



Women's March
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PF NEWS

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Cultural Fidelity: Inspiration
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Ati-Atihan Festival



Photos by Dave San Pedro

The Aklan Association of Sacramento and Vicinity Inc., led by the new President Danny YapDiangco, with the Filipino community and the Aklanos celebrated their 26th Ati-Atihan Festival and Dance on January 21, 2016 at the Jose Rizal Community Center, Sacramento, CA.

Hala Bira Puera Pasma!

It is the the familiar chanting that we hear during the Ati-Atihan festival. It has been said that it originated from the 17th century during the time when Moro raiders from the south were attacking the Panay island. To defend themselves, they used artillery with the battle cry "Hala Bira" or Hit them! After the fight, their faces covered with gunpowder made them appear as if they were black-skinned Ati. The Santo Nino is credited with saving the locals from the Moros.

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Pastor Ruiz with Aklan Association President Danny YapDiangco

Duterte cites Chinese contribution to Philippines economy



Filipinos perform the traditional dragon dance along Session Road in Baguio City ahead of the celebration of the Chinese New Year.

By Christina Mendez

MANILA, Philippines - In yet another sign of the country's good relations with Beijing, President Duterte greeted members of the local Chinese community as they mark the Chinese

New Year.

The President yesterday expressed appreciation for both the Chinese and Filipino-Chinese communities' contribution to the country's economy, culture and history.

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Miss France is new Miss Universe



'THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS JOB IN THE WORLD' - Miss Universe 2015 Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach (left) prepares to crown Iris Mittenaere of France as Miss Universe 2016 on Coronation Day Monday at the Mall of Asia Arena in Pasay City. (AP)

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America first

By Ana Marie Pamintuan

There's trouble in the BPO industry, one of the nation's top employers, and it's not just due to President Duterte's apparent dislike for most things American.

You've heard the news, and it isn't encouraging: after President Donald Trump's "America first" promise, US companies – the biggest operators of BPOs in the Philippines – have put on hold expansion plans. The news has fueled fears of eventual shutdowns or significant downsizing.

Trump wants to roll back the tide of globalization. Normally this looks like a quixotic quest. But because this is the leader of the United States talking, people are waiting to see how he intends to compel American businessmen to go along with him.

American manufacturers took advantage of globalization and moved production out of the homeland to countries with lower labor and other costs. It also made sense in terms of logistics; outsourcing moved them closer to many of their markets.

Naturally, the move took away American jobs. But it helped ease unemployment and poverty in many developing countries. Why should America care? Steady jobs and rising incomes mean improved purchasing power for people in developing countries, which means larger markets for advanced economies such as the US. Developing nations may not be hiring American, but they're buying American, and European, and Australian-New Zealand...

China, for example, has become one of the largest markets for everything from automobiles to coffee and the world's luxury goods. If the Association of Southeast Asian Nations can get its act together, its combined market of about 650 million people can be a strong bargaining chip in trade negotiations.

Some Filipinos visiting the US are disappointed when they can't find items under their favorite American brands that are made in USA. But the Philippines has been among the top beneficiaries of US outsourcing and liberalized trade.

Fidel Ramos, in a visit to the US during his presidency, once needed gloves for the cold. His wife Ming bought a pair from one of the upmarket US shopping chains, and was surprised to find out later that the gloves were made in the Philippines.

In early October 2001 when I went to Hawaii as a Jefferson Fellow at the East-West Center, the most striking aspect of life in those first weeks after 9/11 was the widespread flag-waving as Americans expressed their patriotism.

And the striking thing about the Stars and Stripes being sold in all sizes all over Honolulu, from convenience stores to supermarket chains and the main shopping center, Ala Moana, across Waikiki Beach was that most of the flags were made in China and the rest in other developing countries.

I remember our futile hunt for a US flag made in USA because our fellowship included an amiable participant who is now a big shot in Chinese internet giant Tencent. She was amused by our hunt for a US-made flag and the trite jokes about God making the world while everything else was made in her country.

As we know, flags aren't the only items sold by the Chinese to the world. It seems they have a lock on tourist souvenirs – t-shirts, baseball caps, key chains, cups,

wristbands.

Cheap production costs lured a horde of foreign investors to relocate to China, including iconic US jeans brand Levi's.

What may worry American manufacturers is the competition posed by their Chinese counterparts, who can produce almost everything cheaper. While consumers tend to get what they pay for and cheaper can mean inferior quality, there are millions worldwide who settle for cheaper versions.

This kind of competition posed by China's factories put several Philippine industries in the ICU, among them textiles and apparel as well as furniture.

This is the state of the global economy that Donald Trump wants to upend under his "America first" policy.

Trump has said he wants his country to buy American and hire American – his formula for making America great again. Can he bring Levi's back to America?

US Ambassador Sung Kim urged us last Tuesday to let the Trump administration get settled first, to let the new president run his ideas by his economic team.

Kim expressed confidence that US commitment to free trade and fair trading rules would be sustained under Trump. Although the envoy was careful about making predictions about policy thrusts of the new administration, he said he did not expect a "dramatic shift" in the way Washington approached the issue of trade, except in "specifics" such as a new focus on bilateral negotiations.

Even with Trump pulling the US out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which the Philippines has also not joined, Kim said his government would continue to focus "on the importance of free trade, encouraging everyone to play by fair rules."

"I don't think that's going to have a negative impact on countries like the Philippines and on US-Philippines trade ties," Kim told us.

Still, the world is in jitters. After all, Trump vowed to set up a physical wall between the US and Mexico, and now he's moving to do it.

We should be ready for any adverse impact of "America first" on our BPO industry.

At the start of the BPO boom, a top official of a major development organization happily told me that the industry was slowing down the exodus of Filipinos for jobs overseas. Steady jobs with decent pay, the official also noted, was also weakening patronage politics especially in the countryside, because people no longer felt beholden to local politicians for many of their needs.

Trump, of course, is not the only leader who is turning inward in an effort to stop the tide of globalization. There's our very own President Duterte, although his anti-foreign rants are tempered by subsequent clarifications from his economic team. And unlike Trump, Du30 is befriending China.

Instead of engaging in a trade war with China, Trump the business mogul can learn from the Asian dragon, which became the second largest economy by embracing the world and the free market.

One day Trump and others who equate isolationism with nationalism may consider that what's good for the world generally tends to be good for individual states.

Building the great wall of Donald Trump

By Ignacio R. Bunye

Just days after his inauguration, Donald Trump has set into motion his plan to build a wall along the common border between the United States and Mexico purportedly to keep off illegal immigrants.



Donald Trump

When completed over the course of Trump's presidential term, the wall will stretch over 2,000 kilometers. It will cost around 10.5 billion US dollars. But here is the catch. Trump intends to bill Mexico for the cost of construction! If that is not international bullying, I do not know what is.

Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto (who was one of two heartthrobs during the APEC meeting in Manila) is, naturally, indignant. He cancelled a prior scheduled meeting this week with Trump to express his displeasure. Mexico demands respect, Nieto said. Furthermore, no way will Mexico pay for the construction.

The average Mexican is both angry and resigned. "Trump is a false prophet, leading the US into the desert. But if Trump wants to build a wall on his side of the border, there is nothing we can do about it."

While Trump has no love lost for the Chinese, his proposed wall along the Mexican border was obviously inspired by the humongous Chinese version.

The Great Wall of China actually consists of several separate walls built over centuries, spanning the reigns of several Chinese dynasties. Its purpose was to prevent foreign incursions into Chinese territory.

When placed end to end, the Great Wall, according to some estimates, would stretch more than 20,000 kilometers. Several portions of the original structures are no longer existent but the remnants are still large enough to be visible from outer space.

What would the Great Wall of Donald Trump look like?



Editor's Note

It's the second month of the year! What we hoped to be a promising new year is turning up to be almost everybody's nightmare. But as much as I would like to focus

on them, allow me to spend my energy in mentioning the positives that have happened so far, in the past month in our community and around. For your information, please read on the following pages, as topics of interests such as about the building of Trump's Great Wall, the Muslims being barred from flights back to U.S., and the Philippines president's "dead or alive" way of dealing with the so called war on drugs in the Philippines.

How about the La La Land bagging the most prestigious Oscar awards and the new Miss Universe Iris Mittenaere, with the beauty pageant held in the Philippines? We say better luck next time for the Philippines' delegate Maxine Medina. They say the Q and A killed her, instead of the other way around.

A Fil-Am Ninio Fetalvo, has been ap-

In all probability, the wall would be at least 20 feet high (to prevent scaling) and at least 5 feet deep (to prevent tunnelling). To meet a tight construction schedule, pre-cast cement wall panels would probably be used. This would require an estimated 339 million cubic meters of cement as well as several million pounds of steel. One can be sure, that

in accordance with Trump's America First Policy, the steel would be "made in US."

If all goes well, the whole project will be completed just about the time Trump completes his 4 year presidential term.

The wall may or may not serve its purpose, according to observers. But one thing is definite. The construction will create jobs for the "forgotten Americans" who voted Trump into office. Farther down the road, the Great Wall of Donald Trump may also attract tourists, just like the original Great Wall of China.

While Mexican President Nieto has cancelled his meeting with Trump, Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May is pushing through with hers. Theresa May was the principal political beneficiary of the controversial Brexit vote.

The prime minister has some economic plans in common with Trump. One of them is a proposed massive cut in corporate income taxes. Like Trump, she is hoping that the corporate tax cuts would provide sufficient incentives to lure in business.

While many find Trump's ideas outlandish, it is not necessarily so with the financial market. Cheering the "Trump effect," Dow Jones last week closed above 20,000 – for the very first time in its history!

Apparently, Trump's promises of massive infrastructure spending, corporate tax cuts, 10 percent tax to encourage repatriation of offshore profits are enough to get the market quite excited.

Of course, these are, at this time, just promises....promises.

pointed as new White House assistant press secretary. We can take pride in his accomplishments, and to wish him good luck in being a part of the team that will make the country great again.

In our community, the Aklan Association once again held another successful Ati-Atihan festival, under the leadership of Danny Yap Diangco. The Filipino Women's Club new president is Vickie Debord, and the Filipino Family Fraternity is Aida Azurin. Let's all support their leaderships and upcoming projects for our community.

The Philippine Consulate on Wheels is making their way again to Sacramento on March 18. It can be a lengthy process. It's wise to prepare all the necessary documents and to reserve an appointment to secure a spot.

Lastly, please give us your blessings as our son Dane and partner/cofounder Amanda Newsum hold a grand opening on Feb. 16, for the first ever, non-profit dance center in our community.

With you in celebrations,
Dinnah San Pedro

Miss France is new Miss U

By Alex Y. Vergara and Robert R. Requintina

Iris Mittenare, a 24-year-old dentistry student from Lille, France, edged out 85 other delegates to win as Miss Universe 2016 at SM Mall of Asia-Arena in Pasay City, yesterday morning. Like previous editions of the pageant, the three-hour event, the culmination of a three-week activity all over the Philippines featuring some of the world's most beautiful and most intelligent women, had its share of surprises and controversies.

Mittenare, wearing a clingy and beaded nude-colored gown, ended France's almost 64-year Miss Universe title drought. Prior to Mittenare, the last French beauty queen who won Miss Universe was Christiane Martel.

"I was very surprised I won, I feel blessed," said the 24-year-old, whose competition profile had described her goal as advocating for dental and oral hygiene if she won.

Having clinched the crown, Mittenare said she wanted to go beyond that and promote education for children and young women.

Malacañang extended its congratulations to Miss France for clinching the Miss Universe crown. "Congratulations to the new Miss Universe, Iris Mittenare of France. People of France are rejoicing. Truly, this is a proud moment for their country," Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said.

"Iris brought tremendous joy to

her people by representing France well on the international stage with her winning grace, regal bearing and inspiring answer," he added.

Abella said the new Miss Universe "won not only the nod of the judges but the affection of the entire world as well."

The Palace also lauded Miss Philippines Maxine Medina for her performance at the pageant. "We likewise congratulate Maria Mika Maxine Medina for making it to the Top 6. She represented the Philippines well in the international scene," Abella said.

THE French embassy in Manila expressed pride that Miss France Iris Mittenare has been crowned Miss Universe 2016.

French Ambassador Thierry Mathou said the crowning of Miss France a year after Wurtzbach won is the "brightest symbol" of the spirit of our Phil-France: Feel French! Festival which was recently launched to celebrate the 70th anniversary of French-Philippine friendship.

"It is even more symbolic this year as we mark the 70th year anniversary of diplomatic ties between France and the Philippines," said Ambassador Mathou. "To witness Pia Wurtzbach pass the crown to Iris Mittenare was truly a beautiful moment that represents the friendship between our two nations and our common quest for excellence."

In the same statement, the French diplomat congratulated all the contestants of the 2016 Miss Universe competition, "which celebrates the beauty, intelligence, and character of women from all over the world."

In her first press conference some 30 minutes after she was crowned, the new Miss Universe revealed that beauty pageants are still popular in France despite people's waning interest in them, especially in developed countries.

But Miss Universe is not as popular as it was before because it has been a long time since a French woman won it, she said. Because of her victory, she assured journalists and Paula Shugart, president of Miss Universe Organization (MUO), that Miss Universe would regain its popularity in France.

She has always advocated education for children, but now that she's Miss Universe, her involvement is bound to get bigger. She has also adopted one of MUO's pet causes, which HIV-AIDS awareness. She encouraged people to get tested.

"I have a charity, which is to teach children, but now I represent the universe, I want to do more than that," she said in English. "I want all the children to be in school, which is my charity, and it is the most important, education for children."

Her advocacy also includes young people, especially women "because I have had the chance to live in France and to go to school every morning, and I think every children (sic) should have this chance."

Toughest part

Asked what was the toughest part of her journey to the crown, especially during the last round of competition, Mittenare said: "Being in the top three was amazing for me, because this is exactly what I want to do. I wanted to do top six. When I was in the top six, I was just like wow, and I answered the question."

Although a favorite by pageant



Contestants congratulate Miss France Iris Mittenare after she was declared winner in the Miss Universe beauty pageant at the Mall of Asia Arena, in Pasay, Metro Manila, Philippines.

fans to go far in the competition, few openly predicted that Mittenare could pull off an upset by edging out perennial frontrunners Andrea Tovar of Colombia, Mariam Habach of Venezuela, Chalita Suansane of Thailand, and hometown girl Maxine Medina of the Philippines.

Tovar ended up as second runner-up, while Medina made it only up to the contest's top six. But the evening's biggest surprise was Habach's exclusion from the evening's first cut.

Easily coasting to the top 12, aside from Misses France, Philippines, and Colombia, were Misses Kenya, Indonesia, USA, Mexico, Peru, Panama, Canada, Brazil, Haiti, and Thailand. After the swimsuit competition, the number of delegates was cut to nine with the exclusion of Misses Panama, Peru, and Indonesia.

Haiti's Raquel Pelissier, who speaks five languages and is training to become an eye doctor, came out of nowhere and almost stole the thunder from Mittenare. In the end, she had to settle for first runner-up, duplicating compatriot Gerthie David's feat in 1975.

The Philippines has now hosted Miss Universe three times, first in 1974, and then in 1994. Spain and India won respectively for the

first time in both pageants. Not a few pageant fans were already bracing themselves for a first-time win for Haiti.

Final question

During the make-or-break final question round, the last three girls standing composed of Mittenare, Tovar, and Pelissier were all asked the same question by Miss Universe host Steve Harvey: "Name something over the course of your life that you failed at and tell us what you have learned about that experience."

Mittenare, answering through a French-speaking interpreter, said that she failed several times in her life. Once, in school, she thought she failed in her dentistry course because she couldn't find her name on the list of passers. She had to wait the next day to learn that her fears were unfounded because she did pass after she found her name in a "new book."

"So I think when you fail, you have to be elevated. You have to try to keep on going," she said in French. "If tonight I'm not the winner, I will still have the great honor of being one of the three finalists."

Pelissier, this year's dark horse, had a more dramatic answer, as she

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Dead or alive: Duterte offers reward for NBI agents involved in kidnap-slay of Korean businessman

By Argyll Cyrus B. Geducos

President Duterte said he will offer a P1-M reward in cash to anyone who can pinpoint the whereabouts of the three National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) agents allegedly involved in the killing of a Korean businessman Jee Ick-joo, if they fail to surrender within 24 hours.

Duterte, in a late night press conference in Malacañang, ordered NBI director Dante Gierran to do anything to make the involved agents surface within 24 hours.

He was also about to offer a P5-M reward in cash to anyone who can bring PSSupt. Rafael Dumlao to Camp Crame or even in front of the Malacañang Palace dead or alive, and without him asking any questions.

However, he only found out during the press conference that Dumlao had already returned to Camp Crame Sunday afternoon and is ready to 'tell all' about the abduction and killing of businessman Jee Ick-joo.

Jee was kidnapped from his house in Angeles City, Pampanga last October 2016 by around eight men including three police officers and three NBI agents and was reportedly killed inside Camp

Crame the same day. His remains was then brought to the Gream Funeral Services in Caloocan City and was reportedly cremated afterwards.

According to Duterte, he is enraged by the issue because Dumlao tarnished the reputation of the Philippine National Police, an institution he claimed to be 'corrupt to the core.'

"I am offering P5-M reward, cash, para kay Dumlao. Dead or alive. It will take effect pag hindi ka sumuko in 24 hours 'pag 'di ka sumuko (I am offering P5-M reward, cash, to anyone who can bring Dumlao, dead or alive. It will take effect if you don't surrender within 24 hours)," Duterte said before he learned that Dumlao had already surrendered.

"Bakit malaki? Kasi [expletive] sinira mo ang pulis. Galit ako kasi pati ako napaahiya (Why is the reward big? Because you tarnished the PNP. I am enraged because even I got embarrassed)."

Duterte also revealed that PNP director general Ron-



Duterte

ald Dela Rosa offered to resign in relation to the killing of Jee. However, he declined Dela Rosa's resignation because it will contribute nothing to the progress of the case.

"The scalawags will continue with or without Bato," he said, adding that around 40 percent of the police are used to corrupt practices.

Dela Rosa, during the same press conference, said he offered to resign because he wanted to give the President a free hand to choose someone else for the position who can do the job better.

"I wanted to give the President the free hand to choose somebody to replace me and do the job as expected. I don't want to add more embarrassment to the country," he said.

Dela Rosa also admitted that the case has affected the credibility of Oplan Tokhang.

Meanwhile, Dela Rosa said he will do his job to the best of his ability and hopes not to fail Duterte and the Filipino people.

Duterte cites Chinese contribution to Philippines economy

From page 1

In a one-page message, Duterte welcomed the new year under the Chinese lunar calendar, describing it as opportunities for "change" that can "mean a forward move, a rising or a leap towards a better station, a steady ground, a reason to be grateful for and proud for the gift of life and the fulfillment of our aspirations."

"The government shares the joys and hopes of our Chinese friends and Chinese Filipinos who have found a root and reason for staying in the country. They have enriched the Filipino culture and history on their own," he said.

The Department of Labor and Employment also reminded businesses to comply with the pay rules for the event, which had been declared a special non-working holiday by Malacañang.

Former Senate president Edgardo Angara and son now Sen. Juan Edgardo Angara pushed for the declara-

tion of Chinese New Year as a special non-working holiday, a measure approved in 2013.

"As we celebrate the onset of the Chinese New Year, we must also observe the proper pay rules for our workers in the private sector," said Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III in a statement.

In his message, Duterte noted how the Chinese have contributed to the economy through trade and investments, as well as in cuisine.

"Their cuisine has been dearly familiar in many Filipino homes. Their philosophy and attitude in life are a wellspring of practical lessons that all of us, regardless of nationality, can learn from," Duterte said. "May all of us develop more appreciation of our heritage as two distinct yet intertwined peoples and further fortify the goodwill that we have shared over the years."

Since he assumed office, Duterte has started to pivot to China as part of his crafting of a more independent foreign policy – seen as

veering away from the US.

"To everyone else who believes in the miracle of beginnings and who makes a choice for hope against fear, my best wishes on this auspicious season of the Chinese New Year," Duterte said.

On the holiday pay, Bello said promoting workers' welfare and protection by observing proper pay rules and other core labor standards would encourage productive and efficient workers. Under existing pay rules for a special non-working day, the "no-work, no-pay" policy would apply to an employee who opts not to work today "unless there is a favorable company policy, practice or collective bargaining agreement granting payment on a special day."

If an employee worked, he shall be paid 130 percent of his daily rate on the first eight hours of work plus an additional 30 percent of his hourly rate for overtime work rendered on the holiday.

Murdered Korean cremated as 'Jose Ruamar Salvador, Filipino'

By Nancy C. Carvajal

The crematorium staff say they learned that 'Ruamar Salvador' was actually Korean Jee Ick Joo only last January 18, when agents from the NBI paid a visit to St Nathaniel

He had been living in the Philippines for the last 8 years, but South Korean national Jee Ick Joo did not seem to have any intentions of changing his citizenship – at least not yet.

But when the 53-year-old businessman's body was brought to a Caloocan City crematorium last October 19, his death certificate not only identified him as Filipino, it also said his name was Jose Ruamar Salvador, of Champaca Street, Sta Quiteria, Caloocan City.

Jee, who had a wife and teenage daughter, was abducted from his home in Angeles City, Pampanga on October 18, along with the family helper. He was apparently killed just hours later.

According to a staff member of the St Nathaniel Crematory in La Loma, Caloocan City, however, the remains of the man who would turn out to be Jee was brought there the next day and cremated at 11:00 in the morning.

An employee of Gream Funeral Services in Bagbaguin, Caloocan City had identified herself as the representative of the dead man's family and made the reservation for the cremation two hours earlier, said the St Nathaniel staff. It was also the same Gream employee who signed all the papers required for the cremation, the staff said.

Death certificate forged?

"We had no idea they were not related," said the crematorium personnel, referring to the Gream employee and Jee. "The assistant even looked distraught when they arrived at our office



St. Nathaniel Crematory

to submit the documents for the cremation of the body."

The crematorium staff said they learned that "Ruamar Salvador" was actually Jee only last January 18, when agents from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) paid a visit to St Nathaniel.

According to the St Nathaniel personnel, two people from Gream had gone to their office to submit the man's death certificate, a health permit from city hall, and authorization to cremate the remains. For the required identification card of a family member, the Gream employee whom the crematorium staff kept referring to as "the assistant" submitted her own ID. False information had been enrolled about the identity of the remains in the evidently fake death certificate.

Cause of death?

The St Nathaniel personnel said that the death certificate contained the time and cause of death, but declined to disclose the details. The staff also said it was only the second time that St Nathaniel had dealt with Gream, which is some 30 minutes away by car from the crematorium.

The urn containing the ashes of the deceased was released to the assistant, the crematorium personnel said. PNP chief Ronald "Bato" dela Rosa would later tell the media that a Gream employee had supposedly panicked and flushed the ashes down the toilet.

The crematorium staff said they have provided the NBI all the documents submitted to them for Jee's cremation.

They also told PCIJ that a close-circuit television camera captures all the activities in the crematorium chamber and in St Nathaniel's offices.

Who is 'Penny'?

The St Nathaniel's staff said she saw the Gream assistant again at the NBI, where they had gone on January 18 (after the NBI's visit to the crematorium) to give their judicial affidavit on the events surrounding the cremation of Jee.

By then, the Gream assistant was answering to the name "Penny." According to the crematorium employee, she asked Penny, "Bakit ninyo naman kami dinamay dito (Why did you get us into this)?"

Penny is apparently an assistant to Gream's owner, Gerardo Santiago, a former policeman who was assigned to the Northern Police District. Senior Police Officer 3 Ricky Sta Isabel, one of the prime suspects in the Jee kidnap-slay, was once deployed to the same police district.

Penny and 4 other employees of the funeral parlor are now under the custody of the NBI. An NBI insider said that the 5 Gream personnel "could identify the people who brought the victim's body to them and ordered a cremation." The NBI insider added that apparently, policemen brought Jee's body to Gream at around 10:00 to 11:00 in the evening of October 18.

The insider also said that the Anti-Illegal Drugs Group members who were on duty when Jee was supposedly brought to the compound of the anti-narcotics group have been summoned by the NBI as part of its ongoing investigation. Penny and the 4 other Gream personnel may be put under the Witness Protection Program, said the NBI source.

Miss France is new Miss U

From page 3

related failure to the devastation her poor country suffered from a major earthquake in 2010.

“About seven years ago, I survived the earthquake and I thought I was failing,” she said, her voice cracking. “I wasn’t living my dream. I was living day by day. And that earthquake, it was such a very bad event, but I chose to be a very positive person and learn a great message from it. If I’m here today, it’s because I’m living my dream.”

The top three underwent an earlier grilling with three other contestants. Crowd favorites Medina and Suansane’s respective advances to the finals were halted during the previous question and answer round. Kenya’s Mary Were, another dark horse, was also eliminated after reaching the top six.



Pia Wurtzbach places the Miss Universe crown on Miss France Iris Mittenhaere after the latter was declared winner in the Miss Universe beauty pageant.

Asked by Harvey what the most significant change she has seen in the last ten years, Medina, taking her time to speak slowly, said in English after hearing the same question asked in Filipino by a

Filipino-speaking interpreter: “In the last ten years of being here in the world... I saw all the people in one event like this the Miss Universe. And it’s something big to us that we are one. As one nation we are all together. Thank you!”

It wasn’t enough to impress the board of judges led by the ever bubbly Dayanara Torres, Miss Universe 1993, and the eloquent Sushmita Sen, Miss Universe 1994, and the radiant Leila Lopez, Miss Universe 2011.

Steve Harvey

Before announcing the winner, Harvey joked about having an eye surgery so that he will not commit the same mistake in reading out the wrong name of the winner which happened last year.

“Pia is one remarkable woman. It’s great to see you. You were first runner-up for 28 seconds,”

Harvey told Pia as she emerged on stage.

Asked about her reign, Wurtzbach told Harvey: “It really exceeded my expectations. It was a remarkable year. I’ve really grown as a woman. I just signed with IMG.”

Wurtzbach said that he forgot to thank Harvey. “Thank you for making me the most popular Miss Universe.”

Harvey responded: “I want to thank you for making me the most popular host of Miss Universe.”

Wurtzbach said that she is happy that the pageant was held in the Philippines for the third time.

“It’s really about time for the Philippines to stage it because we have so much talent and we are just waiting to be recognized. We have so much to offer and welcome everybody to the Philippines,” the German-Filipino beauty queen said.

In the end, the Filipino beauty queen wore Eala’s red and silver dress over Veric’s shiny, all-red number. Eala confirmed through text message that the gown Medina wore, as she glided easily from top nine to top six, was indeed his.

She and Suansane, who wore a semi-beaded black gown, which revealed her midriff, were both touted by pundits, together with Tovar, to make it to the finals. Except for Tovar, both Asian front-runners failed to advance to the final round.

Social media was also said to be swirling with posts from Latinos, especially in Venezuela, decrying Habach’s attitude problem. The accusation was the complete opposite of the Venezuelan beauty queen’s warm and queenly image on stage.

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MAY S. GOROSPE-FAVIS, Lyric soprano, is no stranger to the concert stage. While a student of Josefina Garlit-Bailen at the University of the Philippines College of Music, she honed her vocal talents as a member of Saringhimig, a semi-professional choir based at the school. During that time, Ms. Gorospe-Favis competed and received 2nd Prize in the Senior Division of the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA). She traveled to Paris for studies at the Sorbonne and then to the United States for further vocal studies, taking private lessons with Helena Butterfield and receiving her Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music under the tutelage of maestra Elizabeth Parham. Ms. Gorospe-Favis returned home to the Philippines and was recruited for the small screen as a regular cast member of the popular television series, Aawitan Kita, a program featuring Filipino songs and zarzuelas. Since then she has continued singing to much acclaim in various recitals in both the U.S. and the Philippines.

The February 11th concert at St. Paul’s Catholic Church is her 2nd benefit concert. It is her way of “paying it forward” and for giving hope and encouragement to those who are going through this dreadful disease, cancer.

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Mexicans begin to unite in fight against Trump's plans

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Mexicans are beginning to debate how to fight back against US President Donald Trump's aggressive stance on trade and immigration.

Prominent political figures have suggested the country expel US law enforcement agents, stop detaining Central American migrants or no longer inspect northbound trucks for drug shipments. Some activist groups on Friday were calling for a boycott of American brands.

Former President Felipe Calderon said Thursday that "we have to design a policy of retaliation" for Trump's proposed plans, which include making Mexico pay for the border wall he wants to build.

"We have to put US security issues under review ... including the presence of (US) agents" on Mexican soil, Calderon told local news media.

The comments came after current President Enrique Pena Nieto scrapped a planned Tuesday meeting with Trump after the American president tweeted that it would be better to cancel if Mexico wasn't willing to pay for his proposed wall.

Ruben Aguilar, a political consultant who was spokesman for former President Vicente Fox, noted Friday that Mexico has been stopping Central American migrants before they reach the US border "as part of the logic between two friendly countries."

He suggested that Mexico could

say, "Okay, I'm not going to stop Central Americans anymore," and added, "Now if our two countries aren't friends anymore, that is a card we could play to increase the pressure."

"Drugs are another" possible card, Aguilar said. "If you want to stop them with your wall, well we won't stop them anymore, let them go through."

Trump appeared to try to defuse the spat between the two countries Friday, saying, "Great respect for Mexico, I love the Mexican people."

"We have really, I think, a very good relationship, the president and I, and we had a talk that lasted for about an hour this morning, and we are going to be working on a fair relationship," Trump said.

The office of the Mexican president confirmed the call, calling it "constructive and productive," but did not specifically mention the wall or other policies proposed by Trump it doesn't agree with.

Pena Nieto's government instead stressed "the need for both countries to continue working together to stop the trafficking of drugs and the flow of illegal weapons."

"Both presidents recognized their clear and very public differences on this very sensitive issue, and agreed to solve those dif-



Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump walks with Mexico President Enrique Pena Nieto at the end of their joint statement at Los Pinos, the presidential official residence, in Mexico City. President Donald Trump and Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto spoke for an hour by phone Friday Jan. 27, 2017 amid rising tensions over the U.S. leader's plans for a southern border wall, administration officials said.

ferences as part of an integrated discussion of all aspects of the bilateral relationship," Pena Nieto's office said. "The two presidents also agreed, for the moment, to no longer speak publicly about this controversial topic."

Pena Nieto met with Mexican lawmakers to discuss US relations. "There will be constant communication between the federal executive and the Senate to define what actions to take," said Fernando Herrera of the conservative National Action Party.

On Friday afternoon, Mexican business magnate Carlos Slim called for "national unity" in the face of Trump's hostility, and said the country should have a measured response "without getting

angry but without surrendering."

Slim called for a "modern, not protectionist" national program of substituting imported products, the vast majority of which come from the United States.

But he stopped short of calling for a boycott of American goods.

"I think it is an error to think about boycotting companies," Slim said. "What we should do instead is buy what is produced in Mexico."

A coalition of Mexican farm and consumer groups, however, did call for such a boycott when it raised the battle flag on Jan. 18, two days before Trump took office.

The campaign's slogan — "Consumers cry war!" — echoes the first line of Mexico's national anthem as it calls on Mexicans to buy national products.

"The statements and threats from the US president-elect are irrational and unacceptable, but they should awaken a rational response, and lead us to radically change in our model of national development, and recover sovereignty over our food system," the coalition said in a statement.

In a country where US chain restaurants, coffee shops and stores are now ubiquitous, social media users created long strings of

hashtags such as #AdiosStarbucks #AdiosCostco, #AdiosWalmart, #AdiosMcDonalds, #AdiosProductosGringos, #ConsumoProductosMexicanos.

Peter Schechter, senior vice president for strategic initiatives at the Atlantic Council, said the dispute may awaken underlying currents of resentment in Mexico. The US took away almost half of Mexico's territory in the 1848 Mexican-American War, though that historic resentment had faded in the last three decades.

"All this does is to solidify the view that an attempt to negotiate with the United States under this administration is impossible, and that we should break from the United States," Schechter said. "This argument has moved from incredulous, to possible in people's minds. The next step is it moves from possible, to the right thing, and that step is not that far."

Former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo wrote in an op-ed in the Washington Post that "the prudent thing" is to assume that Trump will kill NAFTA, which he said would be costly to Mexico.

"But such an outcome should not be cause for despair in my country," he wrote, calling for Mexico to reinforce its commitment to openness and tell companies from around the world that it remains open for business.

"The end of NAFTA, as disruptive and costly as it would be in the short term, could be compensated for with the right set of policies," Zedillo wrote.

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Women's March

By Sarah Cascone

In a day of protest on Saturday, January 21, hundreds of thousands of women gathered in Washington, DC, to object to the agenda of President Donald Trump. The crowds in Washington were mirrored in demonstrations in cities across the country and around the world: in Boston, 175,000 people attended, according to the New York Times; in Atlanta, 60,000 people marched; and in New York, crowds of over 400,000 took to the streets, many of whom



Art patron Agnes Gund and artist Laurie Simmons were among the marchers.

donned pink hats and turned out along Fifth Avenue. In the weeks leading up to the inauguration, the art world organized its resistance. Art spaces around the country responded to the #J20 call to stop operations on January 20 to "combat the normalization of Trumpism." Shepard Fairey designed a new series of hopeful posters for inauguration weekend that did not feature the image of the president this time around. And then there were the Dear Ivanka activist rallies and the "Nasty Women" art shows, which began with one exhibition that originated in a Facebook post and grew into a four-day fundraiser for Planned Parenthood and spawned similar shows around the world.

Muslims barred from flights to U.S., as others detained

US President Donald Trump's order to ban entry into the US travelers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen sparks widespread international criticism and personal heartache

By Agence France-Presse

TEHRAN, Iran — Muslims from 7 countries were barred Saturday, January 28, from flying to the US and others detained there after US President Donald Trump froze arrivals, with one man saying his life has been “destroyed”.

Iran, which saw many of its citizens stranded in European and Middle Eastern airports, denounced the “insulting” ban and said it would reciprocate.

Trump on Friday, January 27, signed a sweeping executive order to suspend the arrival of refugees and impose tough new controls on travelers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

His move sparked widespread international criticism and personal heartache.

“Donald Trump destroyed my life,” Iraqi Fuad Sharef, 51, told Agence France-Presse.

He had been in transit in Cairo with his wife and two children when officials told them they could not board an EgyptAir flight to New York's John F Kennedy airport.

“I had sold my house, my car, my furniture. I resigned from work and so did my wife. I took my children out of school” to resettle in Nashville, Tennessee under a special immigrant visa, he said.

A pharmaceutical industry manager who had previously worked for an NGO subcontracted by the US aid agency, Sharif and his family were put on a flight back to Iraq.

In Tehran, an Iranian studying in California said the new restrictions would affect her studies.

“I had a ticket for Turkish Airlines on February 4, but it has been cancelled,” the girl, who did not wish to be identified, told Agence France-Presse.

Several other Iranians hoping to fly from Europe were also told they could not board US-bound flights, including an elderly couple stranded for the night in Vienna.

Legal challenge

Airlines said they had no choice but to respect Trump's executive order



'LET THEM IN' Protestors rally during a demonstration against the Muslim immigration ban at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

and deny citizens from the 7 Muslim-majority countries from traveling to the US.

Two travel agencies in Iran said they had been instructed by Etihad Airways, Emirates and Turkish Airlines not to sell US tickets or allow Iranians holding American visas to board US-bound flights.

There are no flights from Iran to the United States, where more than a million Iranians live.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani did not comment directly on the ban Saturday, but said that now was “not the time to build walls between nations”.

The Islamic republic's foreign ministry said it would “respond in kind after the insulting decision of the United States concerning Iranian nationals” until the measure is lifted.

Tehran called the decision “illegal, illogical and contrary to international rules”. In Khartoum, the Sudanese foreign ministry expressed its “regret” at the US ban.

The New York Times reported that two Iraqi refugees with valid visas were detained late Friday at JFK airport just hours after Trump signed the order.

On Saturday, the American Civil Liberties Union and other advocacy groups filed a legal challenge to Trump's order, and asked for their suit to be considered a class action.

One of those held, Hameed Khalid Darweesh who has worked for the US government in Iraq for 10 years, was later released.

He told reporters “America is the greatest nation, the greatest people in the world”.

'Firm response'

But 11 others remain detained at JFK, according to Democratic congressman Jerrold Nadler, who went

there to press for the release of the first two.

The United Nations urged Trump to continue his country's “long tradition” of welcoming refugees and to ensure their equal treatment, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the world body hopes that Trump's decision to ban refugees is a temporary measure and that they will again be given protection.

French President Francois Hollande said Europe must have a “firm response” to Trump, and “when he refuses the arrival of refugees, while Europe has done its duty, we have to respond”.

Trump's decree — which he says aims to make America safe from “radical Islamic terrorists” — specifically says no visas will be issued for 90 days to migrants or visitors from the 7 Muslim states.

It also bars Syrian refugees indefinitely, or until Trump himself decides that they no longer pose a threat.

His decree suspends the entire US refugee resettlement program for at least 120 days while tough new vetting rules are established.

In Lebanon, Syrian refugees struggling to get by in makeshift camps bemoaned their fate.

“What on earth have the Syrian people done to deserve this?” asked Abu Mahmoud al-Ghol.

“And to think it's a democratic country doing it,” the 44-year-old said.

Nearly 6 years of conflict in Syria have driven more than half the population from their homes, with many fleeing abroad and dreaming of new lives in the West.

Trump order will block 500,000 Legal U.S. Residents from Returning to America from Trips Abroad

In banning newcomers from seven countries from entering the United States for the next 90 days, the president has used language that will affect those who are in the U.S. already on visas and green cards

By Marcelo Rochabrun

A spokeswoman for the Department of Homeland Security told Reuters on Saturday morning that the President's executive order will, in fact, stop green card holders from seven countries from returning to the United States if they travel abroad. “It will bar green card holders,” the spokeswoman said.



Muslims and immigration activists at a prayer and rally against President Donald Trump's immigration policies.

When details leaked earlier this week about a spate of immigration-related executive orders from President Donald Trump, much public discussion focused on a 30-day ban on new visas for citizens from seven “terror-prone” countries.

But the order signed this afternoon by Trump is actually more severe, increasing the ban to 90 days. And its effects could extend well beyond preventing newcomers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen, from entering the U.S., lawyers consulted by ProPublica said.

Are you from Iraq, Iran, Syria, Yemen, Sudan, Libya or Somalia and live in the United States either on a visa or a green card? We want to hear from you if President Trump's travel ban is impacting your life. You can email us at travelban@propublica.org, or text me an encrypted message using Signal to (609) 613-0526. Share your story.

It's also expected to have substantial effects on hundreds of thousands of people from these countries who already live in the U.S. under green cards or on temporary student or employee visas.

Since the order's travel ban applies to all “aliens” — a term that encompasses anyone who isn't an American citizen — it could bar those with current visas or even green cards from returning to the U.S. from trips abroad, said Stephen Legomsky, a former chief counsel to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services under President Obama.

“It's extraordinarily cruel,” he said.

The order bans the “entry” of foreigners from those countries and specifically exempts from the ban those

who hold certain diplomatic visas.

Not included in the exemption, however, are those who hold long-term temporary visas — such as students or employees — who have the right to live in the United States for years at a time, as well as to travel abroad and back as they please.

“If applied literally, this provision would bar even those visitors who had made temporary trips abroad, for example a student who went home on winter break and is now returning,” Legomsky said on Friday evening executive order.

Trump made “extreme vetting” of foreigners a cornerstone of his campaign, particularly those from countries that are predominantly Muslim and that he considers hostile to the U.S.

“I'm establishing new vetting measures to keep radical Islamic terrorists out of the United States of America. We don't want them here,” Trump said this afternoon, describing the intention of the executive order. “We want to ensure that we are not admitting to our country the very threats our soldiers are fighting overseas.”

Trump signed the directive just before 5 p.m. but it took the White House almost three hours to release the actual text.

About 25,000 citizens from the seven countries specified in Trump's ban have been issued student or employment visas in the past three years, according to Department of Homeland Security reports.

On top of that, almost 500,000 people from the seven countries have received green cards in the past decade, allowing them to live and work in the United States indefinitely. Legally speaking, green

card holders are considered aliens. While lawyers are unsure if they would actually be barred from reentering the U.S. if they have traveled abroad, they conceded it's a possibility.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment asking for clarification on the meaning of the executive order.

Citizens of Iran and Iraq far outnumber those from the other five countries among green card and visa holders. In the past 10 years, Iranian and Iraqi citizens have received over 250,000 green cards.

Iran also has the 11th most students in the U.S. among foreign nations, according to the Institute of International Education's Open Doors report, which tracks the demographics of international students.

“We are inundated with calls and questions of how this is going to affect people,” said Jamal Abdi, policy director for the National Iranian American Council, an organization that advocates for better relations between Iranian and American people.

Abdi is concerned the temporary ban will become permanent. The order says the 90-day ban is meant to allow the U.S. and the seven targeted countries to discuss what information would need to be shared in order to start granting visas once again. But if no agreement is reached, citizens would remain blocked from entry.

“My interpretation is that the Iranian government is not going to comply regarding sharing information,” Abdi said, “which would render this a permanent ban.”



PerryScope

By Perry Diaz

Is martial law just a matter of time?



President Rodrigo Duterte and his generals.

President Rodrigo “Digong” Duterte won the presidency hands down by 39% plurality and 16.6 million votes. His closest rival, Mar Roxas, got 23.4%, which is only 9.9 million votes. Not only did Duterte win the presidency, he also took control of the House of Representatives when a vast majority of congressmen from other parties – there were only three from Digong’s party – abandoned their parties and joined Digong’s party, the Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan (Philippine Democratic Party-Power of the People) or PDP-Laban for short.

Known in the local parlance as “balimbings” (political turncoats), Duterte’s followers in the House provide him with an ironclad defense from any attempt to impeach him. In the Senate, while there are only three (out of the 24 senators) who are affiliated with PDP-Laban, Digong’s personal influence over the senators is unquestionable. Except for two or three senators, most of the senators wouldn’t dare oppose Digong. They respect and fear him.



Duterte and the late dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos.

In essence, one can say that Digong is a “strongman” like Russian President Vladimir Putin; but he is not a “dictator” like the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos who had absolute power over everything. And this begs the question: Why would Digong want to declare martial law, when his grip to power is strong? Would it be fair to presume that he might have been thinking of the day when his grip weakens and loses control of Congress? And the specter of that happening could give him sleepless nights, insecurity, and paranoia. Could this be the

reason why he is not comfortable sleeping in Malacañang Palace protected by the elite Presidential Security Group?

Indeed, he’d rather commute by plane everyday working between Malacañang and his modest home in Davao City, which consumes several hours thus shortening his productive time in running the country. But his long commute time doesn’t seem to bother him. He probably feels safer sleeping in his private home secured by his personal Praetorian Guard, and surrounded by his “loyal” constituents... and the safety of his mosquito net, which protects him from dengue-carrying mosquitoes while he sleeps.

Insecurity

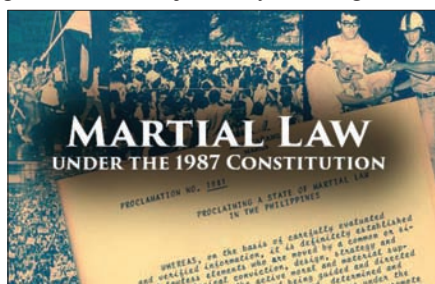
It’s probably this feeling of insecurity -- compounded by paranoid mood swings -- that has driven him to consider declaring martial law. But there are two impediments: the 1987 Constitution and the Supreme Court. Declaring martial law is not as easy as in 1972 when Marcos with the support of the powerful “Rolex 12,” a group of the most influential military generals and defense officials including a rich business tycoon, imposed martial law and ruled by decree.

Martial law

It all began last August when Digong included several judges – he called them “narco-judges” – on a “narco list” of alleged drug lords and users. He threatened to have them arrested to which Supreme Court Chief Justice Ma. Lourdes

Serenio reacted by issuing a statement, saying that “law enforcers must first secure warrants of arrest from judges before judges allow themselves to be ‘physically accountable to any police officer’ as she warned of a constitutional crisis.” This did not bode well with Digong who responded angrily, “I’m giving you a warning. Don’t create a crisis because I will order everybody in the executive department not to honor you,” he said referring to Sereno. He added, “Please, don’t order me. I’m not a fool. If this continues, (that) you’re trying to stop me, I might lose my cool. Or would you rather I declare martial law?”

But there is one obstacle: the Constitution. Section 18, Article VII says that the President, as commander-in-chief, may “in case of invasion or rebellion, when the public safety requires it” suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus or place the country under martial law.” However, the martial law period or suspension of the writ of habeas corpus should not exceed 60 days. The writ safeguards individual freedom against arbitrary state action. It also specifies “that a state of martial law cannot override the function of both the judiciary and legislative



Martial Law under the 1987 Constitution.

branches of the government.” It also doesn’t “authorize the conferment of jurisdiction on military courts and agencies over civilians where civil courts are able to function, nor automatically suspend the privilege of the writ.”

But his allies quickly defended him. Presidential Chief Legal Counsel Salvador Panelo said, “The imminent danger brought about by the proliferation of illegal drugs is enough basis for Duterte to place the Philippines under martial law.” The question is: Can Digong declare martial law like

Marcos, abolish the Constitution, and rule by decree? Can he abolish the civilian government all the way down to the local executive levels? And who would help him administer martial law? Would it be the 160,000-strong Philippine National Police (PNP) under the leadership of the controver-



Marcos and son Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr.

sial General Ronald “Bato” de la Rosa? With the PNP’s record of killing suspected drug pushers and allegations of “kidnapping for ransom” operations using the PNP’s Oplan Tokhang anti-drug campaign, the PNP is now suspected of extrajudicial killings (EJK) or “salvaging.” This is reminiscent of the dark martial law days of the Marcos era.

Bongbong

And this brings to mind Digong’s ardent desire to have Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr., the late dictator’s only son and namesake, succeed him as president. Duterte is presumably indebted to the Marcoses who contributed large amounts to Duterte’s presidential campaign. But the problem is that Bongbong lost the vice presidential election to Leni Robredo who took over the vice presidency at the same time as Digong. Bongbong protested Leni’s election, which was by a small margin, by submitting a 20,000-page document before Supreme Court (SC), which sits as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET). According to former SC Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, it would take more than three years before the PET reaches a decision.

Well, for some reason, Digong couldn’t wait that long to turn over the presidency by way of a “resignation due to poor health.” He said that he could be stepping down sooner, in which case he’d like Bongbong to persistently pursue his electoral protest. Which makes one wonder: How can Bongbong’s electoral protest be expedited?

My crystal ball shows that there is one Associate Justice who is actively “lobbying” the other justices to rule in favor of Bongbong. Not three years, not one year, but very soon! The word is that majority of the PET has already been convinced to rule favorably for Bongbong by abbreviating the process and calling for a vote immediately. How did the “lobbying” work? Is it by friendly persuasion or gentle pressure... or bribery? But if it works one way or the other, then we’re looking at a decision very soon. However, it also rumored that a group has been formed to resist martial law and stop Bongbong from taking over the presidency.

Sanctions

Ultimately, a Bongbong presidency could attract a hostile consortium of foreign governments who would impose economic sanctions against Bongbong and his government, just like the way the U.S. and her allies sanctioned Russia after she invaded Crimea. But Russia is barely surviving the sanctions only because she has a sovereign reserve currency of \$500 billion dollars; the Philippines doesn’t have that kind of wealth.

But if for some reason, the Supreme Court justices come to their senses and for once demonstrate their loyalty to the Constitution that they were sworn to defend and uphold, then Digong might just do what he had threatened to do.



Sad to say, all the gains that have brought the Philippines out of the economic doldrums during the Marcos era may be wasted by Digong’s irresponsible and disgraceful act of destroying the collective efforts of the Filipino people in the past three decades. And this brings to fore the question: Is martial law just a matter of time? (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

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China military official says war with US under Donald Trump 'becoming practical reality'

Sino-US relations are becoming more tense under America's new administration

By Will Worley

War with the US under Donald Trump is "not just a slogan" and becoming a "practical reality", a senior Chinese military official has said.

The remarks were published on the People's Liberation Army website, apparently in response to the aggressive rhetoric towards China from America's new administration.

They communicated a view from inside the Central Military Commission, which has overall authority of China's armed forces.

Quoted in the South China Morning Post, the official from the Commission's Defence Mobilisation Department wrote: "A war 'within the president's term' or 'war breaking out tonight' are not just slogans, they are becoming a practical reality."

The official also called for military deployments in the tense South and East China Seas and for a missile defence system to guard the Korean peninsula, another regional hotspot, the Post reported.

The US should also reconsider its strategy in the Asia-Pacific region, the official wrote.

Mr Trump and members of his



PLA soldiers on parade in China

administration have consistently voiced a hard line against China. Mr Trump has branded the country a "currency manipulator" and accusing the country of underhand trading and economic tactics.

But more significantly in security terms, Mr Trump has also ignored the US's longstanding 'One China' policy, publicly engaging with the President of Taiwan, Tsai Ing-wen, in a move that was hugely antagonising for Beijing.

China strongly regards Taiwan as part of its territory and the US has tacitly respected this for decades, but Mr Trump signalled a departure from this policy.

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has also advocated a US naval blockade of artificial Chinese islands in the South China Sea – which Beijing could interpret as

an act of war.

Further suggestions China is preparing for conflict emerged this week, with unconfirmed reports the military has moved long range missiles closer to the north east border in Heilongjiang province -- within firing range of the US.

Chinese social media has carried pictures claiming to show the Dongfeng-41 advanced intercontinental ballistic missile system near the Russian border.

Provocative state-run tabloid The Global Times suggested the People's Liberation Army could have leaked the photos on social media as a warning to Mr Trump.

However, Chinese President Xi Jinping has also recently called for the reduction of nuclear weapons.

China 'deploys long-range nuclear-capable missiles to coast' in response to Donald Trump's 'aggression'

English-language newspaper carries editorial urging Beijing to 'ready itself to pressures imposed by the new US Government'

By Rachel Roberts

Chinese missiles with long-range nuclear capability have reportedly been deployed within striking range of the US.

China has moved long-range missiles to the Russian border from where they could reach the USA, apparently in response to President Donald Trump's "aggression", unconfirmed reports say.

The missiles, which can carry ten nuclear warheads up to 8,700 miles, have reportedly been moved to Heilongjiang province in north-east China.

A leading English language newspaper in the communist country carried an editorial urging the country to strengthen its nuclear arsenal to "force" the US to respect China in the wake of the new President's tough talk.

The Global Times – which is state controlled like all Chinese media and is sometimes used to road-test public opinion - this week called on the Government to boost its nuclear arsenal.

The editorial said: "Before Trump took power, his team showed a tough stance toward China, and in turn, Beijing will ready itself for pressures imposed by the new US Government."

And it added: "China bears the heavy task of safeguarding national security. Nuclear deterrence is the foundation of China's national security, which must be consolidated with the rising strategic risks."

It said a military clash with the US is "the very last thing that China wants" but nuclear weapons must be at the cornerstone of its deterrent.

The call is in stark contrast to a speech given by Chinese President Xi Jinping to the United Nations just days earlier, where he called for nuclear weapons to be "prohibited and destroyed over time".

Chinese social media has carried pictures claiming to show an advanced intercontinental ballistic missile system, Dongfeng-41 in the north-east.

The Global Times suggested the People's Liberation Army

could have leaked the photos on social media as a warning to Mr Trump.

The President, who has been in office for less than a week, has ruffled Chinese feathers with strident talk on trade and national security.

In one of the campaign debates with Hillary Clinton, he blamed China for stealing US jobs from Americans, for devaluing the dol-



Missiles with long-range nuclear capability have been deployed within striking range of the US.

lar and for engaging in state-sponsored cyberhacking.

Mr Trump said: "Look at what China is doing to our country. They are using our country as a piggy bank to rebuild China."

He also said on Twitter back in 2012 that global warming was "a hoax perpetuated by the Chinese" – but has since said that was meant in jest.

Before he took office, Mr Trump stoked a diplomatic row by accusing China of flexing its muscles in the disputed territory of the South China Sea.

Mr Trump's nominee for Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, said last week China's access to the islands it has built there might be blocked - raising the prospect of a military confrontation.

Rex Tillerson calls China's actions in the South China Sea 'illegal'

The US does not recognise Taiwan as a sovereign nation, but in December Mr Trump became the first US President or President-elect since Jimmy Carter in 1979 to speak on the telephone to Taiwan's leader, President Tsai Ing-wen.

The bilateral relations between the US and China are regarded as among the most important in the world because of the potential for conflict and the size of their economies.

Relations between the two countries have generally been stable but with some periods of conflict – most notably in the Vietnam and Korean Wars.

Mr Trump has urged China to use its influence to rein in North Korea, which is believed to have conducted at least two tests of nuclear weapons in the last year.

Philippine Fiesta

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Filipino Family Fraternity

Installation of Officers for 2017-2018, held at Casa Ignacio, RVM Sisters Residence, Elk Grove, on January 7, 2017 with a mass officiated by Fr. Joyle Martinez and also the Inducting officer.

Officers are the following: President, Aida Azurin, 1st. Vice Pres., Alice Pambid, 2nd. Vice Pres., Ray Oineza, Secretary, Rose Basos, Corresponding Secretary, Cleo Sabarre, Treasurer, Mercedes Guerrero, Assistant Treasurer, Ling Avera, Auditor, Maria Bahoric, Peace Officers, Alex Avera and Segundo Azurin, Directors: Josie Patria, Paul Cordero, Julie Oineza, Lourdes Belosio, Luz Daclan, Linda Cordero, Bembet Borromeo, Divina Borromeo, Remedios Mangosing, Carol Munar, Linda Gibson. Advisor is Sr. Josie Tanudtanus, Spiritual Advisor, Fr. Joyle Martinez



President Aida Azurin



President Vickie Debord and Mona Pasquil

FILIPINO WOMEN'S CLUB

Installation of officers for -2017-2018, held at the Sheriff Office at 7000 65th. Street, Sacramento, CA 95823 on January 8, 2017. Installing guest was Mona Pasquil.

President, Vickie Debord, 1st. Vice Pres. Zenny Yagen, 2nd. Vice Pres. Remy Solomon, Secretary, Cleo Sabarre Ner, corresponding Secretary, Rose Basos, Treasurer, Aida Azurin, Assistant Treasurer, Lee Ramirez, Auditor, Mercy Guerrero, Sergeant-At-Arms-Millet Pangilinan, Parliamentarian, Josie Patria, PRO-Vickie Johnson, Directors: Erlinda Aglubat, Julie Oineza, Olive Jackson, Carol Munar and Sylvia Tamayo.,



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One tree for every year of Lion service
And a Legacy Tree planted by DG Kumar
to commemorate the Lions Centennial.
Reserve your spot!
Volunteer by March 1, 2017 @ <https://goo.gl/LCbUvg>
*. Stonelake's National Wildlife Refuge, Hood Franklin Road, Elk Grove, CA
(In partnership with Sacramento Tree Foundation)
For more information, please contact Dolores V. Diaz at Doloresvdiaz@gmail.com
Or Jason Sullivan-Halpern at volunteer@sactree.com

"Trees" by Elle Diaz Dunbar

Ati-Atihan Festival and Dance

From page 1

The festival is celebrated in Kalibo on the Island of Panay (Visayas). The procession is the climax of the fiesta and street dancers never fail to enter the Kalibo church every time they pass by. Compared to the carnival in Rio, Brazil, the Ati-Atihan Festival includes the mass celebration, parades, procession and dancing. The name Ati-Atihan means "make-believe Atis."

The Ati-Atihan is the only festival in Sacramento to celebrate this kind of endless dancing (Sadsad) to the continuous rhythmic beat of drums and lyre, in which the last celebration was led by Tony Solidium. It is a festival in honor of Santo Nino, celebrated on the 3rd week of January.

The new officers of the Aklan Association and Vicinity in Sacramento for 2017:

- President - Danny YapDiangco
- 1st vice President - Wallaine Bantigue
- 2nd vice President - Juby R. Osit
- Secretary - Faith I. Rogan
- Assistant Secretary - Nida C. Zabal
- Treasurer - Necita I. Ruiz
- Assistant Treasurer - Elma R. Taitague
- Auditor - Venus A. O'Meara
- Parliamentarian - Edgardo Zabal Jr.
- Press Relations Officer - Jose Rolando 'Jun' G. Osit, John Joan Inuman
- Sargeant at Arms - Robert Bantigue, Cyrus F. Reyes, Kenneth Inuman
- Historian - Marie Solidium, Maricar R. Nguyen, Edgardo Zabal Sr.
- Advisors - Frank Zabal, Ciciro Reyes, Ph. D., Sarah Enloe, Venus O'Meara, Elena Magsuci, Nenita Ruiz, Blas Dela Cruz, Tony Solidium and Dionisio Tonel, D.M.D.



Philippine Consulate On Wheels

(Consular Outreach)

- * **Passport Application and Renewal**
- * **Dual Citizenship**
- * **Legal Documentations - SPAs, Affidavits, Civil Registry, Reports of Births & Marriages, etc.**

March 18, 2017, Saturday
 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
 Filipino American Veterans Hall
 8831 Gerber Road, Sacramento, CA 95828

Strictly an appointment only
 To set an appointment contact
 Dr. Antonio Solomon at 916.682.3382
 remidi50@aol.com

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 PF News (Philippine Fiesta)





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By Dale Esperante

Local Veterans and Community Updates

RECOGNITION

On 15 Jan 2017, two members of The American Legion Magellan Post 604 were presented a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition and sincere appreciation of outstanding service and assistance which contributed to the advancement of The American Legion programs and activities dedicated to God and Country. Congratulations to Eusebio L. Sarte and Pastor S. Engkabo Jr.



The American Legion District 6 Commander Will Williams presented two Certificates of Appreciation on 15 Jan 2017 at Magellan Hall. One to Comrade Eusebio L. Sarte (WWII Veteran who has been a member of the Legion for more than 44 years), and the other to Comrade Pastor S. Engkabo Jr. (Korean War Veteran and Legion member for more than 36 years.) The certificates were signed by Chaplain Dale Esperante and Commander Tom Amaba. Chaplain Dale was acting commander on 15 Jan 2017 per request of Commander Tom in his absence. (Photos by Joe Gonzalez)



Eusebio L. Sarte - A WWII Veteran and an American Legion Member for 44 Continued Years.



Pastor S. Engkabo Jr. - A Korean War Veteran and an American Legion Member for 36 Continued Years.

ORATORICAL PROGRAM

In November 2016, I mailed a letter to five local high schools (Elk Grove, Laguna Creek, Sheldon, Luther Burbank, Hiram Johnson) regarding the American Legion Oratorical Contest, www.legion.org/oratorical. The Oratorical Contest is a Constitutional Speech Contest. Students who qualify may be eligible for scholarship money ranging from hundreds to thousands of dollars. The overall National contest winner gets an \$18,000 scholarship, 2nd place \$16,000, 3rd place \$14,000.

To reach the National Contest, a student must qualify through the following levels of competition: Post, District, Area, and Department (State). The State winner will receive \$1500 in addition to the opportunity of representing our state in the national finals. Travel for Department (State) winners will be paid by the American Legion. A chaperone over 21 years of age must accompany each contestant.

A senior from Sheldon High School answered Magellan Post 604's invitation to the American Legion Oratorical Contest. His name is Matthew Simons. Sheldon High School Scholarship Coordinator, Angela McCabe, communicated Mat-



Commander Tom Amaba, Matthew Simons and American Legion District 6 Commander Will Williams.

thew's interest in this scholarship program. On 18 Dec 2016, Matthew delivered two speeches, prepared and assigned, before the members of Post 604. The veterans of the Post voted to award Matthew \$150 scholarship money for qualifying. On 19 Feb 2017 at 1 p.m., Matthew is eligible to represent Post 604 in the District 6 contest to be held

at 523 Bush St, Woodland, CA. After the District contest, Matthew may receive another \$150 from Magellan Post 604. District 6 will also present scholarship money to the winner of its oratorical contest. After the District, the next level will be at the Area 1 (Northern California) contest on 26 Feb 2017 at 1 p.m. at the Woodland City

Council Chambers at 300 First St. Woodland CA. The State contest will be on 4 Mar 2017 at the California State Capitol (Time and place TBA).

Matthew's parents are William (Bill) Tyson and Mylene Simons. Mylene is from the town of Lezo in Aklan province of the Philippines.

INVITATION TO A FUNDRAISING DANCE BY THE ADJUTANT/PRINCESS

On 17 Dec 2016, Magellan Post 604 Adjutant Luzviminda Molina was crowned Mrs. Visayas by the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity (FCSV) in their annual Mrs. Philippines Pageant and Banquet. Mrs. Visayas is one of three princesses to Mrs. Philippines, Queen Carol Munar. This year, Adjutant Luz is one of two female veteran members of Post 604, and one of the few members who are still working (not yet retired). She is a Nurse Practitioner for Sutter Senior Care PACE (program for all-inclusive care for the elderly).

Luz is organizing a fundraising dance for the friends and veterans of Magellan Hall on



Adjutant Luzviminda Molina was crowned Mrs. Visayas by the Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity (FCSV).

18 Feb 2017, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. (or later-we're flexible). The donation per person is only \$12 including merienda and beverage. There is no official program scheduled, but if you are an entertainer and would like to perform, we will welcome your performance. This is a time to enjoy dancing and exercising to the beat of the music in the company of like-minded people. Come and join us and have fun-fun-fun!!!

BALLROOM IN VALLEJO

If you enjoy being in the company of serious ballroom dancers and you don't mind driving more than an hour one way from Sacramento, then go to the Filipino Center of Vallejo at 611 Amador St., Vallejo, CA 94590. They hold a dance every Sunday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., for \$10 per person including merienda and beverage. You will find yourself in the company of serious but fun-loving ballroom dancers. There you will meet Annie Frias Ramos, the president of Visayan Circle of Northern California, and her husband Jess, the manager and vice-president of the Fil-Am Community Center. There is no official program except for a few mo-



Ballroom dancing in Vallejo

ments during the evening when the emcee will introduce the newcomers and groups visiting from different towns of northern California. If you don't know how to dance Ballroom or Latin but willing to learn, Tony Esperante said, "there are always friendly dancers who could show you a step or two, for free!" For exclusive instructions, special dance instructors are available. If you have any questions, you may contact Manager Jess Ramos at 707-319-6864.

CONSULATE ON WHEELS

The Philippine Consulate General in San Francisco will be sending its Consulate on Wheels to Sacramento on 18 March 2017. As in the past, the Consulate on Wheels will be accommodated by The American Legion Magellan Post 604 at 8831 Gerber Road, Sacramento, CA 95828. The following services can be provided by the Consulate on Wheels: PASSPORT, DUAL CITIZENSHIP, AND LEGAL.

Please be advised to check the website www.philippinesanfrancisco.org to ensure that your paperwork meets all the requirements before coming to the Consulate on Wheels.

Please note that the first two hours (8 a.m. - 10 a.m.) will be BY APPOINTMENT



The Bayanihan Club of Sacramento USA, with the volunteers and sponsors.

only. Volunteers from the following organization will assist as facilitators for the staff of the consulate: Bayanihan of Sacramento, Magellan Post 604, Filipino Community of Sacramento and Vicinity, Cabalen, Naguilan, Ilocano, Maharlika Lions, and Philip-

pine Fiesta/PF News. For further information and appointment call: Dr. Tony and Remy Solomon at 916-682-3382. You may also email remedi50@aol.com

POST EVERLASTING

On 14 Jan 2017, Commander Tom Amaba read, "Another Legionnaire has been called to the High Command, and has gone to report to the Commander of us all." After the funeral mass for Raymundo S. Manglicmot Sr., the Post Chaplain and the Commander performed the American Legion Post Everlasting ritual in the presence of family and friends of the departed. After the Chaplain read, "Farewell our friend, Legionnaire and comrade," the legionnaires who were in attendance rose and formed a line in the center aisle. In single file, the legionnaires approached the casket and rendered a slow Post Everlasting Salute as a sign of respect and farewell to the departed comrade. Comrade Raymundo was a Korean War veteran. He was a member of Magellan Post 604 for 13 years. Born on 4 Jan 1928--Passed on 1 Jan 2017. His surviving spouse, Aurora, is still a member of The American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604.



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UNLUCAI meeting headed by President Tina Bambao held at the residence of Emer and Josie Manaid at Vallejo on January 7, 2017, for the upcoming 35th anniversary honoring the founders of UNLUCAI, the late Alfredo and Adelaida Vita. The event will be on May 27, 2017 at Hilton Sacramento Arden West, 2200 Harvard Street, Sacramento, CA 95815.



Dr. Belisario "Billie" Monteagudo 80th Birthday Celebration



Dr. Belisario "Billie" Monteagudo, husband of Virgie Monteagudo, celebrated his 80th. Birthday with a dinner dance held at St. Paul's Parish Hall on January 21, 2017, attended by his family, siblings, parishioners of St. Paul, and friends in the community.



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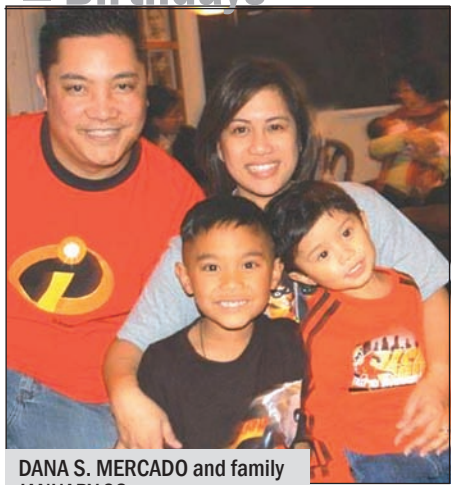
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Birthdays



DANA S. MERCADO and family
JANUARY 28



RHUENA BUENTIPO with hubby
Mannie / FEBRUARY 1



CRISTINA BAMBAO
JANUARY 28



BLAS DELA CRUZ
FEBRUARY 3



LEILA E. PEREIRA with Natalie, Melanie, Eric and Cynthia
JANUARY 29



JENNIFER CHENG
JANUARY 30



SHER with ED NAZARENO
JANUARY 28

Anniversary



DR. TONY and REMY SOLOMON
35th Wedding Anniversary, February 17



JUN and FAINA ABAYA
53rd Wedding Anniversary, January 26



Calendar of Events

FEBRUARY 16, 2017 (THURSDAY)

Rize All Dinner Dance
Beginner Ballroom - 5:30 to 7:00pm
Dinner and Dancing - 7:00 to 10:00pm
2745 Elk Grove Blvd. Ste. #270
Elk Grove, CA 95758
916.538.3255
Dance@RizeAll.com
www.RizeAll.com



March 18, 2017 (SATURDAY)

COW - Consulate on Wheels
9:00am to 4:00pm
Filipino American Veterans Hall
8831 Gerber Rd. Sacramento, CA
Appointment only
916.682.3382
remidi50@aol.com

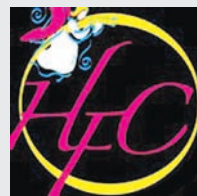


March 18, 2017 (SATURDAY)

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Fil-Am appointed as new White House assistant press secretary

By Rosette Adel

A Filipino-American has recently joined United States (US) President Donald Trump's administration.

The 23-year-old Filipino-American, Ninio Fetalvo, was assigned to serve as an assistant press secretary at the White House Office of the Press Secretary, according to Filipino community newspaper Asian Journal.

Fetalvo was reportedly asked by US Press Secretary Sean Spicer, his former boss at the Republican National Committee (RNC) where he used to work as the Asian Pacific American press secretary.

He confirmed his appointment by posting his current role at the White House in his LinkedIn profile.

The young assistant press secretary will start working for the Trump administration on Monday. He will work under three deputy press secretaries reporting to Spicer.

In the Asian Journal report, Fetalvo said he is honored to work on behalf of the United States and the American people. He said



Ninio Fetalvo

he is excited to see "what Trump and US Vice President Mike Pence accomplish to truly make the country great again."

According to Fetalvo's Linked In profile, he graduated from the George Washington University with a bachelor's degree in Political Communication. He also previously served as Deputy Director of Strategic Media of the 58th Presidential Inaugural Committee which handled the inauguration of Trump.

Fetalvo's previous work experiences include his service as Florida Communications Director for RNC, Deputy Director of Media Affairs for RNC, Deputy Press Secretary of California for RNC, Asian Pacific American Press Assistant and Spokesman for RNC, among others. He rendered his internship also at the RNC as well as Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and served as a legislative intern at the US House of Representatives.

Bataan Death March survivor recalls

By Bev Llorente

ALBUQUERQUE – December is one of the toughest months for 96-year-old Atilano David.

It was December 7, 1941, when the Imperial Japanese Navy made a surprise military strike on a United States naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The deadly attack led to the United States' sudden entry in World War II.

"I was 19; I thought I would never see 20," David told *Balitung America*. "The hardships waiting for the enemy was is terrible.

David was among the 75 thousand Filipino and American troops to walk the 65 mile march to prison camps in the Philippines during the war.

"If I remember right, it was 7 to 10 days," he said, vividly remembering the experience. "It was about 65 miles from where we surrendered."

David was a young sergeant of the 31st regiment of the Philippine Division.

"In 'No Man's Land,' the place was already bomb[ed]... not even stone remained," he recalled. "For 3 days and 4 nights, we were subsisting on a tin of jelly, and four crackers, and there were four of us."

David says that his experiences in the war, and part of the Bataan Death March, are all accounted for. He has already written a book and will be published in spring of 2017.

"It is imperative that the young genera-



Atilano David

tions know what happened in Bataan, because the Americans and the Filipinos always had a good relationship," David said, remembering General Douglas MacArthur's prominent role in the victory. "When Japan [invaded] the Philippines, the Americans were on the watch out for their welfare."

The infamous death march is memorialized in several parks and museums in New Mexico.

From December 1941 to April 1942, 1,816 soldiers from New Mexico fought alongside Filipinos to combat Japanese invaders on the Bataan Peninsula. Of those soldiers from New Mexico, 829 died in battle.

Bataan Memorial Park in Albuquerque, New Mexico pays tribute to its soldiers both living and dead, that their bravery and sacrifices shall forever be etched not only in history books, but in the memories of generations to come.

Free Range Chicken

By Gabriel Ortigoza, PhD

Starting a poultry project needs a good plan to succeed.

In management, planning is the first in the processes before leading, organizing, and controlling. Planning is the process of identifying objectives and how these objectives can be attained. A good plan must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound.

Doing some research on free range chicken in the Philippines is a plus factor. I did mine and here are the results I found on the net.

Dimension of the poultry house:
It must be 1 chicken : 1 square meter for indoor or 1 chicken : 1 square meter outdoor

Brooding:

Incandescent light or charcoal heat can be used for 1-21 days old chicks.

Feeding

Feed the chicken with organic feeds once in the morning and once in the afternoon. For noontime, feed them with vegetables. A regular size feeder can accommodate 25 chicks. One gallon of water can provide hydration to 25 chicks. Booster is recommended for 1-21 days old chicks. Starter is recommended for 21-45 days old chickens.

Broiler finish or corn for 45-84 days old chickens.

Housing

Use native materials like nipa for the roof and bamboo for posts and beams of the chicken house. It does not need to be expensive.

For the flooring, rice hull or CRH (carbonized rice hull), and sand can be used to prevent odor. EMAS (effective microorganism activated solution) can be sprayed over the flooring once a week to best control the odor.

Vermi cast (earth worm manure) from ANC (African Night Crawler) can also be utilized to remove odor.

Treatment

Chickens, like human beings, get sick too. Here are some practical ways to treat our chickens.

Sili (pepper) and bawang can be used as antibiotics to prevent infection. Oregano for respiratory problems, ipil-ipil as dewormer (purga). Lemon grass (tanglad) as detoxification, mosquito and snake repellent, and water with xonrox as feet and shoes bath

Keep everything clean and natural because cleanliness is next to godliness. (gabbyortig@yahoo.com)



Gabriel Ortigoza

FILIPINO FIESTA

"Remembering and Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Bataan Death March"



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Note: If you have relatives who were in the Death March, please contact us so we can include them in our "Honor List".

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Cultural Fidelity: Inspiration

By Noeh Nazareno

Remember...

Good morning, Mr. President. Please, don't be alarmed, we're not going to harm anyone. Who are you people? We're mutants. My name is Charles Xavier. Please, sit down. I'd rather stand.

Rogue. These files were taken from the private offices of William Stryker.

How did you get this?

Well, let's just say I know a little girl who can walk through walls. I've never seen this information. I know.

Then you also know I don't respond well to threats.

Mr. President, this is not a threat. This is an opportunity. There are forces in this world, both mutant and human alike, who believe that a war is coming. You will see from those files that some have already tried to start one, and there have been casualties. Losses, on both sides. Mr. President, what you are about to tell the world is true, this is a moment. A moment to repeat the mistakes of the past, or to work together for a better future. We're here to stay, Mr. President. The next move is yours.

We'll be watching.

Today, we live in uncertain times. Falsehoods borne of ignorance and arrogance, from both sides, have hurled the country and the world towards a perilous cliff. As per the philosophy, "Together, or not at all," incidentally worded exactly that way in "Doctor Who," the truth and reality is that we must find a way to live together or find that life will not at all be what we want and especially need.

Being that the most important lessons in life are so well embodied by science fiction and most all things nerdy, I was serendipitously reminded of "X2: X-Men United."

Leading up to the Presidential election in November, I was feeling confident that Hillary Clinton would beat Donald Trump, and a part of me felt and believed it was, "because Trump was obviously the wrong choice."

And then I was reminded of human nature. Not to expect the unexpected. Not to expect the worst. But something bad that my extensive vernacular cannot put into a succinct sentence.

The results have placed peoples into a dangerous phase that may turn the clock back on so much that America and the human race has faced and conquered.

You know, even when Jean was

a student, she was always hesitant about her powers. Always looking to others. Feeling that in some way, she was left behind.

Could we have done more to save her?

In the past, she may have let us.

There had to be another way. Why did she leave the plane?

Because she made a choice.

Americans made choices. Clearly some of them wrong, and I'm not necessarily talking about those who voted for Trump. Clearly some of them right, and the only ones I can say that did clearly vote at all, but not all who voted at all.

There are a great deal many things I share and point out to people, across contexts to speak on life.

Opportunity and choice.

Time itself is opportunity. Every second that goes by is opportunity wasted.

When you do not reach out in person, with a phone call, with an e-mail, with a text, with anything, you are one more opportunity down from making good, making things right.

Each opportunity offers a variety of choices. Use your knowledge and imagination. Chances are that despite your level of education and actual experience, you know and understand not just the difference between right and wrong, but the actual right choice and wrong choices in a given situation (and let's be mature here: quality confirms the difference between the actual right choice and supposed possible right choices).

In actual practice, I believe you can always have another chance at a first impression; it just depends on perspective and execution, informed by knowledge, wisdom and imagination.

But the big ones, the major moments, the life choices, those come down to opportunity and choice. Whether or not you take the opportunity, and whether you make the right choice, or not.

Professor, is everything alright?

Yes, I think it will be. Now, tell me, have any of you read a book by an English novelist named T.H. White called "The Once and Future King"? No? Well... (continues indistinctly)

I actually had to look up that



book. Long story short, those of you who saw Disney's "The Sword in the Stone" incidentally know part of that story, and in the bigger picture, "The Once and Future King" is about the rise of a promising young person and the fall of themselves, a life's empire and its players.

In the immediate sense, chances are good that everything will be alright. Even at its worst, frequency of death and wrongful imprisonment could not come to life in the immediate future. Literally, any changes that would negatively and adversely affect anyone will not be occurring in full anytime soon.

process is slow, normally taking thousands and thousands of years. But every few millennia, evolution leaps forward.

In the film, the context suggests a few things. One is a "coming full circle" in that the final dialogue was the opening dialogue of the first and previous film. The second was the slightly subtle hint of the beloved Dark Phoenix storyline from the comic book source. After that, it's matter of factly.

For the most part, life is a slow process. We don't grow taller and turn into functioning adults overnight, just as species do not

But it's not to say it's not possible, nor especially that it won't happen.

When the students entered Professor X's den for class, he took a deep breath through his nose, trying to hold back grief and loss for Jean Grey, exhaling to attempt a brave, confident and mature form, as people were used to seeing him in.

He turned to the nearest window, looking out into nature. A few moments pass and a student asks if everything is alright.

Upon his natural realization, he responds that he thinks it will be.

Mutation. It is the key to our evolution. It is how we have evolved from a single-celled organism into the dominant species on the planet. This

evolve overnight.

But once in a while, rather tellingly in scale and regard to the matter at hand, evolution will leap forward. And when that happens, there is little to stop it. Nor would stopping it necessarily be the point.

Everything is a choice. Imagine the possibility of knowing what is to come. Would you take action to prevent it? Would you take action to destroy the possibilities that least favor you? Or, perhaps, would you take action to nurture what is to come, and nurture it for the better good of someone other than yourself, possibly for all?

If you are anything other than what could be classified as a White male, you are seen as a mutant. You may not like it (I'm confident you don't), but whether you are a female or not, especially if you are not White, you are a mutant in this country (and possibly parts of the world).

Many believed a war was coming, and not the kind that militaries are mobilized for. If you take a look around, talk to people and ask them questions, you will find out that it has already begun, and there have been casualties.

Losses, on both sides.

Tell not our President, because he does not make your life choices. You do. So, tell yourself.

This is a moment. A moment to repeat the mistakes of the past, or to work together for a better future. We're here to stay. The next move is yours.

We'll be watching.

Miss China shares her Chinese New Year traditions

By Deni Rose M. Afinidad-Bernardo

Though busy with the upcoming coronation night, Miss China Li ZhenYing shared to Philstar.com her Chinese New Year traditions.

"In Chinese New Year, the entire family celebrates. I hope that in the coming New Year, we become healthier, happier, and luckier. This is the most important time of the year. If in the entire year you've been gone, in Chinese New Year, you really have to be with your family," the 23-year-old Shanghai native told Philstar.com in an interview for Smile Train.

"We have fish, which in Chinese means 'yu,' and it means more money. Also, we eat dumplings, which is a circle

and it means that everyone in the family should stick together. After that, we exchange our wishes for each other," she said of their family's traditions.

According to her, it is good feng shui and auspicious for her to join Miss Universe because the Philippines is near China and "I have a lot of supporters also praying for my good luck."

"I feel so lucky. I can't believe I have become Miss Universe China. I'm lucky enough to join the Miss Universe family!" she enthused.

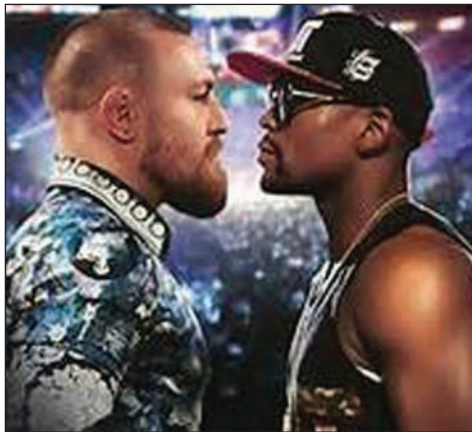


Miss China Li ZhenYing

Fight becoming inevitable as Conor McGregor, Floyd Mayweather make their pitch

By Kevin Iole

However unlikely, however illogical, despite the many barriers and the skepticism from those on both sides of the aisle, a boxing match between UFC star Conor McGregor and retired boxing star Floyd Mayweather Jr. is becoming more and more inevitable with each passing day.



Conor McGregor and Floyd Mayweather

it will be an easy bout. McGregor has no boxing experience — neither amateur nor pro — and Mayweather is already a massive favorite in sports books.

Earlier in the day, McGregor did his part to move the

needle, starting with an Instagram post in which he exclaimed, “[Expletive] the UFC.”

That was no random post, however. It was a very strategic move by McGregor and it was meant for Mayweather’s ears. He was letting Mayweather know that he, too, is his own boss.

Mayweather has used this, “I’m my own boss,” concept to great effect in the nearly 10 years since he defeated Oscar De La Hoya at the MGM Grand Garden to leapfrog the Golden Boy and become the sport’s biggest draw.

He’s used it repeatedly to give himself an edge in negotiations with every fighter he’s fought subsequently, including Manny Pacquiao. In the long, slow slog toward a Mayweather-Pacquiao fight on May 2, 2015, Mayweather repeatedly pointed out he was free to choose what to do on his own, but that Pacquiao had to answer to promoter Bob Arum. He said it often enough and loudly enough that eventually it became accepted as true, whether or not Arum held that sway over Pacquiao.

The Mayweather-Pacquiao fight, which came long after it should have happened, sold 4.6 million pay-per-views, and shows the kind of market that may exist for a Mayweather-McGregor fight.

McGregor did his part, though, to show he’s his own boss, too, and thus tried to level the playing field somewhat in the negotiations. Mayweather has three massive pay-per-view successes that McGregor can’t approach: 4.6 million sales vs. Pacquiao; 2.5 million vs. De La Hoya and 2.2 million vs. Canelo Alvarez.

McGregor has been over a million in each of his last three fights, and Mayweather’s last fight, against Andre Berto in 2015, was a relative flop, selling just 400,000.

The lure of those three million, perhaps more, pay-per-view buys is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore, even for the well-heeled Mayweather.

A few hours after McGregor conducted a pay-per-view interview — yes, a pay-per-view interview that pushed the possibility of the fight happening a little further down the tracks — Mayweather showed up Saturday at the MGM Grand to do his part.

Carl Frampton and Leo Santa Cruz were fighting for the WBA featherweight title in front of a raucous, passionate crowd of 10,085 at the MGM Grand Garden on Saturday. Frampton is Irish, like McGregor, and so the fight was broadcast to Ireland and the United Kingdom on Sky Sports 1. Showtime broadcast the card in the U.S.

Mayweather showed up precisely as the co-feature between Mikey Garcia and Dejan Zlaticanin ended, which gave him the opportunity to play ringmaster yet again. The estimable Jim Gray of Showtime got Mayweather first, and asked him if he wanted the fight.

Mayweather smiled that mega-watt smile of his and flung his head back as if he hadn’t been expecting the question.

Does he want the fight? Duh.

Of course he wants the fight. The entire reason he showed up at a fight card he wasn’t promoting was precisely to go on television, particularly in the U.K., where McGregor fans and possibly McGregor himself were watching, and make his points.

And he didn’t exactly pour ice water on the idea, either.

“I believe the fight can happen,” Mayweather told Gray. “Like I said before, he is a tough competitor. He has proved throughout the years in the UFC that he can fight standing up. We’ll have to see what the future holds.”

He wants the fight because he can make a boatload of money and because he believes

Australia looks set to host Manny Pacquiao - Jeff Horn fight

Queensland state in Australia may play host to Manny Pacquiao’s next fight, with the 52,500-capacity Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane being considered



Jeff Horn may get into the ring with Manny Pacquiao, possibly in Australia.

Agence France-Presse

SYDNEY, Australia — WBO welterweight world champion Manny Pacquiao could fight Australian Jeff Horn in Queensland state after officials confirmed Sunday, January 28 (Sunday in Manila) they were in negotiations to host the bout.

There has been weeks of speculation that the 38-year-old Filipino dubbed “Pac-Man” will get into the ring with Horn in April, possibly in Australia.

“We now are getting the pieces together to deliver this major fight,” Queensland’s tourism minister Kate Jones told reporters in Brisbane.

“We are working very closely with Duco Events, (venue manager) AEG Ogden and as well as the (Brisbane City) Council to secure this fight here in Brisbane.

“We’re hoping to lock this down as soon as possible.”

Describing it as the “largest boxing event in Australia”, Jones said her government was keen to secure the fight at the 52,500-capacity

Suncorp Stadium.

Suncorp Stadium general manager Alan Graham said 28-year-old Horn was keen to fight at the Brisbane venue.

“He’s personally said that he couldn’t think of anything more exhilarating than walking out in the middle of Suncorp Stadium with a full house and people backing him... for a fight,” Graham told reporters.

Horn’s promoter Duco Events was not immediately available for comment.

Brisbane’s Courier Mail newspaper said Sunday the fight had been pencilled in for April 23.

Pacquiao, who has parlayed his sporting fame into a career in politics, is a veteran of 67 fights with 59 victories.

His record easily dwarfs that of Horn, who hails from Queensland, who has notched up only 17 fights with 16 wins.

Pacquiao said last week that negotiations for the fight, including the date and opponent, were still ongoing.



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ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE PURPLE PLACE

Hollywood producers name 'La La Land' the year's best film

By Reuters

Hollywood producers named the musical "La La Land" the best film of 2016 on Saturday at a ceremony marked by criticism of President Donald Trump's immigration policies.

The big win by "La La Land" at the 28th annual awards set up the film, which stars Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone, as an odds-on Oscar favorite, after it scored a record-tying 14 Oscar nominations earlier this month.

The Producers Guild of America (PGA), which is among the leading industry organizations representing makers of movies and TV shows, also named its best animated film which went to "Zootopia," favorite documentary, won by "O.J.: Made in America" and honored Netflix's "Stranger Things" as the top television drama.

Musician John Legend, a star of "La La Land", criticized the new president's executive order placing curbs on people arriving in the United States from certain Muslim-majority countries, which spawned protests and confusion at several U.S. airports on Saturday. "We encourage everybody out there to speak out against it," Legend said.

Later, introducing the splashy, colorful musical film, Legend said "Our vision of Amer-



Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone

ica is directly antithetical to that of President Trump. I want to specifically tonight reject his vision and affirm that America has to be better than that."

Accepting the award, "La La Land" producer Marc Platt continued in a similar vein, saying "It is the power of cinema fueled by free artistic expression that cannot be denied, that has no borders, and will never be banned from our hearts, our minds and our souls."

In past years, PGA best film winners have often gone on to win the best picture Oscar, Hollywood's big prize.

Among other honors for television productions, two FX shows prevailed, as another look at the famous O.J. Simpson murder case, "The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story," won the producers' award for long-form television and the comedy series award was won by "Atlanta."

Netflix's "Making a Murderer" won for non-fiction television, while NBC's "The Voice" took home the prize for reality competition series and PBS' "Sesame Street" scored for children's program.

Outstanding sports program went to "World of Sports," while "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" won the live entertainment and talk television award.

Coco Martin 'too young, inexperienced' to be KAPPT head at 35

By Marinel R. Cruz

"It's a responsibility that seems too big for me," said Coco Martin when asked why he has turned down the offer for him to be president of the Kapisanan ng mga Artista sa Pelikulang Pilipino at Telebisyon or KAPPT.



Coco Martin

Coco said the idea was proposed to him by current KAPPT president Rez Cortez, who's also his costar in "FPJ's Ang Probinsyano." "I told Tito Rez I wasn't ready yet. On the set, he observed how well I took care of my staff," he said.

Coco said that while his main goal was to help fellow actors, he wanted to do this "on my own terms."

The actor pointed out: "I'm still too young and inexperienced to be president. It's important that I know what I'm doing before I assume responsibility over something as significant as the actors' guild."

What Coco said he wanted to delve into was the production of free TV shows online. "It's good because there will be no network involvement. It's like working on an indie movie. I'll make this happen this year," he declared.

He said he hoped to give more artists, especially those considered "semiretired," another shot at acting.

The 35-year-old actor is so focused on work

that he seems to have no more time for his personal life. Coco, however, said he didn't mind this at all. "I love what I'm doing. I'm excited to wake up each morning and get to work."

He said there would eventually be a time when he'd be told to lie low. "I'll be ready when that happens, and I'll have no regrets."

This is also why Coco is in no hurry to plunge into a serious relationship with anyone just yet. The actor is rumored to have dated 21-year-old actress Julia Montes.

"Been there, done that. I had my first girlfriend at 15. Life was difficult then," he stressed. "My love life is not a priority. I've set a deadline for myself. I'll start searching for that ideal partner when I turn 40. That will be a turning point in my life."

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