



NEWS EDITION

APRIL 26, 2014

HAWAII'S ONLY WEEKLY FILIPINO-AMERICAN NEWSPAPER

FIL-AMS URGE AQUINO TO ASK OBAMA'S SUPPORT FOR DRONE TECHNOLOGY, TPS APPROVAL

by HFC Staff



U.S. President Barack Obama with USP4GG Chairwoman Loida Nicolas Lewis

In anticipation of President Barack Obama's visit to the Philippines, leaders of the US Pinoys for Good Governance (USP4GG) have called on President Benigno S. Aquino III to persuade Obama to approve the Philippines' request for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to Philippine nationals and to provide drone technology to the Philippines which will help against China's aggression in grabbing Philippine territory and valuable marine and energy resources.

USP4GG is a U.S.-based organization comprised of well-respected business executives and professionals. Chairperson Loida Nicolas Lewis is a prominent activist, entrepreneur and philanthropist, while President Rodel Rodis was former president of the San Francisco Community

(continued on page 4)

OBAMA VISIT TO PHL, ASIA SEEN AS COUNTERWEIGHT TO CHINA

By Elaine Kurtenbach



Obama and Aquino

TOKYO — President Barack Obama's travels through Asia in coming days aim to reassure partners about the renewed U.S. commitment to the region, with an eye both to China's rising assertiveness and the fast-growing markets that are the center of gravity for global growth.

The question: Will it be enough?

Nearly seven months after he cancelled an Asian tour due to the U.S. government shutdown, Obama's failure to prevent Russia from annexing Crimea has

(continued on page 6)

JAKARTA, MANILA RANK HIGH AMONG 34 CITIES



JAKARTA

MANILA

MANILA, Philippines - Manila is second among five cities in Southeast Asia with the highest potential of getting much better in the next two decades, a report from the Wall Street Journal quoting US-based consulting firm A.T. Kearney showed.

In the report, Manila was next to Jakarta on the

(continued on page 4)

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS



Knights of Rizal Honor Consul General Torres

5

LEGAL NOTES



Employment Authorization for Abuse Victims

13

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EDITORIAL

Keep Middle And Working Class America Strong

Already in 2014, we are seeing people's revolutions in the Ukraine and Venezuela. Ongoing people's movements still very much unsettled are taking place in Syria, Egypt, other parts of the Middle East and Europe.

The United States itself had a potential time bomb that was quietly disarmed, for now, in the 2011-2012 Occupy Movement.

What Americans ought to pay closer attention to and must learn from these revolutions occurring globally is this single-most important message: "Keep the ideal of equality a working reality. Keep America's middle and working class robust."

The ideal of equality cannot just be a selling point for manufacturing peace among the masses. But there must be quantified and qualitative proof among the middle- and working classes (the majority of the people) that their lives are in fact fairly secured and could potentially get better through hard work, education, and constant political reform.

This hope for a better life is what brought millions of immigrants to the United States; and is the fuel that kept running all great civilizations in history, until that sacred trust no longer had validity.

HISTORY OF AMERICA'S MIDDLE CLASS

The advent of the middle class in the U.S. is a relatively new phenomenon. Historians believe a truly middle class society in which greater equality existed emerged after World War II, the generation of the baby boomers. Economic measures that supported this belief was the rise in homeownership, higher employment, stable inflation, and general feelings of well-being among the masses.

For many middle aged adults today, they can easily draw from their own personal family experiences as proof of better times during the baby boomers' generation. Our parents, and practically all our uncles and aunts owned homes, had steady full-time employment if they chose to work, had ample discretionary income after having had paid basic bills. Income distribution in America was at its highest and opportunities flourished.

So for a good 40 some years since WWII, Hawaii and the rest of the U.S. enjoyed a stronger economy in terms of inflation and closer to equal income distribution.



This was made possible because after the Great Depression of the 1929 and ensuing decade, America's working majority had the political will to demand change and greater equality, and eventually got it through engineered economic policies of the New Deal that included for the first time powerful influence by government to improve the lives of the masses through reforms, social safety nets such as Social Security, massive government projects that stimulated job growth, and fair regulations on industry and commercial activity.

It wasn't free market forces and a blind trust in some invisible hand that improved the lives of working Americans, as Republicans since President Ronald Reagan would like us to believe.

In fact studies show that inequality on average have risen under Republicans and been more stable under Democrats. It was under the two Bush presidents tenure and

Reagan that we saw gaps in income distribution in the U.S. become wider.

Republican policies that widened the gap of income distribution were deregulation, union busting, favorable taxation for the wealthiest Americans, corporate welfare, and a push for economic globalism.

STATUS OF TODAY'S MIDDLE CLASS AND INCOME DISTRIBUTION

The middle class today is shrinking. A study from Pew Research Center found that the middle class incomes -- defined as Americans with incomes between \$39,000 and \$118,000 -- is falling

In the last 12 years, incomes for the wealthiest Americans quadrupled even as their tax rates were halved; CEO and executive compensation has grown 126 times faster over the last three decades than the average worker pay.

A 2010 Census Bureau study found that incomes for the bottom tier of Americans fell four times faster than they did for the wealthiest after this latest recession.

Collectively, the bottom 90 percent of Americans own just a little over half of the nation's entire wealth; the wealthiest 0.01 percent of Americans own 5 percent.

PEOPLE'S UPRISINGS DON'T JUST SUDDENLY HAPPEN

Fortunately, the U.S. is still economically prosperous enough to keep

(continued on page 3)



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by Emil GUILLERMO

Aloha Democracy? Gutting Campaign Finance Reform Changes Real Nature of System

One of the issues that came up during my time on the editorial board of the old *Honolulu Advertiser* was the nomination of Samuel Alito to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2006.

The significance of the conservative Alito's ideological bent is a reminder of how the power of a president to nominate a judge can have as large an impact on society as just about anything a president can do.

Presidents, as we all know, are limited to two terms. Their libraries may live forever but their time in office is limited. Supreme Court justices are seemingly forever. And now we are paying a real price for Alito.

As one of the five Republican appointees be-

hind the recent McCutcheon decision, the ideological bent of an activist conservative court has been completed. It began with the Citizens United issue in 2009, in what was a sly bit of court activism. Indeed, the issue was originally about whether corporations could fund an anti-Hillary Clinton campaign movie. But that was considered too small and the court suggested the plaintiffs come back for a rehearing to argue the much broader issue of unfettered corporate funding.

They did and in January 2010, the court ruled infamously that corporations were individuals and entitled to spend as a form of political expression. This year, the corollary to Citizens' United, McCutcheon lifted any limitations on individual campaign contributions.

It thus makes politics all cash and carry. If you have cash, you win. Wealthy individuals now feel uninhib-

ited to use their money to buy—excuse me—support, their preferred candidates.

The green lights are on all the time. There are no red lights for the wealthy. And if you're not one of the wealthy, then you are on the margins. Welcome to the new marginal democracy, where all people count but some people count even more. And some count less.

There's the danger. With wealth and income concentrated in the hands of the few, the agenda will be set by those with the means. Want to lower taxes? Want bailouts, an end to deregulation? All the above coincidentally lead to bigger profits.

Capitalism is now synonymous with democracy. Give to a campaign and let the political process work for you. Forget it if you are poor, need a hand or some support. It's not that kind of democracy anymore.

Consider the words of

Robert Reich, the former Labor Secretary and now a UC-Berkeley economist with the numbers: "That the richest 400 Americans now have more wealth than the poorest 150 million Americans put together, the wealthiest 1 percent own over 35 percent of the nation's private assets, and 95 percent of all the economic gains since the start of the recovery in 2009 have gone to the top 1 percent—all of this is cause for worry, and not just because it means the middle class lacks the purchasing power necessary to get the economy out of first gear.

"It is also worrisome because such great concentrations of wealth so readily compound themselves through politics, rigging the game in their favor and against everyone else."

The new democratic order was on display in Wisconsin immediately after the Citizens United ruling and the lifting of that state's 100-year ban on corporate spending. It led to millions of dollars from

the infamous Koch Brothers and other wealthy donors to candidate Scott Walker in the mid-term elections of 2010. Nationwide, it led to the rise of the Tea Party.

Walker went on to win the gubernatorial election with a huge spending advantage. And then he began to reward his corporate donors with union busting efforts.

By March 2011, a law was passed eliminating public employee bargaining rights in Wisconsin. It was the first big domino. Michigan became the 24th "Right to Work" non-union state in 2012. The Supreme Court just heard arguments to strip Illinois's public unions of the right to collect dues.

Thanks to an activist conservative court's vision of democracy, the climate has definitely changed. The only question now is when the sentiment will take hold in Hawaii. Or if the state can manage to preserve some aloha in democracy. ■

EMIL GUILLERMO is a journalist and commentator based in California. He was on the editorial board of the *Honolulu Advertiser*.

EDITORIAL

(cont. from page 2; KEEP...)

the middle and working masses content. That is the real reason the Occupy Movement fizzled. But the wealthiest Americans must step lightly and realize the delicate road ahead. In order for them to enjoy continued prosperity, or for that matter for the entire country to move forward economically, it's high time for morality to be interjected in the way we conduct business, and that means, good, old-fashioned sharing and establishing self-controlled limits of profits to be reaped for themselves. If our legs no longer can run, our body goes nowhere.

This is the type of moral argument and historic framework that ought to be infused in the debates with regard to specific issues such as raising the minimum wage or health-care reform or preserving Social Security or restructuring taxes. Ultimately, these types of issues have as their goal to bring balance and stability to our middle class, working class and entire country.

It's clear these social insurances come at a cost. It's also that we live in a time of real revolution in which the alternative to do nothing could be even more disastrous for everyone from the top 1 percent of income earners to the bottom 90 percent.

What we've seen from the great civilizations of the past from Egypt, to the Roman empire and feudal Europe, is a pattern that led to their demise: imbalanced concentration of wealth and power; decentralization of territories, and seething discontent among the poor masses. Newer empires arose not necessarily because of greater wealth, but they offered a society with hope for a better life and a feeling of fairness. Interestingly, two countries on the rise and expected to have the largest economies in the world in the near future -- China and Russia -- are seeing their middle class expanding, not shrinking as in the U.S.

There's no doubt that America is still a great country in so many facets to mention. Americans can help to keep our country strong if we were to be more open to one basic rule that we all grew up practicing in our own families: "Look after on another and learn to share because it is the right thing to do for everyone's benefit." ■



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(cont. from page 1; **FIL-AMS ...**)

College District. Atty. Ted Laguatan is the organization's spokesperson and legal counsel.

USP4GG has a chapter based in the Marianas. The USP4GG Marianas Chapter for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and Guam is chaired by Celia B. Lamkin, MD. Hawaii falls under her jurisdiction.

The USP4GG expressed its support for the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) which allows for greater rotational U.S. military presence in the Philippines.

"China is engaged in blatantly taking over Philippine territories and valuable resources that rightfully belong to the Filipino people using the power of its military superiority," says Lewis. "This is plain and simple immoral, bullying tactics which civilized nations should not do. Realistically, the Philippines by itself cannot resist China's aggression. We need help from the U.S. and the United Nations."

OBAMA VISIT

President Obama is scheduled to visit the Philippines on Monday, April 28.

His two-day visit is the last stop on a trip to Asia that has included stops in Japan, South Korea and Malaysia.

Topics to be discussed between Aquino and Obama include political and security cooperation, trade and investments expansion, tourism and development cooperation, deepening people-to-people ties, and the rehabilitation of areas affected by Super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan).

Obama's visit is expected to bring renewed attention to the U.S.' alliance with the Philippines, particularly on defense cooperation and maritime security given the Philippines' on-going territorial dispute with China.

Lewis and Rodis have appealed to President Aquino to ask the U.S. for more effective weaponry to deter China's aggression. U.S. and NATO forces are currently utilizing drone technology in various military operations and anti-terrorism campaigns. Pilotless drone aircraft, which can be controlled from military stations hundreds of miles away, are capable of surveillance and carrying out rocket and bomb attacks.

"This can be a great equalizer against China's

bullying tactics," Lewis says. "If the Philippines had access to this technology, we could effectively utilize it to keep China at bay without endangering the lives of our soldiers. The cost will be less than that spent for jet planes, ships or helicopters."

Obama's visit comes as the Philippines and the U.S. are finalizing the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement that would provide American troops greater access to military bases in the country. Angered by news of the deal, nearly 100 left-wing activists picketed the U.S. embassy in Manila a few days before Obama's arrival. They were promptly dispersed by water cannons fired by riot police.

There have already been eight rounds of negotiations over the past year between Manila and Washington over the accord, which would allow more U.S. troops, aircraft and ships to be temporarily stationed in selected Philippine military camps as a counterweight to China and as a standby disaster-response force. Approximately 500 U.S. troops are currently based in the southern Philippines. Since 2002, the U.S.

military has provided anti-terrorism training for Filipino forces battling al Qaeda-linked militants.

USP4GG's leaders support greater American military presence on Philippine soil—troops, ships, aircraft and humanitarian equipment. Currently, the U.S. is limited to annual joint military exercises and port visits.

"This new agreement with the U.S. is simply a legitimate self-defense move," says Lewis. "Leftist groups connected to China are using the sovereignty card to prevent the presence of U.S. troops in Philippine soil, when it is in fact China who is clearly infringing on Philippine sovereignty."

Most observers say that increased U.S. presence may force China to exercise more caution due to increased U.S. military presence in the region.

TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS

Another issue that USP4GG leaders urge Aquino to bring to Obama's attention is a request for the U.S. to designate the Philippines as a Temporary Protected Status (TPS). TPS was granted to Haiti in 2010

as a result of a magnitude 7.0 earthquake that similarly took thousands of lives and devastated the country. Designed as an emergency measure for nations facing extreme hardships, such as those caused by natural disasters, TPS would allow Filipino nationals without permanent resident status to continue to stay in the U.S. and provide working authorization temporarily until TPS status ends.

For the 300,000 undocumented Filipinos in the U.S., TPS means they would be able to legally work and send much-needed money back to family, friends and aid groups in the Philippines to help in the recovery efforts of Super Typhoon Haiyan.

Lewis expects a TPS designation to significantly increase remittances which in turn will positively affect the Philippines' economy and increase its dollar reserves.

In the past, remittances from Filipinos working abroad have helped to boost the Philippine economy. In 2012, Filipinos around the world sent home a record \$23.8 billion, according to a report from the

(continued on page 6)

(cont. from page 1; **JAKARTA ...**)

list of 34 cities in low- and middle-income countries most likely to take the global lead in key areas from business to workforce health and security.

The A.T. Kearney ranking said Manila was followed by Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

The other Southeast Asian cities on the list were Kuala Lumpur, which was 10th followed by Bangkok at 21st and Ho Chi Minh City at 29th spot.

In its ranking of cities, A.T. Kearney cited Jakarta's increasingly stable political system and emphasis on addressing income inequality and environmental concerns.

But while Jakarta was first on the list, Manila appeared to have more prom-

ise, according to Euben Paracuelles, Nomura's senior economist for Southeast Asia.

"Manila I think has done a little bit better over a relatively short period of time," he said.

"Assuming they sustain this reform momentum, that bodes very well," Paracuelles said in the WSJ report.

He said the upcoming presidential election in Indonesia could prove to be a significant stumbling block to Jakarta's globalization, depending on poll outcome. In Indonesia's recent legislative elections, the party thought to dominate the polls got less votes than anticipated.

Analysts said the development has created the need for multiple party

coalitions, which in the past have held up policy-making, the WSJ report said.

If a large, clunky coalition leads the next government, it could continue to delay much-needed reforms, the WSJ said quoting analysts.

The Philippines is basking in its improving economy and greater investor confidence resulting from the Aquino administration's good governance and anti-corruption efforts.

Economic growth in the Philippines was at 7.2 percent last year, second only to China's 7.7 percent in Asia. The growth came despite devastation caused by a deadly earthquake and by Super Typhoon Yolanda late in the year.

The World Bank expects this year's growth to

be at 6.6 percent amid a slowdown across Asia.

In its survey, A.T. Kearney took into account a wide range of metrics in determining its rankings – including how developed infrastructure was in each city, as well as ease of doing business, income inequality and environmental stability.

Jakarta scored most highly on measures involving its population, such as income equality, while improvements in stability and security also bumped it up the table, the WSJ report said, adding that scores were determined by evaluating how cities progressed between 2008 and 2013 and extrapolating to measure the likelihood of improvement in the next two decades.

While Jakarta is known

for its mind-boggling traffic, infrastructure has seen much improvement over the past five years.

Its governor Joko Widodo has been credited for implementing a low-cost healthcare scheme and dramatically raising the minimum wage.

While Bangkok was ranked as Southeast Asia's cultural capital, it ranked low on other factors mainly due to political and economic stagnation, made worse by recent political instability caused by ongoing anti-government protests, the report said.

"Long period of political uncertainty" has tarnished Bangkok's image so much so that it now ranks behind Caracas in Valenzuela and just above Casablanca in Morocco. (www.philstar.com) ■

NAIA: The Continuing Insult to Ninoy Aquino

CTALK
by Cito BELTRAN

Filipinos celebrate their defeats, commemorate executions and assassinations with holidays and fiestas, and build shrines and monuments to their heroes only to turn them into dumps and symbols of the Filipino's inability to sustain and maintain what should be a place of reverence and honor.

Luneta has turned from a place of execution to a place of worship or protests. EDSA from the beginnings of a true highway (Hi-way 54) to a metropolitan interchange, to a place of protest to a highway where commuters and drivers are now constantly protesting the constant blocking and re-blocking of what is suppose to be a highway. The Libingan Ng Mga Bayani has become another "tahanan ng mga walang bahay" or a squatter's colony to the point that the AFP now has to

fence the place and post bills telling the public that the area is a National Shrine. NAIA, from being the home of Asia's first airline, to becoming the place of assassination/execution of Ninoy Aquino, featuring the outline of the slain hero drawn out like a crime scene that never changed after 30 years.

But unlike Rizal's Luneta and Epifanio De los Santos' EDSA which are being continuously repaired and developed, the international tribute to Ninoy Aquino, namely the NAIA or Ninoy Aquino International Airport, has turned into a daily insult and dishonor to the memory of Ninoy Aquino not to mention the flying public and all taxpayers. From a crime scene for a couple of assassinations and one hanging, the NAIA has turned into a national monument to criminal neglect. Yes it is criminal to name such a decrepit "international airport" after a national hero, it is criminal to



Sweltering heat and a non-functioning air-conditioning system plague departing passengers at the NAIA Terminal 1 on Tuesday, April 15, causing at least one case of fainting. |Photo by Ariel Fernandez

charge terminal fees for terminals that don't have regularly functioning air conditioning systems, don't have regularly functioning X-ray machines, claims to be international but neither has the size, facilities nor technology to operate and sustain at truly international standards.

I understand and appreciate the dilemma of President Noyonoy Aquino who, like his mother Cory, finds his hands tied because of his being President and be-

cause he is an "Aquino." Because she was Ninoy's wife and the President then, Cory Aquino realized the curse of public office and public opinion that prevented her from moving heaven and earth to find the mastermind behind Ninoy Aquino's assassination/execution. Today the same curse rears its ugly head preventing the President from taking a direct hand at fixing and turning the NAIA into a proper tribute to his father as well as a standard of excellence for the flying public.

Perhaps the only answer to the problem is to let someone else do it. We've all heard the phrase: "Put your money where your mouth is." Well, from what I've heard there are more than enough people willing to do that, in particular Philippine Airlines and its

President Ramon Ang who, after several "ignores from the ignorant" has renewed his offer to build an airport but this time with a different approach. During a birthday lunch, Ramon Ang made a few points clear: To begin with, PAL is no longer pushing for a new or improved NAIA because they have something to gain, they are doing it because they have a lot to lose from regional and international competitions in terms of facilities and passenger handling at NAIA especially after the ASEAN integration takes effect in 2015. The fear is if airport facilities are not improved fast and furious, the market may start to drum up so much negative publicity that even the DOT's now static tourism campaign won't convince people to fly into the World's Worst Airport: NINOY AQUINO International Airport. Operationally, the local airlines are "burning money" on fuel while waiting to take off or land at NAIA which all adds up to delays and customer dissatisfaction.

Instead of a privately built and operated international airport in some still undisclosed location, Ramon Ang has come up with the suggestion to expand the NAIA

(continued on page 8)

HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Knights Of Rizal Honor Consul General Torres

by S. COLMENARES, JR., Ph.D.



Standing (l to r): Sirs Richard Ancog, Ben Caberos, Clem Bautista, Gerhardt Walsh, Allan Alvarez, Felipe Tan, Florante Pumaras, Eric Casino, Danny Villaruz and Darwin Arellano. Seating (l to r): Sirs Jun Colmenares, Julius Torres, Arnold Villafuerte, Raymund Liongson and Ben Sanchez.

THE KNIGHTS OF RIZAL-HAWAII CHAPTER BADE FAREWELL and honored Philippine Consul General Julius Torres during a *despedida* dinner at Max's of Manila at Dillingham on Monday, April 21, 2014.

Consul General Torres is leaving Hawaii at the end of this month to return to the home office in Manila. He has served as consul general in Hawaii since 2011. His former foreign service assignments include Bucharest, Romania; Saipan; Brussels, Belgium; Canberra, Australia; Palau; Koror; Toronto, Canada; and

Amman, Jordan. A member of the Knights of Rizal, the consul general was honored by the members of the local chapter by exalting him to the third degree of the order, with the rank of Knight Commander of Rizal (KCR). His promotion, which was recommended by the Hawaii Chapter commander, the Western USA area commander, and the USA regional commander, was approved by the Supreme Council of the Order of the Knights of Rizal in recognition of his exemplary performance and contributions to the

Knights of Rizal, the Philippine government, and the Filipino people. The exaltation ceremony was conducted by Sir Serafin "Jun" Colmenares, KGOR, area commander for Western USA, Sir Arnold Villafuerte, KCR, chapter commander, and Sir Raymund Liongson, KGOR, past chapter commander.

In his response, Sir Julius Torres said he was touched by the honor bestowed on him and pledged that he will continue to support and work toward the goals for which the Knights of Rizal was founded - spreading the ideals of Dr. Jose Rizal, working toward peaceful change, and promoting education especially among the youth. He wished the chapter success and more power.

The event was attended by officers and members of the Knights of Rizal-Hawaii Chapter, their ladies, and guests. ■



Michael A. McMann, M.D.

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UH-Manoa to Host Women in Journalism Forum

NEWSPAPERS ARE A PREDOMINANTLY MALE-DOMINATED profession, with women accounting for only 36 percent of the staff at a typical daily newspaper, according to a recent study by the Women's

Media Center. A forum entitled "Women in Journalism: Setting the Standard" will be held at the University of Hawaii-Manoa campus to discuss the disparity. The event is scheduled for April

29, 2014 from 6 pm to 7:30 pm at the Architecture Auditorium.

A panel will discuss the challenges that women face trying to break into the field. Panelists include Civil Beat Editor Patti Epler,

Hawaii Public Radio Executive Producer Beth-Ann Kozlovich, KITV television news reporters Catherine Cruz and Denby Fawcett.

The forum is open and free to the public but organizers encourage the public

to RSVP online at <http://bit.ly/1g9ZDvD>. The event is sponsored by the UH Dean's Office and Political Science Department, Bishop & Co., Women's Fund of Hawaii, Scholars Strategy Network of Hawaii and Civil Beat. ■

HEADLINES

(cont. from page 1; **FIL-AMS** ...)

World Bank. Of this amount, more than 40 percent, or \$9.5 billion, comes from Filipinos in the U.S. After the devastating typhoon, remittances from overseas Filipinos are needed more than ever.

About 20 U.S. senators, including U.S. Sen. Mazie Hirono of Hawaii, have expressed their support for a TPS for the Philippines.

"Our work to rebuild lives and infrastructure in the Philippines is far from over and the country is not

in a position to accommodate returning nationals," writes Sen. Hirono in a Congressional blog called The Hill. "We urge the Department of Homeland Security to support recovery efforts by granting TPS to the Philippines."

The request for TPS has reached Secretary of State John Kerry's office for his recommendation before it is approved by the Department of Homeland Security.

USP4GG members and other Fil-Ams continue to work hard to rebuild their

homeland and help their families. They only ask for some assistance while they put their hearts and minds into propping up a nation that has historically been a close ally of the U.S. government. ■

(cont. from page 1; **OBAMA** ...)

sharpened concerns that America lacks the will or wherewithal to follow through on its much-touted "pivot" to the Asia-Pacific.

"Words come easy," said Philippine political analyst Ramon Casiple. "But U.S. allies would want to know what help they can get when things reach a point of no return."

The United States has been stepping up regional military deployments, but has made less progress on rebalancing through broader diplomatic and economic initiatives, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a Pacific Rim free trade agreement.

Obama arrives in Tokyo on Wednesday for the first state visit to America's closest ally in Asia by a U.S. president since Bill and Hillary Clinton came in 1996. He will be the first sitting U.S. president to visit Malaysia since Lyndon Johnson in 1966. Allies

South Korea and the Philippines, the two other stops on his agenda, are also keen to shore up security ties.

U.S. allies wonder if America has adequate capability to back them up in territorial rifts with China, Caspile says, given Washington's budget problems and preoccupation with crises elsewhere.

"The American objective is to reassure countries that ... America is here to stay and is going to keep a strong interest in dealing with China together with those countries," said Koichi Nakano, a political science professor at Tokyo's Sophia University.

A report released last week by the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee urged that more effort and money be devoted to upgrading alliances in the Asia-Pacific. "A successful rebalance must underscore the strategic message that

the policy represents an enduring U.S. commitment to the region, assuring our partners that we are in it for the long haul," it said.

Striving to allay Japan's worries over its territorial dispute with China and missile launches by North Korea, during a recent Asian tour U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel pledged two more ballistic missile defense destroyers for Japan by 2017. In a further show of solidarity, Hagel rebuked Beijing for escalating its territorial dispute with Tokyo over Japanese-controlled islands in the East China Sea that Japan calls the Senkaku islands and China calls the Diaoyu islands.

The U.S. is obligated to protect Japan from attack, but has sought to avoid taking a stand on sovereignty over the islands. Tokyo is hoping for more in the way of confidence building, says Hitoshi Tanaka, chairman of the Institute for International

Strategy in Tokyo.

"We would like to see the president make a strong, clear statement about the Senkaku," said Tanaka. "There is a need for Japan and the U.S. to work to improve the security situation in East Asia."

Obama's two-night stay in Tokyo — just enough for the state visit the Japanese had pushed for — in itself sends a good message, said Mataka Kamiya, a professor at the National Defense Academy in Yokosuka, near Tokyo.

"It's important not only for the psychology of the Japanese but also for the impression given to the Chinese and North Koreans," he said.

The U.S. has 50,000 troops in Japan and about 28,500 deployed in South Korea, where it just concluded joint U.S.-South Korean exercises. But Tokyo and Seoul remain at odds over a separate territorial dispute and lingering Korean resentment of Japanese aggression before and during World War II.

Getting an early start on fence-mending, Obama brought Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and South Korean President Park Geun-hye together for their first face-to-face meeting since they both took office over a year ago, on the sidelines of a recent nuclear security summit in The Hague.

A visit by Abe in December to Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine, which enshrines 14 convicted war criminals among 2.5 million war dead, irked the U.S. and angered both South Korea and China.

At least two members of Abe's Cabinet, and dozens of other lawmakers, paid respects at the shrine just days before Obama's arrival in visits the South Korean side described as "deplorable." But the leaders' attention may well be diverted by a tragic ferry sinking, which left more than 300 missing or dead, most of them teenagers.

The United States already has a free-trade agreement with South Korea, which is likely to eventually join the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Both the U.S. and Japan had hoped to announce "substantial progress" on the pact by the time of Obama's visit despite conflicts over tariffs on farm products and automobiles. Officials signaled Tuesday that a breakthrough was unlikely.

A TPP deal with Japan is vital for making headway with the other 10 countries in the trade bloc, which includes Malaysia, the third stop on Obama's swing through Asia, the market for about 60 percent of U.S. exports.

"Obama has two main agendas on this trip, which

(continued on page 7)

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by **Atty. Emmanuel
Samonte TIPON**

5 C's in Choosing a Lawyer

If you're looking to hire a lawyer, here are Five C's you should consider—Comfortable, Capable, Confident, Cost and Convenience.

1. Comfortable—The most important factor in choosing a lawyer is comfort. The lawyer you are talking with may be the most capable, the most self-confident, the cheapest and has the most convenient office location but if you do not feel comfortable with the lawyer, you should not hire the lawyer.

Do you and the lawyer speak the same language? If not, how are you going to discuss your case comfortably and completely? Note what the lawyer says; but more importantly, observe the lawyer's body language. Read the handbook "Body Language 101" by David Lambert which contains everything you will ever need to know about reading body language.

The following questions will help you determine if you can comfortably deal with the lawyer. Does the lawyer show great interest in listening to you? Does he lean forward as if to catch every word you say? Or is he yawning or rubbing his eyes? Is he constantly interrupting you as you are

telling your story, thereby interrupting your train of thought? When the lawyer's phone rings, does he engage in a long conversation with the caller or tell the caller that he is with a beautiful client and will call back?

After telling your story, does the lawyer have a preliminary evaluation of your case or tell you to come back for the evaluation? Does the lawyer feel that the government has a strong case and that it is better to plead guilty and make a deal, otherwise if you lose you might be jailed for life? Does the lawyer refuse to answer your question as to whether he has handled a similar case before and what the outcome was? Will the lawyer agree to visit you if you will be arrested and detained? If you do not speak English, will the lawyer bring an interpreter with him?

2. Capable—What are the credentials of the lawyer you are considering hiring? What school did the lawyer go to? Did the lawyer graduate from an Ivy League university? Does his confidence and years of successful experience make up for not going to these schools? Do not hesitate to ask how long has the lawyer been in practice, what his experience is in the type of case you have and what his success rate is.

3. Confident—My son Noel, a lawyer specializing in military, criminal and family law cases says "Confidence is the backbone of success." He was inter-

viewed for "Forecasts and Strategies for the New Year and Beyond" which was published in Forbes 2014 Billionaire Issue (March 24, 2014).

He explained that "If you strive to be successful, you must have confidence in yourself, your abilities and that you can win. Confidence doesn't come naturally. It comes from possessing and maintaining the highest level of competence in your field. No matter how great your natural talent, success is built upon hard work, long hours and mastering your craft."

Does the lawyer act with an air of confidence? Is the lawyer confident in winning your case? If the lawyer says 50-50, that means he has no confidence. If the lawyer says he is confident, what is the basis of his confidence? What is his strategy for winning? Leave immediately if he tells you that it is better to plead guilty or ask for voluntary departure.

4. Cost—For most people, cost is their primary consideration when hiring a lawyer. But is money more important than avoiding jail or deportation?

Think 10,000 to 20,000 times before committing a crime. That is the average cost in dollars to hire an immigration lawyer or criminal defense attorney. It will cost more if you are in detention.

5. Convenience—The location of the lawyer's office from your home is a factor in choosing a lawyer, but it should not be a significant one. If a cigarette smoker can say "I will walk a mile for a Camel [cigarette]," you should be able to say "I will drive a thousand miles for a great lawyer." ■

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 is originally from Laoag City and Magsingal, Ilocos Sur. Atty. Tipon specializes in immigration law and criminal defense. He served as an immigration officer and co-authored "Immigration Law Service, 1st ed.," an 8-volume practice guide for immigration officers and lawyers. His radio program airs Thursdays at 7:30 am on KNDI 1270 AM. He can be reached via mail at: 800 Bethel St., Suite 402, Honolulu, HI 96813, by telephone at (808) 225-2645 or by e-mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. For more on Atty. Tipon, go online to: www.MilitaryandCriminalLaw.com. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice.

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HEADLINES

(cont. from page 6; **OBAMA...**)

are to reaffirm the U.S. 'pivot' policy on Asia and to close the final hurdles for the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement," said James Chin, a political analyst with Monash University in Malaysia.

As the U.S. shifts more of its military assets into the Pacific region under new defense guidelines, it is stepping up cooperation with many Southeast Asian nations, in-

cluding Malaysia.

Though Kuala Lumpur's treatment of opposition politicians is complicating matters, Washington wants improved ties with Malaysia, whose majority Muslims adhere to a moderate form of Islam. The U.S. has taken a leading role in the Indian Ocean hunt for the Malaysia Airlines jet that vanished on March 8 with 239 people on board.

(www.philstar.com) ■

Making Love with Nature in Terengganu

by Angelo L. GUTIERREZ

Terengganu is an eight-hour drive paradise from Kuala Lumpur, untouched and waiting to be explored by people in search for new places to make love with nature.

The east coast state, unexplored even by several Malaysians, is virtually an immense island surrounded by beautiful and pristine white sand beaches.

It has a coastline that stretches to 244 kilometers, facing the South China Sea and is populated only by 1,094,000 people, mostly Malays and the rest Chinese and other ethnics.

The most amazing location within the state is Tasik (Lake) Kenyir, the largest man-made lake in Southeast Asia with 209,199 hectares of water, dotted with 340 islands, which were mountains and hilltops drowned by the damming of the Kenyir River in 1985.

Each island have its own special features where tourists can visit an island garden of orchids, take a long rainforest trek, swim in Petang River and play with the local fish called Kelah.

The lake also has islands where tourists can enjoy caving, bird and butterfly watching.

Kenyir is also home to nine rescued elephants brought to a 256-hectare village, where hanging bridges have been built for tourists'

viewing of the gentle giants.

Ang Ching Yang, managing director of the Kenyir Elephant Village, said only small batches of tourists are allowed to have an up-close interaction with the elephants.

Yang said 21 more elephants will soon be brought to the village.

Tourists should be prepared to take long boat trips and should allot a whole day to be able to explore the lake's several islands. Probably one of the most scenic beaches in the world can be found in Redang Island (Pulau Redang), still within Terengganu.

The island is surrounded by resorts, including the Laguna Redang Island Resort, which offers a spectacular view of the royal blue sky and the sea. From Redang Island, tourists can be brought by ferries to Pinang Island, the best spot for snorkeling as it is surrounded by a rich coral reef, which is a sanctuary of marine species.

Malaysia's rich culture and values can be felt and seen in the coastal state, which was roused from poverty after the discovery of oil in its territorial waters.

FOOD AND SONGKET

Local food and handicrafts are also main tourist attractions of the state.

Its most famous break-

fast food is Nasi Dagang, a dish with a combination of rice, steamed in coconut milk and tuna curry. It is best eaten with vegetable pickles.

Also famous in Terengganu is the keropok, a chewy roll made from flour and fish that is best eaten with the local hot sauce made from sugar, vinegar, tamarind and dried chili.

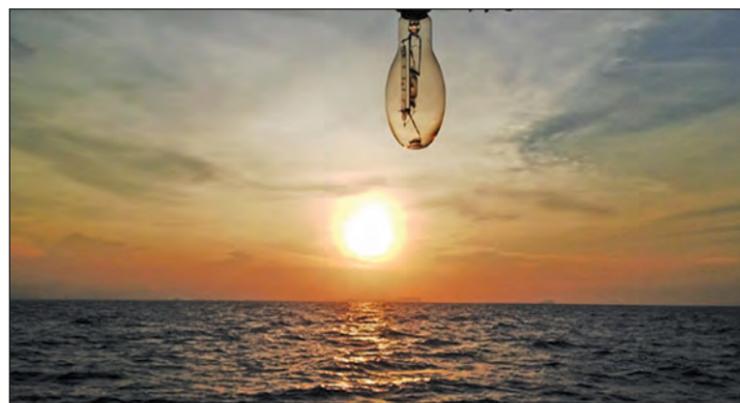
It also has a local coconut-milk based soup called Laksa Terengganu, which consists of rice noodles, bean sprouts, cucumber, long beans mixes with shrimp paste cubes and chili paste.

The local desserts are similar with the Philippines' kakanin, which are mostly made with sweet glutinous rice. The difference, however, is that majority of the glutinous rice-based desserts in the coastal state have spicy fish or sweet fish fillings.

Songket and batic are also manufactured locally in Terengganu, particularly in the Noor Arfa Batik center and the Terengganu Handicraft Centre.

The two manufacturing establishments are a must-visit for tourists looking for souvenirs that they can keep or give away to friends waiting at home.

Most royal among the handicrafts being produced in the two centers is the



Watching the sunset while on a boat in Terengganu



The Crystal Mosque in Kuala Terengganu

songket, a two-meter fabric made with silk or cotton which is hand-woven to perfection for at least a month by a single weaver.

MOSQUES

As the state is mostly populated by Muslims, it is also dotted with mosques, which are also being offered as tourists spots within Kuala Terengganu.

At the Islamic Civilization Park, people can go on a boat tour around the island, where there are 21 miniatures of famous mosques and monuments. At the end of the park is the famous Crystal Mosque.

The Floating Mosque is also a must-visit area in Kuala Terengganu. It is built on a five-acre reclaimed land in the lagoon of Ibai River. The peaceful place would

seem to float as its foundations would be covered by water during high tide.

The state also has a 27-hectare museum, which showcases the rich culture of Terengganu. The museum, established in 1996, consists of four blocks, a Maritime museum, a landscaped area and five bigger versions of traditional Malay houses.

The museum displays the local textiles, crafts, historical artifacts related to Islam, the process of developing the local oil industry, the local flora and fauna. It also has a gallery of instruments used in ancient Malay astrology.

One of the most awesome display in the museum is a decades-old handwritten Quran.

(www.philstar.com) ■

OPINION

(cont. from page 5; NAIA...)

by adding an additional runway at the present location. The plan would entail buying/paying/relocating mostly "informal settlers" from an estimated area of 50 plus hectares to a maximum of 126 hectares within government property (Manila International Airport Authority) which makes more economic sense than buying

new land at current prices which could be subject to speculative pricing and project hijacking. The proposal is clearly intended to calm the fears of DOTC officials who may have felt slighted and threatened with the original proposal for a privately built and operated airport.

While the project proposal may be business related, the silver lining within is that the project study

claims it can be completed within 18 months, time enough to ensure that the airport named to commemorate Ninoy Aquino would be much better in looks, in form and in operations when P-Noy steps down. In other words, P-Noy would at least have one true major legacy infrastructure project, and one that gives honor to his father's name.

At this point, industry

players like Ramon Ang who fully understands the business of airlines and airports can only propose and suggest to the government what they believe would be beneficial to their industry as well as for their business interests, but it can't be said that their interests and benefits are one way. Our country and its economy are directly dependent on the standards and quality of our airlines

and airports. Instead of blocking those suggestions in the media or being pig headed in their attitude, the challenge to those in authority such as Secretary Jun Abaya is if you disagree with "unsolicited proposals" then come up with a real plan, come up with a better plan, come up with a doable plan. If you can't, try helping those who have one, be an enabler. (www.philstar.com) ■

Philippines Ranks 37th in Military Power Index

MANILA, Philippines — **THE PHILIPPINES RANKED 37TH OF 106 COUNTRIES** listed in Global Firepower's 2014 Power Index, which measures each nation's military strength.

In a statement released this month, the data-collecting site ranked countries based on 50 factors, which determine the militaries' "potential conventional war-making capabilities across land, sea and air."

"The final ranking also incorporates values related to resources, finances and geography," Global Firepower explained. Sources are publicly available including the CIA factbook, online listings and media reports.

Nuclear capability and current political and military leadership, meanwhile, are not taken into account, purportedly to allow smaller, technologically-advanced, nations to compete with larger, lesser-developed ones.

The baseline or perfect value of the index is set at 0.0000, with the United States topping the list with a military power index of 0.2208. America is followed by Russia with 0.2355 and China with 0.2594.

The Philippines has a power index of 1.3042, higher by a notch than Malaysia's 1.3143 but lower than Asian neighbors such as Vietnam with 0.8962 and Taiwan with 0.7564.

The Philippines' relatively large population base contributed to the ranking, having 41 million fit for military service out of its total population of over 105 million.

About 220,000 Filipinos are active frontline personnel, while 430,000 are active reservists.

The country's tank value was among the fac-



which notes the Philippines 531 Armored Fighting Vehicles and 270 Towed-Artillery. It does not, however, have any tanks, self-propelled guns or mutli-launch rocket systems.

Components of its air and naval power similarly figured in the index. Global Firepower said the Philippines has 145 aircrafts and 124 helicopters in service. It also has a naval strength of 120 with three frigates, 11 corvettes and 38 coastal defense crafts.

The researchers also considered the country's logistics including its labor force, merchant marine strength, major ports and terminals, roadways and railways, and serviceable

The top 10 strongest global powers in the list are:

1		United States of America	PwrIndx: 0.2208
2		Russia	PwrIndx: 0.2355
3		China	PwrIndx: 0.2594
4		India	PwrIndx: 0.3872
5		United Kingdom	PwrIndx: 0.3923
6		France	PwrIndx: 0.4706
7		Germany	PwrIndx: 0.4899
8		Turkey	PwrIndx: 0.5171
9		South Korea	PwrIndx: 0.5536
10		Japan	PwrIndx: 0.5581

airports.

"War is much a battle of logistics--moving man and machine from points all over--as is direct combat. Labor force reflects possible wartime strength," it said.

Oil resources were also taken into account as it is deemed the lifeblood of any fighting force. The Philippines itself produces only 12,000 oil barrels per day, and consumes 315,000 oil barrels.

The country, however, has proven oil reserves of

138,500,000 oil barrels per day, a bulk of which is underutilized.

Defense budget, debt, foreign exchange and gold reserves as well as purchasing power parity were included.

Finally, the Philippines' geographical values were estimated as they figure into a "defensive-minded war," the researchers said. The country boasts a long coastline of 36,289 kilometers and waterways of 3,219 kilometers with no shared border. (www.philstar.com) ■

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**Pacquiao Wins Initial Bout
vs. BIR**

by Christina MENDEZ /
Wednesday, April 23, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - **MORE THAN A WEEK AFTER WORLD BOXING CHAMP** Manny Pacquiao unanimously won his fight and reclaimed the WBO welterweight title from American boxer Timothy Bradley, the Philippine's boxing pride won the initial bout in his fight against the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).



WBO Welterweight champion Manny Pacquiao

This, after Court of Tax Appeals (CTA) stopped the BIR from garnishing Pacquiao's properties in connection with the P3.289-billion back taxes being collected against the Filipino boxer.

Pacquiao won the initial bout against BIR chief Kim Henares, who is the respondent in the case lodged under case number 8683.

The Court, meanwhile, directed Pacquiao and his wife, Jinkee, to either deposit some P3 billion in taxes being collected or to file a surety bond of not more than double the said amount with the Court.

In a decision last April 22, The CTA's First Division granted Pacquiao's urgent motion to lift the warrants of distraint and levy and garnishment and for the issuance of an order to suspend the collection of tax against him.

In the 10-page resolution, the First Division granted the instant urgent motion for the suspension of collection of taxes. The resolution was signed by presiding justice Roman Del Rosario and concurred by associate justices Erlinda Uy and Cielito Mindaro-Grulla.

"Accordingly, respondent is hereby ordered to cease and desist from enforcing the subject Final Decision of Disputed Assessment (FDDA) and from collecting the subject deficiency tax assessments issued against petitioners for taxable years 2008 and 2009," the ruling said.

The Court also lifted the warrants of distraint and levy, garnishment issued in relation to the FDDA and deficiency tax assessments, pending the final disposition of this case. (www.philstar.com) ■

■ **HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS**

EPA's Pacific Southwest Region Solicits Environmental Award Nominations

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S PACIFIC SOUTHWEST REGION is encouraging residents of Hawaii, the Pacific islands, California, Arizona and Nevada to nominate a friend, peer or organization for this year's Environmental Awards program. The nomination period ends May 31, 2014.

The awards program recognizes individuals and groups who make significant contributions to improve the environment. Anyone can be nominated, including scientists, teachers, journalists, community activists, young people, organizations,

business representatives, public officials and others committed to protecting public health and preserving our natural surroundings.

EPA officials will notify winners this fall. They will be recognized at events in their local areas or in conjunction with existing events, such as a conference or meeting.

The 2013 winners included a nonprofit organization that offers building supplies for reuse, wetlands scientists who champion vernal pool protection, a solar-powered dairy, a transportation professional who advanced electric school buses, a regional composting facility and an educational foundation. ■

Erap, Cabinet Exec Off to HK to Apologize for Manila Hostage Crisis

by Louie BACANI / Tuesday, April 22, 2014

MANILA, Philippines — FORMER PRESIDENT AND NOW MANILA CITY MAYOR JOSEPH ESTRADA left for Hong Kong on Tuesday to apologize for the 2010 Manila Hostage crisis and offer compensation to the victims worth about P110 million.

In a phone-patch interview with Mornings@ANC, Estrada said the trip is a joint effort by the national and local government since he will be accompanied by some Manila city councilors, Philippine National Police Director General Alan Purisima and Secre-

tary to the Cabinet Jose Rene Almendras.

Estrada said they will be meeting with Hong Kong Chief Executive CY Leung. "I am apologizing because it happened in Manila," Estrada said. "In behalf of the people of Manila, the city council and myself extend our apology for the unfortunate incident more than three years ago."

The Manila mayor said he will also offer some sort of compensation worth around 20 million Hong Kong dollars or over P110 million for the victims of the hostage crisis.

He said he is doing this for the overseas Filipino



Mayor Joseph Estrada

workers in Hong Kong, whose working visas might not be extended due to the Philippine government's lack of apology.

"I have to do something. Nakakaawa naman yung ating mga kababayan doon," Estrada said. "I'm trying my best to apologize for them for that unfortunate incident even if it was not

during my term as Mayor of Manila."

A SIGN OF PNOY'S APOLOGY?

President Benigno Aquino III has maintained that he will not apologize for the act of the disgruntled policeman who took as hostages and killed several Hong Kong tourists near the Quirino Grandstand in Luneta in 2010.

While Aquino has repeatedly offered the government's condolences, he said the act of one individual "should not be construed as the act of the entire country."

But with the presence of Almendras and Purisima representing the national government, Estrada be-

lieves that this is already a "sign" of the President feeling sorry over the deadly incident.

"That is already a sign... because the President is being represented by his own cabinet member," Estrada said.

However, Estrada said former Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and not the President is the one at fault for the hostage crisis.

He pointed out that the late Interior and Local Government Secretary Jesse Robredo even recommended Lim's suspension.

"There was a written recommendation. In short, the President has nothing to do with this. It's purely local," Estrada said.

(www.philstar.com) ■

De Lima: Napoles Tagged Enrile, Jinggoy and Bong

by Camille DIOLA / Tuesday, April 22, 2014

MANILA, Philippines — THE WRITTEN TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY ALLEGED PORK BARREL SCAM mastermind Janet Lim Napoles has "a lot of details" and signifies her intention to spill more beans and become a state witness, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said Tuesday.

In a press conference, De Lima confirmed meeting with suspected "pork barrel" scam mastermind at the Ospital ng Makati before Napoles underwent a surgery for a myoma on her uterus on Monday night.

"There are more details, more information from Mrs. Napoles. ... But not everything. Mrs. Napoles appears to know these things. But I cannot share with you the details," De Lima said.

She also admitted that Senators Juan Ponce Enrile, Ramon "Bong" Revilla, Jr. and Jinggoy Estrada are tagged in Napoles' statement.

Asked if Napoles backed the Department of Justice's (DOJ) plunder charge against the three main respondents in the



Janet Lim-Napoles

multi-billion peso embezzlement scheme, De Lima answered, "Yes, absolutely."

De Lima similarly confirmed that some of the names Napoles disclosed are already respondents in the case submitted before the Office of the Ombudsman, which has elevated the proceedings to the Sandiganbayan.

The justice secretary said that Napoles also disclosed some "documentary evidence" during their five-hour meeting.

De Lima arrived at the hospital around 11 p.m. Monday and left at around 3 a.m. Tuesday.

The justice secretary refused to confirm whether Napoles tagged other senators in the pork barrel fund scam.

De Lima said that she



(L-R) Senators Juan Ponce-Enrile, Jinggoy Estrada and Bong Revilla

was confident that Napoles' testimony provides valuable information, but clarified that the alleged scam mastermind still has to undergo further questioning by the National Bureau of Investigation.

"There will be further sessions with her ... We need to get those additional facts and details. Ayaw namin sayangin ang pagkakataong ito," she said.

The official also recounted her conditions for agreeing to meet with Napoles, whom she said has been sending the DOJ "feelers" during the past week.

"To tell all on pork scam. Ayoko na may iba pa siyang kakusapin [and] no commitment to make her state witness," De Lima

where Napoles was "tearful" and was praying the Rosary. She was also surrounded by images of the Virgin Mary and Jesus.

"Sabi niya she is now coming clean. She was tearful when she saw me," De Lima recounted.

She believes that detained businesswoman decided to divulge what she knows as she was anxious of her impending operation for myoma. (www.philstar.com) ■



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Revisiting 12 Children in Velasco's 'Hapag ng Pag-asa'

MANILA, Philippines - The 12 street children in Hapag ng Pag-asa, a highly recognizable work by the late Joey Velasco, have moved many who look at the most reproduced contemporary painting.

Unbeknown to all, however, the models whose ages range from four to 14 each have a story to tell be-



yond the four corners of the mural. Before he passed away, Velasco did not stop at depicting them in the can-

vass, but secured for them a shelter at a Gawa Kalinga village. He continued reaching out to them until his

death in July 2010 at age 43.

Itok, Nene, Joyce, Tinay, Emong, Onse, Buknoy, Michael, Dodoy, Jun and Roselle were given a better chance of life, but nine years since the painting was made public, they all continue to face life's constant battles.

"Some of them [are winning], some of them [are

struggling]. One has lost the fight all together last year-- at age 18 due to complications at childbirth," television show Cheche Lazaro Presents said in a report.

Today, many are still haunted by the image of the 12 young souls who take the place of Jesus' apostles in a Filipino rendering of Leonardo Da Vinci's masterpiece. (www.philstar.com) ■

PHILIPPINE NEWS

SC Stops BIR Drive vs Doctors, Lawyers

by Edu PUNAY /
Wednesday, April 23, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - THE SUPREME COURT (SC) YESTERDAY STOPPED the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) from implementing its new regulation imposing additional requirements for registration of self-employed professionals, including doctors and lawyers.

In summer session in Baguio City, the justices decided to issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) enjoining the BIR from implementing its Regulation No. 4-2014, which requires self-employed professionals to submit affidavits indicating their rates and register their official appointment books.

The order is effective immediately and until further orders from the court. The SC granted the immediate relief sought in

the petition filed by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) earlier this month. Since only the IBP filed the petition, the SC clarified that the TRO applies to the application of the assailed BIR "only as against lawyers."

In its 36-page petition filed through former University of the Philippines law dean Pacifico Agabin, the IBP asked the high court to declare the new BIR regulation unconstitutional.

Petitioners alleged that the new BIR rule violates the constitutional separation of powers of the three branches of government.

They said it "encroaches upon the court's exclusive authority and jurisdiction to regulate and prescribe rules for the protection and enforcement of Constitution Rights, legal practice and the legal pro-



fession."

The IBP further argued that the BIR order infringes on the constitutional right to privacy of lawyers and their communications with clients, which is also protected by Rule 130, Section 24 (b) of the Rules of Court.

They also argued that the assailed policy does not conform to the ethical standards set by the high court for the legal profession, particularly the Code of Professional Responsibility

and Rules of Court which both require that the relationship between a lawyer and his client should be "strictly personal, fiduciary and highly confidential."

The IBP further said that under Rule 130, Section 24 (b) of the Rules of Court, lawyers are prohibited from testifying on any communication received from a client. They also believed that the submission of a notarized list of services with corresponding

rates makes it appear that the law profession is a "mere trade or moneymaking endeavor" instead of being devoted to public service.

Petitioner also expressed fear that the new BIR regulation would lead to "illegal restriction on the practice of law, as it unduly limits a lawyer's liberty to ascertain the fair and reasonable value of his services according to standards defined by the Supreme Court."

Lastly, they argued that the BIR has no authority in issuing the regulation that it is not within the scope of their rule-making power stipulated under Section 244 of the National Internal Revenue Code (NIRC).

Named respondents in the petition were BIR Commissioner Kim Jacinto-Henares and Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima. (www.philstar.com) ■

PNP Chief Faces P100-M Plunder Rap Over Gun License Delivery Deal

by Edu PUNAY /
Wednesday, April 23, 2014

MANILA, Philippines - PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) CHIEF DIRECTOR GENERAL ALAN PURISIMA and Firearms and Explosives Office (FEO) head Chief Superintendent Napoleon Estilles are facing a P100-million plunder charge before the Office of the Ombudsman for their alleged involvement in a supposedly questionable deal

with a private courier service company.

Glenn Gerard Ricafranca of Barangay Capantawan, Legazpi City filed the case on April 16, accusing the officials of entering into an allegedly anomalous contract with Wer Fast Documentary Agency three years ago for the delivery of firearms licenses.

The complainant said he thought of buying a



Chief PNP Alan Purisima

handgun for protection last month and so he inquired with the PNP about firearms license and registration.

He said he learned that

gun license cards are now being delivered to each licensee through Wer Fast, based on a memorandum of agreement between the PNP and the firm in May 2011.

Ricafranca, however, claims to have discovered that Wer Fast was issued a certificate of incorporation by the Securities and Exchange Commission only on Aug. 10, 2011, which he said means that it had no juridical personality to enter into the agreement.

He also said that Wer Fast is not authorized as a courier delivery service by the Department of Transportation and Communications.

AMONG FRIENDS

Ricafranca alleged that one of the firm's incorporators is Mario Juan, a close friend of Purisima, while Enrique Valerio - who represented the PNP in the contract - is a classmate and best friend of Purisima. (www.philstar.com) ■



by Reuben S. SEGURITAN

Employment Authorization for Abuse Victims

of the petition alone.

Under the policy memo, to get an employment authorization document (EAD) a petitioner with an approved I-360 and who is residing in the United States must file Form I-765 along with the filing fee and required photos with the Vermont Service Center.

Previously, they could obtain employment authorization only after being granted deferred action. Deferred action status means that an alien is a low priority for immigration enforcement or deportation and provides legal basis for employment authorization. When granted, the status is valid for 15 months, renewable in 12-month increments.

VAWA self-petitioners who are spouses, children or parents of the U.S. citi-

zen abuser are also eligible for employment authorization without need of deferred action and even before approval of the I-360 self-petition, because they can file the I-485 adjustment application concurrently with the I-360 as immediate relatives.

The policy memo however does not change the policy when it comes to the principal beneficiary's derivative children, who must still rely on a grant of deferred action in order to be eligible for an EAD.

Under the new policy memo, battered spouses of A (ambassador), E(iii) (Australian specialty occupation worker), G (foreign government or international organization representative) and H (alien specialty occupation workers) nonimmigrants are also eligible for employment authorization.

To be eligible for an EAD, the applicant must be the spouse who accompanied or followed to join a principal alien in the nonimmigrant category and he must be maintaining status as a nonimmigrant. The applicant or the applicant's child must have been battered or has been the subject of extreme cruelty perpetrated by the principal alien spouse.

The battered spouse of the nonimmigrant must file Form I-765 along with the new supplemental Form I-765V with the Vermont Service Center, along with evidence of the qualifying nonimmigrant status of both the applicant and the abusive spouse; evidence of spousal relationship; and evidence of abuse such as police reports, court

records, medical records, reports from social service agencies, and a protective order, if any.

If the applicant is unable to provide documentary evidence of the nonimmigrant spouse's status, he must provide some identifying evidence such as name, place of birth, country of birth, date of birth, date of entry into the U.S., I-94 number, name of employer, etc.

If the application is approved, the EAD will be valid for a period of time equal to the remainder of the applicant's current period of authorized stay or duration of status, if applicable. ■

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

Under the Violence against Women Act (VAWA), battered spouses, children and parents of U.S. citizens and permanent residents may file an immigrant visa petition for themselves. The law allows them to self-petition for immigration benefits in order to seek safety and independence from the abuse.

According to the draft policy memorandum released by the USCIS approved VAWA self-petitioners are eligible for employment authorization based on the approval

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Filipinos Saw China Blocking Fishermen from Shoal

by Jim GOMEZ | AP
Wednesday, April 23, 2014

MANILA — CHINESE COAST GUARD VESSELS REPEATEDLY BLOCKED or chased Filipino and Vietnamese fishermen from a disputed shoal where they previously had only tried to block military supply runs, a Philippine marine officer said yesterday.

Marine 1st Lt. Mike Pelotera said he and his men saw the fishermen being "bullied" away from the Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea at least eight times from December to March, when his marine monitoring unit was replaced by a new batch.

He said he shot a video of a Chinese ship chasing a wooden-hulled Vietnamese fishing boat dangerously close to coral outcrops.

Chinese blockades of fishing boats have been re-

ported in other disputed areas, but Pelotera's comments were the first military report of such activity against fishermen trying to venture into Second Thomas Shoal. The Chinese coast guard in recent months has tried to block boats delivering marines and food supplies to a rusting Philippine navy ship deliberately marooned at the shoal since 1999.

"It's with a heavy heart that we saw our countrymen being bullied away from our own territory," Pelotera said. "But we're observing a maximum-tolerance policy and we want this dispute to be peacefully resolved."

The 8-kilometer (5-mile) long submerged coral outcrop is a rich fishing area believed to have undersea oil and gas deposits.

The Philippines also protested to China when a Chinese government ship

fired a water cannon to drive away Filipino fishermen from another disputed region, the Scarborough Shoal north of the Spratlys, in January.

Territorial disputes will be a thorny issue when President Barack Obama this week visits Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and the Philippines, all of which have a dispute with Beijing over islands and waters in the South and East China seas. (www.philstar.com) ■

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DAYASADAS

by Pacita C. SALUDES

Kalleppas manen ti panawen a rumbeng a panangalubog ti naga- puanan ti makatawen (Easter Sunday) Dominggo Paskua aldaw a panagun- gar ni Apo Jesus. Pan- nakaiwakas manen ti impakta ti Dios a panagtu- tuokna a mangisalikan ti lubong.

Naalubog tayo met ti aramid a ditay napupuutan a nakairamanan tay met a napakawan. Naipalagip met dagiti saan a maiyata- day nga aramid bayat ti makatawen. Sapay ta malagip daytoy. Saan a lumabas laeng a kasla pabuya nga awan kaipa- pananna kadagiti tao.

Idiay Filipinas masele- braran daytoy, masursurot dagiti kannawidan nga aramid no madanon dag-

Naulumek A Panawen A Panangilatang Pammam Iti Nailangitan

iti nasantuan nga aldaw, nupay ditoy Hawaii kasla lumabas nga awan ania- manna iti kaaduan kas napaneknekantayo. Kas iti Biernes Santo idiay iti daytoy nga aldaw naulumek ti aglawlaw ket awan ti trabaho ta ita- imudok ti panunot a makipagsagaba iti panag- tutuok ti Apo. Ngem kaaduan ditoy a saandan a malagip daytoy nga aldaw.

Nalpas manen ti SEM- ANA SANTA ket agtuloy dagiti aramid ngem maipalagip laeng a saan a lipatan ti nailangitan ti ania- man a nasayaat kalak- aman iti inaldaw. HAPPY EASTER!

PAKAAMO MANIPUD ITI BADOCC PINILI AID ASSOCIATION

Ipakaamo dagiti opisiales ti Gunglo dagiti Annak ti BadoCC Pinili ti pan- nakaselebrar ti maikalima- p u l o (5 0) n g ANNIBERSARIO TI

BADOCC PINILI AID ASSN OF HAWAII iti annibersari- ona inton Mayo 3, 2014 a maaramid iti Keehi Lagoon. Mayo 3 SABADO manipud alas ocho ti agsapa ag- ingga iti alas dos iti malem. Naragsak a panagtitipon dagiti amin a kamkameng. Adda 600 a kamkameng t BPAO OF HAWAII.

Malaksid ti nasimbeng a panagkakadua, maymaysa ti ranta daytoy nga assosa- sion mangtulong kadagiti agpasina a kamkameng. Madagdagus a maipaay ti tulong kadagiti agpasina apaman a maamuan nga adda sumina.

Iyawis daytoy nga or- ganisasiion ti panagka- meng dagiti mayat a makikadua. Dagiti laeng taga BADOCC KEN PINILI. Annabo dagitoy dua nga ili ken nakamang laeng ti maawat nga agmembro ditoy. No kayatyo ti agka- meng awagan laeng ti pres- idente ni Honesta Rhor iti telepono wenno uray asino kadagiti opisiales tapno

mairaman kayo iti saguday daytoy nga assosasion. Wenno awagandakami ditoy DAYASADAS 808- 839-8016 tapno maa-

muanyo dagiti pagannuru- tan sakbay nga agka- mengkayo Thank You KAKAILIAN!! ■

Aramid Ti Mangipaduyakyak

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GAPUANAN TI PAKAPANENEKAN
KINASIASINO ITI KAGIMUNGAN

TI ABILIDAD NGA AGITUNG PAL
KADAGITI ARAMID A MAIPABAKLAY
TI MANGIPAKITAT PUDNO A KABAE LAN
SAAN LA TA IBALBALIKAS TA DILAM

ARAMIDEN A SITATALUGOD AWAN DUKOT
NAISANGRAT ARAMID AWAN TANABUTOB
ITUNG PAL AWAN IPARANG A SIDUNGET
KASTA TI MAKUNA A TAO A NASINGPET

SINAPATAAN NGA ARAMID DI PAGINSASAANAN
DI AGALIMUTENG WENNO AGINPAPAMBAR
KASTA TI KABABALIN A MAPAGTAMDAN
KEN MAKUNA A TAO A MAPAGWADAN

IPAKITA A NATALGEDKA A SARIKEDKED
IKIKUTAM DAGITI KABAE LAN, A BILEG
AWAN UBLAG A MAILAUK A MANGGEPPAS
URAY PAY DAGITI KATADEMAN NGA ARMAS
ADU DAGITI NATURED A MANGLUSAK KAPANUNOTAN
BARISUENG A PANUNOT AYATNA A MAARTAPAN
ISEMAM LAENG DI IKANKANO KET PALUGARAM
DI TUTOPAN, PALUGODAN SALIMETMETAM TA DAYAW

TI ARAMID ISU TI NALAWAG A PAKAKITAAN
NALAWAG, PUDPUDNO A NAGAPUANAN
SAAN A TAPOK WENNO ARBIS LAENG A NAIPALAI S
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ITULONG KETDI KADAGITI AGKASAPULAN

— **MAINLAND NEWS** —

Embassy Denies Report on U.S. Visa-free Policy for Pinoys

MANILA, Philippines — **THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON D.C. BELIED** a supposed online news report that the United States had lifted the visa requirement for Filipinos.

"The Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines would like to inform the public that there is no truth to what appears to be an online news report that the United States has announced a 'no visa' policy for Filipinos," the Embassy said in a statement.

It was referring to an article posted on the website The Adobo Chronicles on April 22, which stated that the US State Department had announced a "life-changing new policy for Filipinos."

The article said visas will no longer be required for Filipinos travelling to the United States, a policy which was supposedly effective immediately.

The Philippine Embassy, however, said it has been in touch with the US Department of State, which has denied making such an

(continued on page 15)

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ANNUAL FILIPINO FIESTA AND PARADE • SATURDAY • May 10, 2014 • Honolulu Municipal Grounds near Honolulu Hale (by King and Punchbowl Streets) | 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM • Contact FilCom Center @680-0451

COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR • SATURDAY • May 10, 2014 | 10:00 AM-5:00 PM • sponsored by Bayanihan Clinic Without Walls & PMAH • Honolulu Municipal Grounds near Honolulu Hale • Contact JP Orias at 387-8297

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SANTANIANS ASSOCIATION OF HI-USA INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS • SATURDAY • May 24, 2014 • Ala Moana Hotel | 6:00 PM • Contact Julius Soria @ 722-9958

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GLOBAL NEWS

Gov't Urged to Monitor OFWs in MERS-Cov Areas

MANILA, Philippines - **A WORKERS RIGHTS GROUP** has urged the Philippine consulate in deadly MERS-Corona virus hit- areas in Middle East to conduct medical missions to look and monitor the health conditions of stranded overseas Filipino workers, some of whom with children. John Monterona, Migrante-Middle East regional

coordinator, said there are around 200 OFWs in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia who are very susceptible to contracting the deadly disease now spreading the oil-rich country. Monterona said the stranded OFWs have been stayingsince October last year inside the deportation facility in Jeddah. "This situation requires

an immediate action by the Philippine government through its diplomatic posts not only in Saudi Arabia but in other mid-east countries where there are MERS-CoV spread and huge OFWs concentration," he said. He cited that Saudi's Ministry of Health confirmed there were 20 people have already been afflicted by MERS-CoV following report

on the death of two persons in Jeddah, western city of Saudi Arabia. Weeks ago, four persons were reportedly afflicted by MERS-CoV in the United Arab Emirates. Two of them were OFWs, both works as medical staff in UAE hospitals, Monterona said. Scores of MERS-CoV cases were also reported in

Doha, Qatar, he added. "We likewise call on Philippine embassy officials in Riyadh to do the same," Monterona said, noting that there are around 100 stranded OFWs temporarily staying at embassy-rented accommodation, while there are 40 women and children at the Bahay Kalinga in Riyadh. (www.philstar.com) ■

MAINLAND NEWS

Unemployment Rates Fall in 21 US States Last Month

WASHINGTON (AP) — **MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF THE STATES** reported job gains in March, as hiring has improved for much of the country during what has been a sluggish but sustained 4 1/2-year recovery. The Labor Department said Friday that unemployment rates dropped in 21 states, rose in 17 and were unchanged in the remaining 12. Meanwhile, hiring increased in 34 states and fell in 16. The unemployment rate varies from as low as 2.6 percent in North Dakota to as much as 8.7 percent in Rhode Island. South Carolina has experienced the sharpest rate decline over



12 months to 5.5 percent from 8 percent. The rate nationwide stayed at 6.7 percent in March for the second straight month. That national rate stayed flat because someone was hired for almost every person who entered the job market last month. Employers added 192,000 jobs nationwide in March, close to the average monthly gains of the past two years. Ohio experienced the largest month-to-month

drop in its unemployment rate: 0.4 percentage points to 6.1 percent. That steep drop occurred because the state added 12,000 jobs last month, while the total number of people in its job market fell 11,200 to 5.75 million. Unemployment rates can fall when people leave the job market, as well as when employers hire. North Carolina reported the second largest year-over-year drop in the unemployment rate: a 2.2 percentage point decrease to 6.3 percent. Part of that decline came from the loss unemployment benefits for jobless workers. Because those workers needed to look for jobs in order to re-

ceive benefits, the loss of the jobless aid likely caused them to give up their hunts and no longer be counted as unemployed. Several states continue to lag the gains made

across the country. Unemployment remains elevated in Nevada (8.5 percent), Illinois (8.4 percent), California (8.1 percent) and Kentucky (7.9 percent). (www.asianjournal.com) ■

(cont. from page 14; "EMBASSY...") announcement. The Embassy reminded the public that the online article circulating in social media "is a satirical piece that should not be taken seriously."

According to the supposed news report, US Secretary of State John Kerry said that the State Department lifted the visa requirement "as a way to reward the Filipinos for making the US

really look good" in a recent global survey. The alleged survey showed that an overwhelming majority of Filipinos have a favorable view of the US. (www.philstar.com) ■

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