrosanct halls of La Scala - the counterpart of New York's prestigious Metropolitan Opera House.

When La Scala invited Espiritu to audition, he had already portrayed the same role for the Pittsburgh Opera but he had to buy the score in Vienna all over again because the iconic judges - divas Mirella Freni, Teresa Berganza and Luigi Avila - keenly wanted to hear him sing some of the arias and recitatives. Again this belied Espir-



Filipino-American tenor Arthur Espiritu performs at Philamlife Theater on Aug. 14, with soprano Rachelle Gerodias.

itu's assertion that it takes very little to get into La Scala.

Indeed, the cast's preparation for *Così Fan Tutti* took two months of daily rehearsals for hours on end.

How did the Filipino tenor feel at his operatic debut? "It was scary. All those huge chandeliers! I kept asking myself: 'What am I doing here?'" Milan's demanding opera freaks are known to throw things onstage. But everything went smoothly. The cast was very supportive and Espiritu gained friends and admirers.

Before his La Scala engagement in 2007, Espiritu was already keeping a full opera schedule since receiving an Artist Diploma from Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 2004. He sang as Ormindo in Cavalli's *L'Ormindo*, was Tybalt in Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, Beppo (a clown) in Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, and Maintop in Pittsburgh

Opera's highly acclaimed presentation of Britten's *Billy Budd*. In the same season, he rendered the tenor's role in Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, performed in Vienna's Bevedere's Winners Concert, and the Marlboro Music Festival.

Is the lack of height an impediment for Orientals? It may be logical for a Filipina (like the four feet,

nine inches diva Jovita Fuentes) to portray the Japanese Madama Butterfly. But it would be awkward for a petite Filipino soprano to sing with a towering Caucasian tenor or for a towering European or American vocal artist to be looking down on a tiny Oriental lover onstage.

Espiritu did suggest that lack of height can be an impediment. He was once refused a role not for lack of vocal talent, the role went to a six-foot tenor instead!

From whom did Espiritu inherit his gifts? His answer: "I really don't know. Probably from an uncle." Espiritu comes from humble beginnings. His father sold fire extinguishers, his mother served the Philippine Constabulary as secretary.

Espiritu, a lyric tenor like the late Luciano Pavarotti, genuinely admires the lyric/spirit tenor Ottoniel Gonzaga who has sung in 30 major opera houses in Germany and has made a name for himself in the US. Espiritu says, "I admire Ottoniel because firstly, he is a Filipino, secondly, because he is a very fine singer. I hope to become

like him someday." (This wish was aired although the modest Espiritu has already gained a coveted place in the international scene.)

Having appeared in several roles in France in 2008 and in the US, Espiritu looks forward to portraying Tamino in Mozart's magic *Flute with the Israel Opera Tel Aviv*, Elvino in Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, and Oronte in Handel's *Alcina* with Stadt Theater in Switzerland, among many others, for the season 2011 and 2012, as well as the tenor in Donizetti's *Requiem Mass*.

Espiritu makes his not-to-be-missed Manila debut on Aug. 14 (8 p.m.) at the Philamlife Theater, with leading, much sought-after soprano Rachelle Gerodias. Each will interpret operatic arias and Filipino songs; they will also render duets with equally in-demand pianist Najib Ismail as assisting artist.

Entitled "Viva Bel Canto (Long Live Beautiful Song)," the classic concert will be the very first to be sponsored by the Klassikal Music Foundation chaired by George Yang, incidentally, a lyric tenor like Espiritu. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

## PHILIPPINE NEWS

### Rediscounting Loans Drop 59% in July

by Lawrence AGCAOLI /  
Wednesday, August 11, 2010

MANILA, Philippines - **TOTAL REDISCOUNTING LOAN AVAILMENTS** by banking institutions continued to drop, plunging

by 59 percent as of end-July as monetary authorities lifted crisis-related measures to siphon off excess liquidity in the financial system, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) reported yesterday.

Data showed that the total availments under the BSP's peso rediscount facility reached P44.22 billion from January to July this year or P63.9 billion lower than the P108.12 billion availed in the same period last year.

About 55 percent of the total rediscounting loans availed of by commercial, thrift, and rural banks went to commercial credits while 27.3 percent went to other services, 8.8 percent to capital expenditures, 2.9 percent to permanent working capital, and 1.7 percent to housing.

Furthermore, about 4.3 percent of the total availments under the Peso Rediscount facility went to agricultural and industrial credits while only less than 0.1 percent went to microfinance.

Under the Exporters' Dollar and Yen Rediscounting Facility, aggregate availments under the US dollar facility jumped 54.3 percent to \$57.1 million in the first seven months of the year from \$37 million in the same period last year. The facility benefited 24 exporters from January to July this year.

The BSP said there was no availment under the Yen facility during the period.

Rediscounting is a standing credit facility provided by the BSP

to help banks meet temporary liquidity needs by refinancing the loans they extend to their clients.

Monetary authorities use rediscounting loans as a monetary tool to regulate liquidity.

Since the start of the year, the BSP has lifted several liquidity-enhancing measures introduced starting November of 2008 in light of the strong economic recovery. It would be recalled that monetary authorities introduced several crisis-related measures in November 2008 to release more liquidity into the financial system to cushion the impact of the global financial crisis.

Since January, the central bank tweaked several measures including the increase in the rate on a short-term lending facility to four percent from 3.5 percent as well as the reduction of the peso rediscounting budget from P60 billion to P40 billion and further to P20 billion.

The central bank also re-stored the loan value of all eligible rediscounting papers to 80 percent from 90 percent of the borrowing bank's credit instrument and at the same time revived the non-performing loan (NPL) ratio requirement of two percentage points from 10 percentage points above the latest available industry average NPL for banks wishing to avail of the rediscounting facility.

However, authorities decided to keep its key policy rates at record lows due to benign inflation outlook. The BSP slashed its key policy rates by 200 basis points between December of 2008 to July of 2009 bringing the overnight borrowing rate at a record low of four percent and the overnight lending rate at six percent. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

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LEGAL NOTES

# Good Moral Character Requirement for Naturalization



by Reuben S. SEGURITAN

Good moral character as a requirement for naturalization is "measured by the standard of the community, but does not necessarily require the highest degree of moral excellence."

The relevant period for determining good moral character is 5 years (or 3 years if married to a citizen) preceding the filing of the application. However the applicant's conduct and acts prior to the period may be taken into account but will not be the sole basis for denial of the application.

Certain behavior patterns and criminal activities are grounds for disqualification. The applicant must not have established a record of violence or repeated criminal activity.

Commission of the following are grounds for disqualification: corruption, fraud, and perjury, violation of drug laws of the United States or any foreign country, admitting to any criminal act, taking part in illegal commercialized vice, including human trafficking and prostitution, practice of polygamy, or being a habitual drunkard. Murder and aggravated crimes are grounds for immediate denial of the application.

An applicant lacks good moral character if his or her conduct within the applicable period is destructive to family unless he or she is able to establish extenuating circumstances. As it relates to conduct destructive to family, adultery

that results in the dissolution of a viable marriage and intentional failure to support dependents are explicitly mentioned as conduct that will cause disqualification.

Furthermore, actions that have resulted in illegitimate children that become wards of the state may preclude a determination of good moral character. Situations that suggest sexual deviance such as incest also are detrimental to a finding of good moral character. Applicants should take special care in providing an explanation for such activity.

Applicants must establish that they are "well disposed" and "attached" to the government of the United States. Broadly speaking, the applicant must not be hostile to the American system of government and must support the United States Constitution.

Applicants must be willing to take the full oath or affirmation of al-

legiance to the United States without any doubt or reservation. However modifications will be allowed on the basis of moral or religious beliefs. Males must register with the Selective Service to prove that they are "well disposed" and "attached" to the United States.

Registration in the Selective Service is an important requirement and is fundamental to good moral character and establishing the "well disposed" and "attached" standards. All men between the ages of 18 and 26 not subject to exemption must register and provide proof of registration to USCIS. By knowingly and willingly failing to register in the Selective Service, the applicant casts doubt on his "disposition" and "attachment" towards the United States and shows his unwillingness to bear arms on behalf of the United States when legally required to do so.

There are also classes of applicants that are prohibited from naturalizing. Broadly speaking,

people fit in a prohibited class if they profess, advocate, or are affiliated with groups that are anarchist, communist, totalitarian, saboteurs, and have published subversive material. Deserters of the United States and those who fled to avoid the draft military are barred from naturalization. People under deportation proceedings are prohibited from naturalization. Applicants relieved from military service not through an honorable discharge are also barred from naturalization.

The good moral character requirement may be daunting for some applicants. It is in the applicant's best interest to disclose all information and ensure that all answers provided to the USCIS will not lead to disqualification under the good moral character standard. ■

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

## MAINLAND NEWS

# U.S. House Passes State Bail Out Bill

**THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES** has approved another round of "stimulus" spending, this time totaling \$26.1 billion in what critics say is a bailout for bankrupt states that are not doing enough to cut spending despite

lack of revenues. U.S. Rep. Charles Djou opposed the measure, which passed by a final vote of 247-161.

"For every single problem facing our nation, the answer from Congress has been to spend,

spend, and spend some more," he says. "Notwithstanding all this spending, our economic woes have only worsened. The national unemployment rate continues to hover near double digits and we have lost 2.5 million jobs since the

so-called 'stimulus' was passed. It's time to change the priorities in Washington."

Other critics of the measure, which was approved last week by the U.S. Senate, say it's simply another gratuity for public employee unions.

"The House has voted to side with bankrupt states and greedy public teachers unions and to reject the concerns of taxpayers, who are being saddled with a mountain of debt that cannot possibly be paid," says Bill Wilson, president of Americans for Limited Government (ALG). "While Americans struggle to balance their fam-

ily budgets, government has become the only sector of the economy that has not faced cuts during this recession."

Djou calls the measure misguided, wasteful and unfair to Hawaii residents.

"The State of Hawaii has a balanced budget amendment and is required to not spend more than the Hawaii taxpayer can afford," he says. "Hawaii has made the tough choices required to balance its books but this bill will force Hawaii taxpayers to bail out other states who have made no such efforts."

Of the measure's total spending, \$16.1 billion goes toward 6 additional months of increased Federal matching funds for Medicaid and \$10 billion is to supplement State education budgets. ■

# RP Officials Lay Groundwork for Aquino's US Visit

**NEW YORK—TWO KEY MEMBERS OF THE AQUINO** administration are in the US to lay the groundwork for President Benigno Aquino III's visit to the country next month, his first official trip abroad.

Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Gregory Domingo and Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima have been meeting with various American companies in New York to boost trade and economic relations between the United States and the Philippines. Sec. Domingo sat down with the *Fit-Am* press in New York to report on the development in these meetings. "We are meeting with a variety of companies and people; BP

Oil, call center providers, infrastructure funds, and we are looking at the possibilities of them investing in the Philippines," Domingo said.

The secretary also explained that the primary purpose of their trip is to "lay the groundwork for PNoy's visit in September." They hope to put together trade agreements that could be signed during the President's US visit.

"We are hoping to bring home substantial investments when the President comes here next month,"

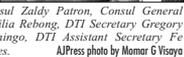
he shared. Domingo is hopeful that the positive buzz generated during PNoy's first month in office will translate to more investments in the Philippines. They are looking for investors for the country's various infrastructure projects.

Investors can enter into a public-private partnership (PPP) with the government if they want to fund any of the government's initiatives. Among the six priority areas for investment are tourism, business process outsourcing (BPO), electronics, mining, housing and food security.

Among these industries however, BPO is the fastest-growing industry sector, with nine billion pesos in revenue and employing more than 500,000 Filipinos.

"The feedback has been very positive so far. The prognosis is good, and we can offer a better business environment for the investors," Domingo said.

Regarding the president's upcoming trip, Domingo said that PNoy is "excited to visit but I think he wants to limit his foreign trips because of his promise not to spend



Consul Zaldy Patron, Consul General Cecilia Rebgong, DTI Secretary Gregory Domingo, DTI Assistant Secretary Fe Reyes. All Press photo by Mamar O'Vineya

too much of the people's money. So he is very conscious about the expenses."

While no official dates have been released, Consul General Cecilia Rebgong said that the trip may be in time for the UN General Assembly scheduled for September 22 to 24.

"We don't have the schedule yet but I assume that he will be entering the US through LA or SF since he is using a commercial flight," ConGen Rebgong said.

For his message to the community, Sec. Domingo said, "The Aquino administration will try its best to make the government system work by being transparent, following good governance rules. Let us support the president in his efforts. You will see results very quickly because we have a target of 2 years, and we hope to see significant accomplishments made within that period." ([www.asianjournal.com](http://www.asianjournal.com)) ■

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## MAINLAND NEWS

# US Urged to Bolster RP Defense Against China Over Territorial Dispute

by Jose KATIGBAK /  
Wednesday, August 11, 2010

WASHINGTON – THE UNITED STATES SHOULD CONSIDER LEASING big-ticket military hardware to the Philippines to give it the capability to defend its sovereign territory against Chinese expansionism in the South China Sea, a former head of the US Pacific Fleet said.

Retired Navy Adm. James Lyons, in a commentary in the editorial pages of The Washington Times, said the US should consider leasing a squadron of F-16 along with T-38 supersonic trainers, an aircraft for maritime patrol, and two FFG-7 guided-missile frigates to provide a recognized capability to enforce the Philippines' offshore territorial claims.

Since the election of Presi-

dent Aquino, US analysts and foreign policy experts have called for a more robust US military assistance to the Philippines to counter "China's aggressive action in the South China Sea."

In his commentary on Monday, Lyons said former President Arroyo, in return for billions of dollars poured into the Philippines, provided unfettered access to China and signed 65 bilateral agreements with it, including an oil exploration undertaking in 2004 shrouded in controversy as it may have ceded territorial waters to the Chinese.

He said after the US left the Philippines in 1991, China unilaterally declared sovereignty over various disputed islands in the South China Sea, and started building an air and naval base on Woody Island in the Paracel Island



SPRATLYS ISLAND

chain and new facilities in the Spratly Island chain.

Lyons said that in 1995, China built a facility on Mischief Reef, which is clearly recognized to be in the Philippine economic zone. And last year, a retired Philippine Liberation Army deputy chief of the general staff called for the construction of a formal air and naval base on Mischief Reef.

Lyons said such a base would allow the PLA to place naval, air and missile forces astride the

Palawan Strait, one of the key strategic sea lanes in the Western Pacific. This, he said, poses a military threat to the Philippines and the security of the sea-lanes through which much of the world's trade passes.

He said that for the last 15 years, US policy on this issue has been adrift and Washington has failed to confront Beijing over its illegal actions in any meaningful way.

However, Secretary of State

Hillary Clinton, at a July meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Hanoi, signaled a change in the US position by directly confronting China.

Clinton said conflicting claims over contested South China Sea areas should be resolved through regional discussions and solutions instead of on a one-on-one basis as preferred by China.

Lyons said now that President Barack Obama's administration has directly challenged China, the US should expand its relations with ASEAN "by building on our Mutual Defense Treaty with the Philippines."

The US should negotiate a commercial agreement for access to logistic support facilities in Subic Bay.

"The new Philippine president will come under intense pressure from China to prevent any expansion of US activities. However, neither we nor the new Philippine government should be deterred by Chinese bluster from doing what is right," Lyons said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

## GLOBAL NEWS

# Clark Freeport Chosen as Among World's Top Investment Destinations

CLARK FREEPORT, Pampanga, Philippines – THE FDI MAGAZINE, PUBLISHED BY THE PRESTIGIOUS LONDON-BASED The Financial Times Business Group, has picked this freeport as the world's "most cost effective" among some 700 economic zones it considered worldwide.

The Clark Development Corp (CDC) said that Clark was chosen in the category which was also closely contested by other "investment destinations" in Poland, Mexico, Latvia, United Arab Emirates, Thailand, Africa, Bangladesh and

Mauritius.

The "most cost effective" category was based on the cost of doing business, lease rates, labor, and power and water cost.

CDC said Clark freeport was also ranked by the FDI Magazine as seventh in its top 10 investment zones with the "best economic potential." The others in the top 10 in the category included the city of San Luis Potosi in Mexico, followed closely by Industrial Estates in Thailand and the Jebel Ali Free Zone in the UAE.

The list of top zones was published in the magazine under the

title "Global Free Zones of the Future for 2010 and 2011."

The CDC said that Clark landed 19th in FDI Magazine's overall top 25 free zones of the future, besting economic centers in Lithuania, Dubai, Croatia, India, Bahrain, South Korea and even South Carolina's Foreign Trade Zones 21 and 38 in the US.

CDC president Benigno Ricalfort said "the recognition boosts Clark's reputation as a world-class investment destination."

"With this, we have all the more reason to pursue programs that would make Clark excel in global competitiveness, quality customer service and corporate social responsibility," Ricalfort said.

The FDI Magazine is an English-language bi-monthly news and foreign direct investment publication owned by The Financial Times Business Group and edited in London. It has a readership of 47,000 senior decision makers involved in



overseas investment across the world in several continents including Asia, the United States, Europe and the Middle East.

The magazine focuses primarily on news on foreign direct investments and in-depth analysis of corporate climate worldwide.

"More than 700 economic zones globally were invited by FDI Magazine to complete a survey requesting both qualitative and quantitative data regarding their zones. This list of 700 was further

reduced to 200 based on information collected by FDI benchmark and information submitted by the zones," Ricalfort noted.

These zones included free-trade zones, special economic zones and country zones. The information collected was set under eight categories: Economic potential, cost effectiveness, facilities, transportation, incentives, FDI promotion strategy and, for those relevant, airports and ports. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### COVO 23RD ANNUAL STATEWIDE CONVENTION / SATURDAY

August 14, 2010 • Philippine Consulate General, Pali Highway • 8 - 4 pm • Contact: Richard Ancog, 383-3691

### 5TH LAPU-LAPU AWARDS DINNER & GALA / SATURDAY

August 14, 2010 • Dole Ballrooms at Iwilei • 6 - 11:30 pm • \$45 per person • Contact: Jun Colmenares, 485-0390

### ANNUAL COVO PICNIC / SUNDAY

August 15, 2010 • Keehi Lagoon Park, Honolulu • 10 am - 4 pm • Contact: Richard Ancog at 383-3691 or Erwin Gabrilillo at 282-4186

### UP ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (HAWAII CHAPTER) BIENNIAL BANQUET AND INSTALLATION OF NEW OFFICERS / SATURDAY

August 28, 2010 • Hale Koa Hotel •

Contact: Alma B. Phocas at (808) 754-1399 or email upaahawaii@yahoo.com; upaahawaii@gmail.com

### 55TH OAHU COUNCIL OF FILIPINO CATHOLIC CLUB ANNUAL CHARITY QUEEN PAGEANT AND SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CELEBRATION / SATURDAY

August 28, 2010 • St. Anthony's Church, Kalihi at 640 Puuhale Road • Contact: Mr. Prudencio Pilar at 351-0728 • RSVP no later than August 21

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# GLOBAL NEWS

## Filipina Maid Inherits Millions from Singaporean Employer

A FILIPINA MAID INHERITED 6 million Singapore dollars (\$4.3 million) from her late employer after more than 20 years of service.

"I am the luckiest maid in Singapore, with or without the money," says the 47-year-old single woman—identified only as "Christine"—during a recent media interview. She refused to be named for fear of possible threats to her life in the Philippines, where wealthy people have been kidnapped for ransom and some killed by

their abductors.

The inheritance, including cash and a luxury apartment near the Orchard Road shopping area, came from the estate of the late Quek Kai Miew, a medical doctor and philanthropist who died last year at 66.

The maid also took care of the doctor's late mother and was told she would be a beneficiary of her employer's will when it was drawn up in 2008.

The maid, who is applying for perma-

nent residency in Singapore, says her newfound wealth has not changed her lifestyle.

"I do not really think much about the money I got. I just live my life as I did before, and not as a rich person," she says. "I am still who I was before. I cannot behave differently because I have money now. Even my Filipino maid friends here still treat me the same."

Nearly 200,000 foreign maids, mostly from the Philippines and Indonesia, work in affluent Singapore, which has a population of five million. (Good News Philippines) ■

## iRemit Sets Up Second Italy Branch in Milan

MANILA, Philippines - I-REMIT INC. (IREMIT), THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST Filipino-owned non-bank remittance company, has set up shop in Milan -- its second branch in Italy -- as part of an aggressive expansion overseas.

In its disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, iRemit said Milan is one of the most frequented overseas Filipino worker (OFW) destinations and comprises about 32 percent of Filipinos in Rome. The first branch in Italy opened in Rome last April.

The estimated number of OFWs in Milan stands at about 34,000, most of

them employed as domestic workers, with a few nurses and staff in the service sectors and factories.

"The steady deployment and demand for our Filipino workers are the primary driving forces of the company. As more and more Filipinos go to other countries to earn a living and provide better lives for their families back home, iRemit also ensures that it will be there to provide them better assistance and guarantee that the fruits of their hard-earned labor will be easily accessed by their beneficiaries in the Philippines," said iRemit chairman and chief executive officer Bansan Choa.

The opening of the Milan branch is just one of the many initiatives lined up by

the company as part of its thrust to aggressively grow the business and expand into territories where its presence has not yet been established.

"In line with our vision to be the ultimate choice remittance service provider, we are constantly pushing to establish our presence in areas where most of our fellow Filipinos reside, whether temporarily or permanently. The challenges that beset the company should be seen as opportunities for us to look into other venues where we could serve more markets. And, we will continue to tap the markets where we previously had no presence," iRemit president and chief operating officer Harris Jacildo said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com)) ■

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