

# HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE

**HAWAII'S #1 FILIPINO NEWSPAPER**

◆ WEEKLY ◆ DECEMBER 18, 2010 ◆

## US & PHL FORCES WORK HAND IN HAND TO MAKE A BETTER MINDANAO

COVER STORY PAGE

# 4



### SOCIAL SECURITY UPDATE

**6** AMERICA'S LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM



### PHILIPPINE NEWS

**12** PHL GOV'T MAY HALT DEPLOYING WORKERS IN 100 COUNTRIES .....



### LEGAL NOTES

**13** CHANGES TO IMMIGRANT VISA SERVICES IN MANILA

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## EDITORIAL

## Working for a Better Mindanao

**T**he U.S. military has quietly partnered with the Philippine government since 2002 in bringing peace and stability to Mindanao. The several hundred U.S. troops stationed throughout Mindanao belong to the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) and are tasked with supporting the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in fighting terrorism.

Along the way, American troops have spearheaded medical and dental missions, distributed vaccines and school supplies for children and participated in many other civic projects. They have also constructed roads, bridges, wells, schools and rural health centers. Such efforts have helped to improve the lives of marginalized people living in conflict areas, gradually shrinking terrorist safe havens and hampering these groups' ability to conduct operations. It's a win-win situation for the AFP—the civic projects have given the people hope for the future, while specialized training has increased their military capacity.

Now more than ever, the future is looking bright for the conflict-prone region of Mindanao. President Benigno Aquino III has thrown his full support behind the Mindanao 2020 Peace & Development Framework, which aims to capitalize on the agricultural strengths of the region. His administration will push for agricultural development in Mindanao by transforming it into a modern agricultural center and the nation's food basket. The president sincerely believes that Mindanao is capable of becoming the food-processing hub of not only the Philippines but for neighboring ASEAN countries. Of course much depends on peace and security in the region. Believing that peace is the foundation of progress, the president has promised to not rest until solutions are found for the problem of armed conflict in Mindanao.

Peace is indeed possible, so long as affected stakeholder groups from the business sector, local government, civil society, youth, peace and development advocates and donor agencies are invited to the table. So far, it seems the Aquino administration is on the right track. The president has demonstrated decisive leadership founded on good, democratic and just governance—which is exactly the type of government needed to exercise a strong political will to move the peace process forward and eventually usher in lasting peace in Mindanao.

## Closing Kalihi Schools a Bad Idea

**O**n a cost-cutting measure, the State Department of Education is looking to close several public elementary schools in Kalihi and East Honolulu. If DOE officials have their way, Puuhale Elementary in lower Kalihi would be closed and merged with Kalihi Kai. In upper Kalihi, students at Kalihi Elementary would be transferred to either Kaewai or Kalihi Uka Elementary.

Closing the two Kalihi schools would save an estimated \$1.5 million a year but have a detrimental effect on students and their families. Statistics show that a majority of students enrolled at the nine elementary schools in the Farrington complex are from economically-disadvantaged families. In fact, about 78 percent of students at Puuhale and 80 percent of students at Kalihi Elementary—nearly 8 out of every 10 students—are from low-income households. Unfortunately, these households are not only less affluent but less able to fight back.

The closures would result in larger class sizes. Enrollment

## FROM THE PUBLISHER



loha and welcome to the latest issue of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle—the islands' leading weekly Filipino community newspaper! For many Filipino families, this is certainly their most favorite time

of the year. If you're a parent, we encourage you to think of new activities to do with your children now that they will be home during the Winter Break. If your kids are toddlers, consider reading aloud a Christmas book or story each day. Kids also love camping, so consider spending an evening in front of the Christmas tree. Munch on snacks, leave the lights on all night, and make a special memory. Whatever you choose to do, make it simple and make it fun!

Speaking of fun, if you haven't already yet heard, Jolibee Restaurant opened its first location in Hawaii earlier this week at the Waipahu Shopping Plaza. With the recent successes of Max's of Manila and Valerio's Bakery, there's good reason to expect this restaurant chain to be just as popular among Hawaii's Filipino community. In case you're wondering, Jolibee's in Waipahu will be open 7 days a week from 5 am to 11 pm. See you there!

Our cover story for this issue, entitled "U.S. and Philippine Forces Work Hand in Hand to Make a Better Mindanao," was submitted by Gregory Bren Garcia, who writes about the cooperative efforts by U.S. and Filipino troops to improve the lives of residents in conflict-stricken and marginalized communities in Mindanao. To be successful, the Philippine government needs to continue to actively engage local leaders and stakeholders in a consultative process and get them to rally behind a common goal of lasting peace. Doing so will go a long way towards solving the root causes of decades-old conflicts that have beset the region. Please read more beginning on page 4.

In other news, if you're looking for a good reason to visit the Philippines any time soon, you may want to consider joining Mrs. Hawaii Filipina 2010 Kanani Dias on her maiden trip to the Philippines. She is inviting anyone who may want to participate in the many events and festivals during her upcoming Goodwill Trip, especially those with roots in the Ilocos Norte region. If you're interested, more details are available on page 7.

There are other interesting and informative articles in this jam-packed issue, including "Immigration Guide" on page 7, "Legal Notes" on page 13 and "Philippine Language" on page 14. We hope you will take time to read them. We again thank you for your support. Until next time... *aloha and mabuhay!*

*Chona A. Montesines-Sonido*

at Kalihi Kai Elementary, if students from Puuhale are included, would swell to over 830 students, which is as large as some middle schools. Numerous studies show that smaller schools are more conducive to positive student achievement than larger schools. Larger schools tend to de-personalize learning and give little attention to individual student learning needs.

Then there is the safety factor for many of these children who must walk longer distances to their new school and cross major thoroughfares like Dillingham Boulevard, Kalihi Street, Kamehameha IV Road and Likelike Highway. Along the way, they must walk along unpaired sidewalks and face motorists who for the most part do not yield to pedestrians nor pay attention to posted speed limit signs.

While government has admirably done more with less during these tough economic times, we cannot expect these children and their families to do the same. They need more, not less assistance. Let's hope that the good state senators and representatives who represent Kalihi will go to bat for these children and lobby hard to prevent the closure of these schools. It is simply wrong for the DOE to balance its budget on the backs of residents in a disadvantaged community like Kalihi.



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## OPINION

# Another Case for Truth Commission to Probe

**GOTCHA** By Jarius Bondoc

**S**o the Philippines did snub the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to jailed Chinese democracy activist Liu Xiaobo. President Noynoy

Aquino saw it vital to free five Filipinos in death row in China for narco-trafficking. But couldn't he save the five other than by sacrificing state principle? Was a prisoner exchange — of convicted Chinese shabu makers or fish poachers — broached to Beijing, "your criminals for our criminals"? The families of those convicts miss them as much as the five Filipinos' kin do.

\*\*\*

Having the Presidential Commission on Good Government probe Gloria Arroyo's alleged sleaze is legal and feasible. Cory Aquino in 1986 decreed the PCGG after dissolving parliament, and it remains in force. The Supreme Court in 1990 upheld its constitutionality. These satisfy the present SC's contention that the Truth Commission that was to go after Arroyo must be legislated and does not single her out. Noynoy Aquino can order the PCGG to expand its present prosecution of Marcos and cronies to include Arroyo et al. The PCGG can in turn subsume the TC to do the job.

But then, the issue is not legal or operational. It is political, as Justice Sec. Leila de Lima and Sen. Francis Pangilinan say. Arroyo's point men can again question Aquino's move before the SC. And the ten of 14 Arroyo-appointed justices who struck down the TC can find ways to reverse their 1990 predecessors. They've done it before, notably last March on the issue of Arroyo appointing a Chief Justice during the constitutional ban.

\*\*\*

Here's another case for the PCGG-TC to look into, along with the Bangko Sentral and the Securities and Exchange Commission. That is, if the agencies are given a chance to enforce justice and order:

A group allegedly manipulated the stock pricing of publicly listed Philex Mining Corp. for a huge windfall but in breach of banking laws.

Sources in the Philippine Stock Exchange aver that Philex share prices suddenly spiked four-fold in a matter of weeks

last year. This was after the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines loaned P800 million to an obscure firm to buy and sell Philex stocks. The loan was given sometime mid-2009 to the firm that had no track record or collateral, but well connected.

It is highly irregular, and against BSP rules, for a bank to lend even one centavo to an unknown, un-collateralized bor-

rower. But the DBP was notorious for similar dirt, like its \$1-billion purchase of MRT-3 bonds worth only \$760 million, for false benefit to the government. In the Philex case, DBP money was used to earn billions of pesos from shares of the country's most profitable miner, but at no profit to the bank.

Prior to the loan, Philex shares were trading at P5 apiece. Upon the DBP bor-

rower's purchase of P800 million worth of stocks, the rate kicked up 36 percent within a week. By August 2009 it had risen 108 percent to P10.75.

It didn't stop there. The influential firm egged the SSS to sell its 22-percent hold on Philex. When the government-run private provident fund agreed and announced so, Philex prices further soared to P19. When the SSS finally un-

loaded at P21 per share in December 2009, the powerful firm piggybacked on the sale to the same businessman.

Reportedly the borrowed P800 million grew to at least P3.2 billion; PSE sources say it could be double. At any rate, the borrower merely returned the P800-million principal and paid no interest. Only a group with links straight to the top can pull such a trick. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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## COVER STORY

(from page 4, US and Philippine...)

alize its potential and contribute more to the country's national development goals.

For example, the grisly Maguindanao Massacre, a politically inclined incident wherein 57 people were killed in November 2009, greatly tarnished the region's reputation in terms of stability, scaring away investors and creating a cloud of doubt among Filipinos and foreign observers alike on whether the Philippine government is really committed to changing the situation in Mindanao.

"It was very shocking and sad especially knowing that a majority of the victims were reporters," says Saiki about the incident. "I know there are political underpinnings involved there and so I would like to see justice be carried out so that the people who are responsible are charged according to the government's rule of law," she says.

When asked whether the U.S. will have a direct involvement to prevent such things from happening again in the future, Saiki says the U.S. JSOTF-P members could only give advice or help shape the opportunity for there to be stability in the region.

"We don't have a direct role in the Mindanao peace process. That's something that is within the government of the Philippines. We're always in a supportive role by documents or authorization, but we're not allowed to engage in any kind of combat operations," she says.

To ensure that the sovereignty of the Philippines is respected, the JSOTF-P is operated "by, through and with" their AFP counterparts and the U.S. personnel in Mindanao only operates in a strictly, non-combat role, providing humanitarian assistance and training and sharing information with their AFP counterparts.

"What the United States forces provide is a 'put-into-action' effort that supports programs or projects of the AFP and the PNP (Philippine National Police). We have resources and we have the experience that could help to amplify and better achieve the goals that the AFP



Lt. Col. Tracey Saiki with children from Midsayap, North Cotabato

and the PNP want to pursue in a particular community to help the people," Saiki says.

### Working for peace and stability

Since 2002, the U.S. JSOTF-P members have been helping the AFP through subject matter expert exchange programs or SMEEs. SMEEs lessons include subjects such as Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Tactical Combat Casualty Care, Marksmanship and Small Unit Tactics, Civil Military Operations Planning, Maritime Operations and Casualty Evacuation.

According to Saiki, the most significant contribution of the JSOTF-P has been their sharing of intelligence information with their Philippine counterparts. A great number of terrorists from the ASG and the JI groups have already been captured or eliminated in recent years through the efforts of the AFP using these intelligence data.

"That just makes the Mindanao region safer so that people in the baranggays and the villages and communities can start seeing that they can have a life of prosperity and have a safe environment for their children to be raised in. Because as long as there are people wondering 'is my family safe' or something, you can not have any kind of economic development," Saiki says.

But aside from skills training through joint exercises and exchange of intelligence information, Iletto says that the partnership also benefits the people of Mindanao through the frequent humanitarian missions that they conduct.

"The presence of American

forces in the southern Philippines has had more actual significance than perceived significance. Through the partnership we have with the United States Armed Forces, we are able to carry out joint humanitarian missions that benefited the people of Mindanao, who warmly welcomed the presence of American forces in the area," he says. "These humanitarian and civic assistance projects are tools for post conflict development that will improve Philippine-U.S. military civic action cooperation, and train civil-military operators to work together with a focus on civic assistance after any conflict," he adds.

Since its inception, the U.S.

JSOTF-P members have worked with the AFP to improve the lives of marginalized people living in conflict areas. Humanitarian aid is delivered through Medical and Dental Civic Action programs to provide care where it is needed, Veterinary Civic Action programs which afford farmers livelihood assistance and opportunities, and Engineering Civic Action programs that help build local infrastructure including schools, water wells, roads, piers and medical centers.

In 2008, JSOTF-P committed more than \$6.5 million to 70 hu-

manitarian assistance projects in Mindanao and delivered free medical and dental care activities to some 10,000 beneficiaries. In 2009, the AFP and JSOTF-P have conducted more than 40 joint Medical Civic Action Programs delivering free care to about 8,000 people.

In recent months, significant changes in the JSOTF-P and AFP leadership have happened, with new AFP Chief Lt. Gen. Ricardo David and new JSOTF-P Commander U.S. Navy Capt. Robert Gusentine taking office. There is also a new U.S. ambassador and a new Philippine president in the persons of Harry Thomas and Benigno Aquino III respectively.

According to Saiki, the visions of the new leaders have not so much changed, but they are definitely looking toward becoming more integrated so that their organizations can better leverage their capabilities towards collaborative solutions.

"The vision for new JSOTF-P and AFP leadership, specifically, Western Mindanao Command (WMC), is to further our 'linking arms, working shoulder-to-shoulder' approach

towards improving the quality of life for the people in southern Philippines," says Saiki.

Iletto adds that the primary purpose behind the continuing presence of JSOTF-P is to put in place what the Mutual Defense Treaty between the Philippine and U.S. governments hopes to achieve.

"[The goal is to establish] a mechanism for one to aide the other from external aggression. Efforts toward this goal will continue and will be further enhanced to ensure its relevance to both Armed Forces," he says.

Saiki also emphasizes that the U.S. military hopes to further enhance and improve the Philippine military's capabilities through specialized training activities not only in the field. She says that the JSOTF-P will continue with the civil military operations assisting with medical, dental, and veterinary activities that help educate disadvantaged communities, as well as in the building of schools for children and building roads and bridges to connect communities and bring economic development.

"When you have healthier

(continued on page 6)

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## COVER STORY (cont.)

*(from page 5, US and Philippine...)*

families and healthier animals, you have healthier and safer communities. This is a priority concern for President Aquino and thus is a priority for the AFP and the WMC/JSOTF-P 'kapit bisig' ('arms linked') commitment. Eliminating foreign terrorist's safe havens and creating the conditions necessary for socio-economic development will instill the long-awaited peace and prosperity to this region," Saiki says.

**An Ohana away from home**

On a lighter note, Lt. Col Saiki, who hails from Hawaii, also talked about the adjustments she and fellow U.S. military personnel have to go through when coming to the Philippines for the first time. For her, it's definitely the language barrier, especially when Filipinos mistake her for a countryman. And there's also the

challenge of adjusting oneself to Mindanao itself; Manila, with its shopping malls and skyscrapers is certainly a whole different world from the southern region.

"Our assignments here are temporary, usually six months to a year," says Saiki, who arrived last March and will be staying in the Philippines until October this year. "For some U.S. members there is a 'culture shock' — learning and understanding the dos and don'ts. Everyone has to attend a newcomer's orientation briefing as part of their in-processing. Even though English is spoken here, this isn't America. We are guests in the Philippines and we must be respectful of the customs and courtesies of our host country," she adds.

Saiki says she and her comrades at JSOTF-P are all honored to work with their Filipino counterparts.

"We're all proud to be here to help our AFP counterparts. At



The AFP and JSOTF-P work together to bring humanitarian aid to conflict-stricken and marginalized communities in Mindanao

first, we see our being here as our duty, our mission; but as the weeks, and months go by, we become friends and we become a part of the change we seek for the AFP and for the people in Mindanao," she says.

For his part, Ito says that they are also grateful to their American counterparts for sharing with them their technical expertise on defense and military issues. He adds that he residents of Mindanao feel the same way.

"The people of Mindanao

are very grateful to have the Filipino and American forces in their area, not only because of these humanitarian projects, but their presence provides the people the blanket of security that anyone living in such conflict-stricken areas need," he says. "We too are grateful that, despite our sacrifices as soldiers, we can now see a safe and peaceful future for our countrymen in Mindanao, and this is further ensured by our defense partnership with the United

States," he adds.

Of course, Saiki, did not fail to realize the home connection in this set up.

"When you look into our US military, there are more than likely a Filipino American that has family that came from the Philippines, and so it's really just hard to think of the US not wanting to be a part of helping the Philippines, especially if that particular area is very challenged and is restricted from sharing the prosperity being enjoyed by other parts of the Philippines," Saiki says.

"Many of us have Filipino friends and family back in the States who are grateful to our contribution to help their home country — pros to my Filipino peeps in Waianae, Waipahu and Pearl City. Though I am not Filipina by blood, I am by spirit! I miss my ohana in Hawaii, but it's a small sacrifice and well-worth it," she adds.

## SOCIAL SECURITY UPDATE

## America's Life Insurance Program

By Jane Yamamoto-Burigas

Many of you may at times worry about how to protect your family if something suddenly happens to you. But if you have life insurance, you haven't probably haven't given it much thought.

If you are working and paying into Social Security, your family may qualify for Social Security benefits if you die. You see, some of the Social Security taxes you pay go toward survivors' insurance. In fact, its value may be more than the value of any other life insurance you may have.

If you die, your family could be eligible for monthly benefits based on your earnings.

Your family members who might qualify include your minor children and your spouse. Similarly, if your spouse is working and dies, you and your children may qualify for bene-



fits for your spouse's record. More than six million people currently receive Social Security survivors benefits.

Here's how it works—You can earn up to four Social Security credits each year. In 2010, for example, you earn one credit for each \$1,120 of wages or self-employment income. When you have earned \$4,480, you have earned your four credits for the year.

The number of credits you need for your survivors to receive benefits depends on how recently you worked at the time of death. For example, if you have worked for only one and a half years in the three years prior to death, benefits can be paid to your minor children and your spouse who is caring for

them. No one needs more than 40 credits (10 years of work) to be eligible for any Social Security benefit.

The benefit may be more than you think. In 2010, the average survivors' benefit for a

widowed parent and two children is \$2,392.

The best way to put a dollar figure on what the estimated benefit amount would be for your family is to go online. At [vivorplan, you will find three different calculators that will help you estimate how much your family might be eligible to receive. You also will find a detailed explanation of survivors' benefits.](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/sur-</a></p>
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To learn more, visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

## PUBLIC NOTICE TO MOTORISTS

The City & County of Honolulu will conduct shaft and soil testing along Farrington Highway in Ewa and Waipahu as part of the Honolulu Rail Transit Project.

Work will require some day and nighttime lane closures during non-peak traffic hours between 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. One lane of traffic in each direction will remain open.

The shaft and soil testing is part of the pre-engineering work for the first 6.5-miles of the rail transit route between East Kapolei and Pearl City. Kiewit Infrastructure West Co., selected to design and construct the first segment of the rail route, has been authorized by the City to conduct the preliminary work.

There are eight shaft testing locations along or adjacent to Farrington Highway. Work at each location is scheduled to take approximately six weeks and all work is slated to be completed by late January 2011.

The public will be notified of detours and change of access with traffic control signs, and special duty police officers will be used when needed to direct traffic at affected intersections.

Motorists using Farrington Highway are advised to anticipate possible traffic delays or take alternative routes.

For updates on work days and times, check the project website at [www.honoluluirailtransit.org](http://www.honoluluirailtransit.org) or contact our hotline at 566-2299.



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IMMIGRATION GUIDE

# Drunk Drivers and Deportation



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon

**T**is the season to be jolly. *Fa la la la la,*—"Deck the Halls" by Robert D. Singleton.

A "crime involving moral turpitude" (CMT) is one that is inherently base, vile, or depraved, and contrary to the accepted rules of morality and the duties owed between persons or to society in general. It is the inherent nature of the crime as defined by statute and interpreted by the courts as limited and described by the record of conviction and not the facts and circumstances of the particular person's case that determines whether it is a crime of moral turpitude.

It has been held by a majority of the members of the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) which reviews decisions by Immigration Judges that a simple DUI does not constitute a crime involving moral turpitude where the statute has no knowledge or intent requirement. Matter of Torres-Varela, 23 I&N Dec. 78 (applying Arizona law). However, there was a strong dissent by one member who contended that drunk driving is wrong and creates human

tragedy. Other board members dissented saying that DUI is an inherently reckless act.

However, a person may be found to have committed a crime involving moral turpitude if such person commits a DUI offense while knowingly driving on a suspended, canceled, or revoked license, or on a restricted license because of a prior DUI. The BIA reasoned that the serious misconduct described in the statute involves a baseness so contrary to accepted moral standards that it rises to the level of a crime involving moral turpitude. Matter of Lopez-Meza, 22 I&N Dec. 1188 (applying Arizona law).

**Is DUI an aggravated felony?**

An "aggravated felony" under INA § 101(a)(43) includes any crime of violence (COV) as defined by 18 USC §16 for which the term of imprisonment imposed (regardless of any suspension of imprisonment) is at least one year. Section 16 defines

COV as (a) any offense that has as an element the use or attempted use or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another, or (b) any other offense that is a felony and that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense.

An offense will not be a COV if it lacks a mens rea (specific intent) requirement for a conviction or if a person may be convicted simply on a showing of negligence or less than intentional conduct. The Supreme Court held that a conviction under Florida law for DUI causing serious bodily injury was not a crime of violence and therefore was not an aggravated felony because the offense did not have a higher degree of intent than negligent or merely accidental conduct. *Leocal v. Ashcroft*, 543 U.S. 1 (2004).

**CAUTION:** Before you go drinking, driving, and singing

"Fa la la la" be aware that the attitude of judges who have ruled against the deportability of certain DUI offenses could change as more innocent people are killed by drunken drivers. An alien who has been languishing in jail awaiting an appeal of his deportation order was denied bond because of two DUI convictions. The judge thinks he is a danger to society.

(ATTY. TIPON has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Hawaii, specializing in immigration law and criminal defense. Tel. (808) 225-2645. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.immigrationServiceUSA.com. He is from Laog 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 KNDI 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.)

As the season to be jolly reaches its zenith, more and more aliens will be jailed for driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI).

Immigration authorities have placed convicted alien drunken drivers under deportation proceedings on the theory that such aliens have committed a crime of moral turpitude or an aggravated felony.

**Is DUI a crime involving moral turpitude?**

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

## Mrs. Hawaii Filipina 2010 to Visit Philippines



Kanani Dias, the reigning 2010 Mrs. Hawaii Filipina, will be hosting a Goodwill Trip to the Philippines from February 3-12, 2011 courtesy of Philippine Airlines.

The Diaz ohana is inviting Filipinos, especially those from Ilocos Norte, to join her entourage in participating in the many events and festivals during her upcoming visit. It will be her first visit to the Pearl of the Orient and to personally meet with her relatives from Laog and Bangui in Ilocos Norte.

"I'm excited to get to know the Philippines more," she says.

ing in Laog :

- February 8, 2011: Dulang Festival and Calesa Festival
  - February 9, 2011: Grand Parade
  - February 10, 2011: Ms. Laog City Pageant
- Kanani Dias was crowned Mrs. Hawaii Filipina on June 6, 2010 at the Hawaii Prince Hotel. The pageant is sponsored by the United Filipino Council of Hawaii (UFCH). Diaz and her husband Jason have been married for nine years and have two boys—Jadsen and Javen.

Anyone interested in booking with the group for the Goodwill trip is asked to call 277-5148 or Rey Cel Travel Inc. at 871-6251.

"I plan on using the trip as part of giving back to the people in my relatives hometown. I want to really get to know my Filipino roots. This is the reason why I decided to run in the Mrs. Hawaii Filipina pageant."

The following is a list of scheduled appearance and events that Diaz will be attend-

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## KGMB to Re-broadcast Emme's Island Moments Special

In case you missed it, Emme's Island Moments will hold a special encore presentation of Ka'ilila's Canoe—A Journey of Spirit™ on December 25, 2010 at 6 pm on KGMB-9.

Ka'ilila's Canoe is a heart-warming story of a canoe that bonds a West Maui family, a young boy's dream and the employees of the Kaanapali Beach Hotel. The program will introduce viewers to the hands who built the canoe and how their lives were touched. Viewers will



watch the canoe come to life and learn about the boy Ka'ilila'au and his journey of spirit.

According to host and producer Emme Tomimbang, 2010 marks the first time in 16



years that the show will not have a Christmas special. Instead, the hour-long encore presentation is the show's holiday offering for a truly Christmas Island Moment, she says.

## Hannemann Portrait Unveiled at City Hall

The official City portrait of former Mayor Mufi Hannemann was unveiled at a ceremony on December 15, 2010 in Honolulu Hale's first floor hallway.

Hannemann thanked the people of Oahu for allowing him to serve as mayor and his family for their support. He received leis from current mayor

Peter Carlisle as well as from former and current City cabinet members and well-wishers.

Hannemann's portrait was photographed by Dana Edmunds of Dana Edmunds Photography. Edmunds donated the labor costs associated with produc-



ing the portrait which measures 17 inches by 23 inches. Edmunds was Hannemann's official Christmas card photographer during his time as mayor.

The portrait was installed in the first floor hallway alongside Hannemann's 11 predecessors.

## City Completes Real Property Assessments for 2011

The City has completed real property assessments for 2011 and will send approximately 290,000 real property assessment notices to property owners on Oahu beginning this week.

The 2011 assessed valuations were set as of October 1, 2010 and based on sales of similar properties in each neighborhood through June 30, 2010.

The total gross assessed valuation of all taxable real property on Oahu dipped slightly from \$178.35 billion to \$178.31 billion, an overall decrease of .02 percent. The drop was due to an overall decline in real property assessments. New developments, including residential subdivisions, condominiums, commercial and industrial projects, and construction of new buildings and improvements to existing parcels, partially offset the decrease in total property values.

Residential property gross valuations increased from \$143.41 billion to \$143.98 billion or 0.4 percent. Hotel and re-

sort property values increased 4.1 percent, while commercial and industrial properties dropped in value by 2.9 percent and 1.0 percent, respectively. These percentage changes represent broad totals while the change in the assessed value of a particular property could be more or less than the island-wide figures.

According to Coldwell Banker Pacific Properties, the Oahu median sales price as of October 2010 was \$595,750 for single-family homes, a decrease of 1.4 percent from October 2009. The \$300,000 median sales price for condominiums indicates a relatively flat market during the same time frame.

The assessment notice is not a tax bill, but a statement of what the City has determined to be the property's value. This notice includes property assessment information including any exemption which the owner has been granted in accordance with City ordinance. The standard owner-occupied homeowner's exemption is \$80,000 and increases to \$120,000 for home-

owners 65 years of age or older.

The net taxable or net assessed value is one of the two components used to calculate the real property taxes for next fiscal year of July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. The other component is the tax rate.

The tax rate will be set by the City Council in June of 2011, as it finalizes the budget for fiscal year 2012. The real property tax bill of an individual property is determined by multiplying the net assessed valuation by the appropriate tax rate and the appli-

### PICTORIAL NEWS

Alberto G. Romulo, the Philippines' Secretary of Foreign Affairs, poses for a photo with U.S. Rep. Mazie K. Hirono. Topics of discussion included the Save Our Industries Act (HR 3039) and the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act (HR 2412). The SAVE Act is a win-win measure that aims to regain lost jobs and create new jobs in the Philippine garments industry and the American textile industry, while the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act aims to "exempt children of certain Filipino World War II veterans from the numerical limitations on immigrant visas." Romulo also met with U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye and other members of Congress to discuss the two pending bills and related matters.

cation of any tax credits.

Property owners who have not received their 2011 Assessment Notice by December 31, 2010, are advised to contact the Real Property Assessment Division at 768-3799 or 768-3169.

Those who wish to dispute assessments may file appeals from December 15, 2010 to January 18, 2011. For more information, call (808) 768-3799 or visit the Real Property Assessment Division's website at [www.realpropertyhonolulu.com](http://www.realpropertyhonolulu.com) and click the "Assessment Appeals" link.

The Real Property Assessment Division's website offers

online services to reduce paper and postage costs while providing increased efficiencies. Property owners may now receive their real property assessment notices via email, and may file online for home exemptions or real property tax appeals.

Visit [www.realpropertyhonolulu.com](http://www.realpropertyhonolulu.com) to use the division's online services and view additional information regarding tax records, exemptions, and tax billing information.

Questions regarding real property assessment may also be emailed to: [bfsrmailbox@honolulu.gov](mailto:bfsrmailbox@honolulu.gov).

## Big Island Filipino Group Falls Short of Fundraising Goal

Despite less-than-expected donations for their upcoming Filipino-style Christmas party, members of the United Filipino Community of Hawaii will press on with their big event, which is set for December 18, 2010 at Moohau Park in Hilo on the Big Island.

In recent weeks, members held several Christmas caroling events to raise funds for the event. The group also pledged to donate \$1,000 to papaya farmer Loreto Julian, whose 17-acre papaya farm was recently vandalized.

However, as of press time, a total of \$614 was raised, according to group member Grace Larson. Of

the amount, \$200 will be given to Julian and the remainder used for prizes, food and other expenses for the group's Christmas party.

Larsen says the public can still send donations to Julian at: 130 Hoapili Street, Kapoho, Hawaii. He can be contacted at 965-7589 or 936-7731.

The goal of the non-profit United Filipino Community of Hawaii is to help less fortunate Filipinos on the Big Island. Currently, the group, which is headed by Rev. Abet Camacho, has 20 members and meets weekly in Hilo. The group was formed after the tragic death of domestic violence victim Catherine Esteves Dingle.



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**PHILIPPINE NEWS**

**Binay urges OFWs to Follow  
 Phil, China Laws**

by **Jose Rodel Clapano**  
 Monday, Dec. 13, 2010



Vice President Jojo Binay

**M**ANILA, Philippines – Vice President Jejomar Binay yesterday advised Filipino migrant workers in China to abide by the laws there to avoid complications.

"I'm asking you to follow all the regulations of China. I am seeking your support and cooperation to remind all our countrymen in China to do the same to avoid any problems," Binay said in a speech before the Filipino community in Guangzhou, China.

Binay, presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers' concerns, noted OFWs in China usually face issues of overstaying, illegal recruitment and drug trafficking.

Consul General Joselito Jimeno told Binay that the issue of overstaying nationals is connected to illegal recruitment.

Jimeno said victims of illegal recruitment, who discover too late that their visas were not processed and therefore have illegal status, would prefer to stay and find employment to compensate for their financial loss.

Binay also stressed that Filipino workers should not risk their future in China to earn money.

He reminded the Filipino community that smuggling 50 grams of heroin is punishable by death in China.

"Drug mules often play willing victims

of smuggling illegal substances out of desperation to earn money," he said.

Binay noted two Filipinos are currently facing the death penalty for drug trafficking in China.

Binay assured the OFWs that the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) are working on a comprehensive response to address their concerns.

He said President Aquino has approved a P1-billion loan fund for OFWs to give them employment and business opportunities when they return home.

"The objective of the present administration is to look for solutions to poverty by providing jobs and enough income for Filipinos so that going abroad will just be an alternative," Binay said.

Binay went to Guangzhou to attend the opening of the 2010 Asian Para Games upon the invitation of the Chinese government. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

**Gaa Reveals He Has Cancer**

by **Jose Katigbak**  
 Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010

**W**ASHINGTON – But for what he described as "an inconvenient thing," 2010 would have been a near perfect year for Philippine ambassador to the United States Willy Gaa.

He played a major role in the US Millennium Challenge Corp. giving the Philippines a \$434-million development grant, orchestrated a one-on-one meeting in New York between Presidents Benigno Aquino and Barack Obama and masterminded the transfer of the consular section from the embassy to a bigger office in the old chancery to better serve the public.

Professionally he couldn't have had a better year.

"I accomplished all my plans. There were no missed opportunities, no regrets. I was looking forward to my retirement (on July 24, 2011 when he turns 65)," he said.

Then he found out he had lung cancer. When a doctor told him the troubling news after a routine checkup for a nagging cough in September, Gaa said his whole world collapsed.

"It hit me hard. I couldn't believe it. Why me, I asked myself as I saw my re-

irement plans crumble," he told THE STAR.

Gaa admitted he went through a variety of emotions including fear, anger and sadness but after the initial shock, he decided to face up to the problem, challenge it and beat it.

Surgeons excised one-third of the right upper lobe of his lung after a five-hour lobectomy in a New York hospital and he now faces four to six months of chemotherapy and radiation.

During the interview he said he felt stronger than he did before the operation and acknowledged with a chuckle that his retirement plans – becoming a university professor, traveling and doing some consultancy work – were coming back into focus.

Asked what he thought of former Central Bank governor Jose Cuisia Jr., Aquino's nominee to be the new ambassador to the United States, Gaa said Cuisia was an excellent choice to succeed him.

"He'll be a good addition to the economic team of the Aquino government. He'll be good for the embassy and he'll feel at home in the US business community. In a word, he'll be a plus," said Gaa, one of the few Filipino career ambassadors posted to Washington. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

## PHILIPPINE NEWS

## US Envoy Visits Noy Amid Nobel Flap

by Aurea Calica  
Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010

MANILA, Philippines — United States Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr. met with President Aquino at Malacañang yesterday just as the Chief Executive was defending the country's skipping the Nobel Peace Prize awarding ceremonies, citing the need to save Filipinos on death row in China.

The President, however, did not give details about the meeting.

Thomas, when asked about what was discussed, told the STAR only that the US side asked for the meeting and "we wished each other Merry Christmas."

In Beijing, the government said yesterday it was handling the cases of five Filipinos sentenced to death for drug offenses according to law.

"China's judiciary handled the cases of the five Philippine drug traffickers independently and in accordance with law," foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told reporters when asked about Manila's no-show at the Nobel rites in Norway.

"Their rights have been ensured and we have been following the conventions on consular affairs and regular Chinese laws and regulations," Jiang said. "We will update the Philippine side on the case in a timely manner and provide necessary assistance and convenience for Philippine consular officials."

Aquino said on Monday he would have an informal chat with Thomas and that there was no reason for the Philippines to apologize to the US for not sending a representative to the ceremony honoring Chinese dissident writer Liu Xiaobo.

"Certainly, we are trying to repair relations between China and the Philippines. We do not want to have another irritant coming along the way of Philippines and China relations," palace spokesman Edwin Lacierda said in a press briefing.

Lacierda said the decision was in the interest of the Filipinos and should not be connected to other issues like the new travel advisory issued by Hong Kong.

He said the Philippines' efforts to harmonize relations with China should actually be considered.

"The fact that we would not

want to irritate Philippines-China relations should have prompted the Hong Kong special administrative region not to issue that black travel advisory. But, again, we don't know where the basis of the Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) decision to issue that came from. Metro Manila is fine. Peace and order situation is fine so there's no reason for them to issue that black travel alert," Lacierda said.

Lacierda added that the Philippines had given assurance that the second phase of the incident investigation and review committee on the Aug. 23 hostage crisis would focus on institutional reforms.

"We're coming up with



Ambassador Harry Thomas Jr.

tourism police, we're coming up also with tourism courts. We are also finalizing the crisis manual, we have set up the presidential situation room — all these institutional recommendations are in place and are being done. So, insofar as our determination to provide safety for all our tourists, it's all there. We are

doing our part right now," Lacierda said.

"Again, we have started institutionalizing the recommendations of the IIRC. We have done our part. We are very, very confident that once they are all in place and some of them are already in place, that we would be able to prove to the tourists from around the world that we are a safe country to visit and we do hope that the tourists will not stop coming to visit us as well as all our balikbayans from abroad," he said.

He admitted though that the Philippines would need to do more to improve its relations with Hong Kong and Beijing.

"We need to assure the Hong Kong people since the Hong Kong residents were affected by the hostage-taking incident. We need to further

improve our relations with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Insofar as China is concerned, we have a good working relationship with them," Lacierda said.

But Lacierda said they could not tell for sure if China would accede to the Philippine request to spare the Filipinos on death row in China even after skipping the Nobel ceremonies.

"Again, it's dependent on the Chinese legal system. But again, this would at least smoothen the flow of relations between China and the Philippines. It will not provide further cause for strain between our countries. So we do hope and we pray that the letter of the President will be received favorably by the Chinese judges and by the Chinese government," Lacierda said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))



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## PHILIPPINE NEWS

# Government May Halt Deploying Workers to 100 Countries Next Year

by **Mayen Jaymalin**  
Thursday, Dec. 16, 2010

**M**ANILA, Philippines - The government may halt the deployment of Filipino workers in at least 100 countries next year.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) yesterday reported that only 85 foreign countries have been issued certification to hire Filipino workers.

"Among the list with the certification from the Department of Foreign Affairs were countries in the Middle East and



other major markets for Filipino workers," POEA chief Jennifer Manalili said.

Manalili noted that the DFA had been given until Nov. 24 to undertake assessment and issue certification to countries considered qualified to hire Filipino workers. The deadline has been

extended to Feb. 24.

"The certifications from the DFA are coming in although not in bulk so we hope the list would be completed prior to the deadline," Manalili pointed out.

Manalili also disclosed that the government is planning to send teams to countries with

OFWs to discuss and clarify the implication of the mandatory certification.

Under the newly amended Migrant Workers Law, the Philippines would not deploy Filipino workers to countries without the mandated certification from the DFA.

The DFA would only issue certification to foreign countries that can guarantee protection and welfare of Filipino workers.

Earlier, Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz reported that the government was not inclined to impose immediate deployment ban in countries considered "unqualified" to hire Filipino workers.

But a POEA official said they could not yet determine if the government would still allow deployment to countries without certification after the February 2011 deadline.

"We still have to wait and see what will happen, but the government is mandated to implement the law," the official explained.

The local recruitment industry had warned of massive decline in hiring of Filipino workers abroad with the implementation of the amended Migrant Workers Act.

Recruitment leaders noted that of the nearly 200 countries employing Filipino workers, very few are compliant with the requirements provided under the amended law. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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## Albay's 60-foot, Solar-powered Yule Tree Attracts Tourists

by **Cet Dematera**  
Monday, Dec. 13, 2010

**L**EGAZPI CITY, Philippines - Albay's 60-foot, solar-powered Christmas tree, equipped with stairs and viewing deck facing Mt. Mayon and overlooking this city's commercial district and the province's coastlines, continues to lure tourists who have described it as a mini Eiffel Tower.

Albay Gov. Joey Salceda said the giant Christmas tree is sending a message that the Yuletide season or other events could be celebrated without posing environmental hazards.

"In fact, we are contemplating on making this structure permanent and instead re-decorate it depending on the occasion being observed or celebrated such as heart-shaped decors on Valentine's Day," Salceda told THE STAR.

## Arum Eyes Early Bout for Pacman

by **Abac Cordero**  
Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2010

**M**ANILA, Philippines - If he could have his way, Bob Arum wants it done as soon as possible.

But that's a big if.

The chief of Top Rank Promotions, in the country to help Manny Pacquiao decide on his next fight, was scheduled to meet the Filipino ring icon over dinner last night at Shangri-La Makati.

Provincial tourism officer Jose Briones said local and foreign tourists are delighted with the giant Christmas tree built by Air Force soldiers from aviation fuel drums.

Standing near the Albay Astrodome, the towering Yuletide tree was lighted last Wednesday, officially marking the kickoff of Salceda's brainchild, Green Christmas, or Christmas without risks.

Briones said the stairs built around the Christmas tree and the viewing deck at the top are among the unique features attracting tourists.

To avoid accidents, Briones said they only allow two foreigners to climb the stairs, and four persons at the viewing deck at a time.

Because of the long queues, Briones said they only allow a group of four only up to 10 minutes at the viewing deck. During power outages, the giant

Christmas tree will stand out more, as it will be the only structure glittering in the landscape, it being solar-powered, he added.

Joive Yee, a Bicol University student who just returned from a free tour of Germany because of his environmental protection advocacy through his Radyo Berde (Green Radio) program, said the solar-powered Christmas tree, which uses recyclable materials, is a novel and pioneering Yuletide symbol.

"When I was on its top, I felt so proud that I am an Albayano who always takes the initiative in protecting the environment," Yee told THE STAR.

Several government agencies and non-government groups in Bicol and even in other parts of the country have signified their interest to adopt Albay's Green Christmas initiative. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

Arum said Pacquiao already has different fight proposals in his hands, those involving possible fights with Shane Mosley, Juan Manuel Marquez or Andre Berto on April 16 at the MGM Grand.

Arum was asked if their discussions would take days or weeks.

"Maybe half an hour," he said over the phone yesterday from his hotel in Makati City.

But Pacquiao doesn't seem to be in a hurry, and in fact he

had wanted May as the month he'd return to action. It's just that Arum is saying that April is the best time to do it.

Arum arrived yesterday morning from the United States to discuss the immediate plans of the pound-for-pound champion who will also throw a grand birthday party in General Santos City this coming Friday.

Pacquiao turns 32 in three days, and while age may be catching up on him, there's no

(continued on page 13)

## LEGAL NOTES



By Reuben S. Seguritan

## Changes to Immigrant Visa Services in Manila

who have previously received a visa appointment notification should not continue with their medical exam and interview appointment at this time. When their cases become current, the applicants will receive notification on how to proceed with their application.

The announcement explains that under the law, immigrant visa numbers must be made available strictly in the chronological order of the priority dates and that the numerical limitation cannot be waived in any individual's case, regardless of the circumstances.

The cut-off date for the 2B preference moved back from September 1, 2002 to March 1, 2000. The 2B category refers to unmarried sons and daughters (21 years or older) of lawful permanent residents.

For the 3rd family preference, the cut-off date retrogressed from March 1, 1995 to July 1, 1992. Married sons and daughters of U.S. citizens fall under this category.

Priority cut-off dates for the 4th preference category moved back from April 1, 1991 to January 1, 1988. This category refers to brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens.

There is no reliable way to predict the movement of the cut-off date, which can advance, remain at a standstill, regress or even become completely unavailable from month to month.

Immigrant visa applicants whose appointments have not been scheduled through the National Visa Center may request a visa appointment either by calling (632) 982-5555 or by going online at the Visa Information and Appointment Service

at <http://www.ustravel-docs.com/ph>. For any questions, those who are present in the U.S. may contact the Visa Information and Appointment Service at telephone number (214) 571-1600 from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. EST.

Visa Information and Appointment Service representatives can provide information on visa appointment-related inquiries only. Inquiries on a specific case may be directed to the Immigrant Visa (IV) Unit by email at [IVManilaReplies@state.gov](mailto:IVManilaReplies@state.gov), by fax at (632) 301-2000, and by phone at the Inquiry Line at (632) 301-2000 ext. 5184 or 5185.

Immigrant visa applicants who have scheduled visa appointments must visit the online appointment website to register their delivery address.

Returning resident visa applicants are also required to book an interview appointment

by visiting the online appointment website or by calling the Visa Call Center.

The authorized courier service provider is 2GO commercial courier. Applicants who have been issued visas have the option of picking up the visa at a 2GO branch or delivered at their designated address. The delivery will be for no additional cost. Applicants should also use 2GO to return documents to the Immigrant Visa Unit.

Finally, applicants who were refused a visa under 221(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act prior to December 1, 2010 must submit the required documentation, along with the refusal sheet, at any 2GO branch.

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)

discussed in a previous article that due to the high demand for visa numbers there has been a retrogression of some Philippine family preference categories from the cut-off dates stated in last month's visa bulletin. As a result of the retrogression, many visa applicants whose priority dates were already current under the November 2010 visa bulletin will now have to wait longer.

In a recent announcement, the U.S. Embassy in Manila advised that applicants affected by the retrogression and

## MAINLAND NEWS



Pacman doing one of the things he loves – singing



Pacman serenading his adoring fans

## Pacquiao Hosts Post Fight Party at Lake Tahoe

Philippine boxing champ Manny Pacquiao's recent decisive win against Mexican opponent Antonio Margarito was cause to celebrate.

Pacquiao, his band and about 1,000 fans celebrated the victory with a post-fight party on November 16, 2010 at the South Shore Room of Harrah's Lake Tahoe. During the three-hour evening event, Manny gra-

ciously took time to meet and greet his fans. He performed 20 songs on stage for fans, many of them calling out his name.

Also performing were the MP Band, Lito Camo and Madonna Decena. The event was a success thanks to Harrah's and Harvey's Lake Tahoe, Prime Media Unlimited and sponsors including international money transfer company

MoneyGram.

Pacquiao dominated his fight against Margarito, earning a unanimous decision over the Mexican fighter. His victory was his eighth title in as many divisions. After the victory party, Pacquiao resumed his duties as a congressman representing Sarangani Province in the Philippines.

## Joseph M. Zobian, M.D.



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(from page 12, ARUM...)

stopping him from doing what he does best – fight.

Arum said he wants two fights for Pacquiao for 2011, and it starts with the one in April.

"It starts tonight," said Arum of his talks with Pacquiao, his trainer, Freddie Roach, and adviser, Mike Koncz.

Arum said he wants it done ASAP.

"Definitely," said Arum,

who flies home to Las Vegas on the 19th.

"I need to know before I go back home. Because we need to work on the dates, the schedule," he added.

As of the moment, however, Arum can't say who's leading the race.

"I don't know. I haven't talked to Manny. It's all up to him," he said. ([www.philstar.com](http://www.philstar.com))

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## PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE



ILOKO  
By Amado I. Yoro

## Ti Adbiento, Ti Pammasangbay, Ti Selebrasion ti Paskua

ti Prinsipe ti Kappia, ti Mangisalakán, ti Mannubbot, ti Silaw, ti Dalan ken ti Biag..."

"Dikag abuteng," kinuna ti anghel. "Yegko kadakayo ti naimbag a damag, wen, dakayo ken dagiti amin a tattao. Ita met la nga aldaw ditoy ili ni David, maipanggay ni Cristo nga Apo a mangisalakán kadakayo. Dagitoy ti pagilasinanyo, masarakanyo ti mayasa nga Ubing a nabungon iti lamping ken nakaidida iti kullung!" [Lucas 2:10]

Anian a pateg ti Sagut iti paskua itoy Ubing a Mangisalakán. Kadatoy managbaso a lubong, yeg kadatayo ti Nasantuan a Dios ti mayasa a pagraceran ken pagtaldan iti panagayak ken iti kinasin-aw a panagpuspuso.

Wen, uray adayo pay ngamin ti paskua iti Disiembre tunggal tawen, addan ti rikna ken pulso ti panawen a ipasimudaag ti panagsagana ti pamilia: dagiti arkos ken dekorasion, dagiti kansion ken samiweng iti radio ken television, Pasien ti kaaduan, aglalo iti lubong a nakristiantuan a paseten ti pammasangbay ti Naindaklan a Maladaga - ni Kristo Hesus kadagiti sagsagut para man iti pamilia, gagayyem, ubbing ken nataengkan kas mangipaneknek ti kinapateg ti sinngat iti paskua ken iti espiritu iti panagyaman.

Kadagiti kaaduan a simbaan, maaisanga dagiti programa ken no dadduma adda dagiti nagaget a mangidrama [reenactment of the Holy Birth in the Holy Place] iti Pagteng idiy

Belen wenno Bethlehem, kas iti nakaiuanan a galad ken pammati. Adda dagiti angak ken kas Maria ken Jose, dagiti Tallo nga Ari [Mago], a nangursurot ti Dakkel a Bituen a nangitrong kadagitoy iti Nanumo ngem Nasantuan a Lugar nga awitda dagiti sagutda a Balitok, Insenso ken Mira, kadagidi panawen ni Ari Herodes.

Kaaduan met a pamilia [ken grupo] ti mapan kadagiti masnop a simbaanda iti tengnga iti rabii a panaginallawat ti Disiembre 24/25 a ditoy ti managan ti Misa de Gallo wenno Noche Buena, a pasien ti adu, ditoy ti mayasa a paset a kasagradiun, kasamayan a pannakapaliid iti kaungan a paset ti paskua.

Patient ti kaaduan a rambakan ti paskua kas paset ti duo-

gan ken tawid a pammati a Kristiano, dagiti naringan ken nakaiageran nga ugali, galad, tradision, kultura, kustomre, ken aw-awid dagiti immuna a kaputotan a Kristiano ta dagitoy ti nagbiaganda a dimmur-as ken imaddang kadagiti nagallallowat a henerasion - kas naigaladan a tawid: adda, kananakem, ken dadduma pay a pakabulkan ti mayasa a Kristiano.

Dadduma nga aramiden dagitoy a pampamilia, organisasion ken gimong: panagpaskua kadagiti balbalay [house-to-house caroling]; parol contest, christmas tree contest, family reunion, membership reunion kadagiti organisasion, maangay no dadduma ti pasala, pakontes, ken ti narabak a programa mainaig amin iti paskua.

Kunada a paskua iti amin a tiempo kas panaginmayat ken

(continued on page 15)

Wen, uray adayo pay ngamin ti paskua iti Disiembre tunggal tawen, addan ti rikna ken pulso ti panawen a ipasimudaag ti panagsagana ti pamilia: dagiti arkos ken dekorasion, dagiti kansion ken samiweng iti radio ken television, Pasien ti kaaduan, aglalo iti lubong a nakristiantuan a paseten ti pammasangbay ti Naindaklan a Maladaga - ni Kristo Hesus kadagiti sagsagut para man iti pamilia, gagayyem, ubbing ken nataengkan kas mangipaneknek ti kinapateg ti sinngat iti paskua ken iti espiritu iti panagyaman.

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Patient ti kaaduan a rambakan ti paskua kas paset ti duo-

## MAINLAND NEWS

## SBA Extends Patriot Express Loan Initiative

A popular initiative that in nearly four years provided over \$560 million in loan guarantees to 7,000 veterans to start or expand their small businesses is being renewed for three more years, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Patriot Express, a streamlined pilot loan product based on the agency's SBA Express program, offers an enhanced guaranty and interest rate on loans to small businesses owned by veterans, reservists and their spouses. Over the past two years, due in part to the American Recovery

and Reinvestment Act, loan volume increased dramatically.

According to SBA Administrator Karen Mills, the loan program provides resources for veterans and their families to pursue their dreams as entrepreneurs and at the same time will help create jobs and drive eco-

nommic growth.

"America's veterans have the leadership skills and experience to become successful entrepreneurs and small business owners," Mills says. "Renewing it means we can continue to fulfill our commitment to the men and women who serve our country by giving them every opportunity for success."

Patriot Express was launched in June 2007 to expand within the more than \$1 billion in loans SBA guarantees annually for veteran-owned businesses.

Patriot Express loans are offered by SBA's network of participating lenders nationwide and feature one of SBA's fastest turnaround times for loan approvals.

Patriot Express loans are available for up to \$500,000. The loans can be used for most business purposes, including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real-estate purchases. Local SBA district offices can provide lists of Patriot Express lenders in their areas. Details on the initiative can be found at [www.sba.gov/patriotexpress](http://www.sba.gov/patriotexpress).

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## GLOBALNEWS

# Probe Sought on Trafficking of Pinoys to Haiti

**M**ANILA, Philippines – Filipino workers are continuously leaving the country and sneaking even into cholera-stricken Haiti in the hope of getting high paying jobs.

The Blas Ople Policy Center yesterday sought an investigation into the trafficking of Filipinos to Haiti and to pinpoint certain patterns in recruitment and illegal deployment.

Susan Ople, head of the Blas Ople Policy Center, expressed concern over the trafficking of Filipinos to impoverished countries such as Haiti where the victims are left to the care of the small Filipino community there.

"Some of these workers were deployed by a second agency, not the original agency that accepted their applications. In some instances, the trafficked victims were received by sub-contractors or labor suppliers masquerading as legitimate foreign employers," she said.

Ople said the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration must improve and strengthen its regulatory functions, otherwise it may end up as an enabler or accomplice of human trafficking syndicates.

She also called on President Aquino to prioritize the passage of the amendments to the Anti-Trafficking Act in order to obtain justice for trafficked victims since it includes specific provisions against forced labor and involuntary servitude.

"These amendments are already embodied in a committee report of the Senate, and hearings have also been conducted in the House of Representatives based on a privilege speech delivered by Rep. Manny Pacquiao," Ople said.

While acknowledging that both houses of Congress are about to go on Christmas break, the



Blas Ople Center said that the President's commitment to certify these amendments as urgent would ensure that the full weight of government – involving all three branches – is behind the global fight against human trafficking.

The proposed amendments to the anti-trafficking act, as proposed by civil society groups, include the removal of the confidentiality clause on the identity and modus operandi of the accused in trafficking cases, provisions regarding attempted trafficking in persons, and acts of trafficking for involuntary servitude and forced labor.

The amendments also address the issue of child trafficking to include the barter, sale and trade of children. Meanwhile, local manpower agencies expressed their support for the Mandatory Insurance Coverage provision of the new Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 2009.

Recruiters said they are not against the insurance coverage, but are merely requesting the Insurance Commission to review the insurance premium to make it reasonable and affordable for the recruitment agencies. (www.philstar.com)

## PHILIPPINE LANGUAGE (cont.)

(from page 14, **TLABIENTO**...)

panagkikinnaawaatan. Adda ita uneg ti puso ken nakemtaayo ti pudpudno nga espiritu ti paskua. Ken mabalinatayo met a mayanak iti mayasa a panagbalibaliw, panagluplos, ti bukod nga aramid, ugali, wagas ti panagbiag ken pannaklangen iti pada a tao ken iti Imatang ti Dios.

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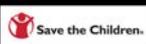


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