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PF NEWS

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Filipino Fiesta of Sacramento
June 4, 2017

Muslim clerics urge Duterte to stop aerial bombing in Marawi



Displaced residents ride a mini-truck with their belongings while fleeing to safer areas as government troops battle with Muslim militants Monday, May 29, 2017 in Marawi, southern Philippines. Philippine forces say they now control most of the southern city where militants linked to the Islamic State group launched a bloody siege nearly a week ago.

By Jigger J. Jerusalem

Muslim clerics have appealed to President Duterte to stop the aerial assaults in Marawi City so civilian lives and buildings could be spared.

The National Ulama Conference of the Philippines, in a statement released on Monday, said government forces now conducting combat operations in some areas in Marawi must continue with its ground attack instead of resorting to bombing sorties.

"We implore (President Duterte) to cease immediately the airstrike but to employ land attack with the help of local military and police so that civilians will

be protected and escorted to evacuation centers," the Ulama said.

The group has also implored national government agencies such as the social welfare and health departments to respond to the humanitarian needs of the Marawi residents, most of whom are Maranaos, who have evacuated due to the fighting there since last Tuesday.

"This is the time, Mr. President, to show us what you've been saying that you have a Maranao blood, and that, that you are sincere about correcting the historical injustices committed against the Moros," it added.

Surrender or die, AFP tells Maute

Give up or face death.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is giving the remaining Maute gunmen still holding out in Marawi City the chance to surrender.

"For the terrorists, not surrendering will mean their sure death," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said yesterday.

Officials said the military is in the final phase of its operations against the Maute group and is expected to retake the entire city by the weekend.

"Our ground commanders have assured the public that the end is almost there," Padilla told reporters. "We're trying to isolate all these pockets of resistance. As to the call to surrender, we aired this



"For the terrorists, not surrendering will mean their sure death," AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said yesterday.

message in the hope of ending this soon and reducing any more loss of lives and property."

Initial reports said the Maute gunmen were left with few areas to maneuver or out-

flank the government troops that continue to close in.

As of Monday night, government forces had killed 63 Maute gunmen in seven days of fighting.

"We are in full control," Continued on page 4



Flores De Mayo

Filipino Santa Cruzan

After a year-long search for a Santa Elena, the Filipino Santa Cruzan was held in Elk Grove Park on May 20, 2017. Organized by Howell Felix of Barrio Fiesta Filipinas, the Santa Cruzan is a great Filipino tradition that has been observed during the month of May.



Photos by Rick Garcia

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We're now headed for one-man rule?

By Federico D. Pascual Jr.

This tired Filipino, this one voter, is tempted to take the line of least resistance and stop asking questions about President Rodrigo Duterte's martial law adventure in Mindanao.

It seems pointless anyway to continue taking the traditional adversarial stance of a libertarian press vis-à-vis the government.

With the Congress controlled by politicians wallowing in pelf and power poised to give its accustomed stamp of approval to Duterte-style martial law – and with key segments of the community largely intimidated – one more discordant voice won't register anyway. So why bother?

But we were alarmed over the weekend by media reports from Jolo about President Duterte telling soldiers that he would ignore the Congress, and even the Supreme Court, if these co-equal departments acted or ruled against his legal theory of martial law.

He told the troops: "Until the police and the armed forces say the Philippines is safe, this martial law will continue. I will not listen to others. The Supreme Court, Congress, they are not here. "Are they the ones dying and losing blood, bleeding, hemorrhaging because there is no help, no reinforcement? It's not they."

With some of his public utterances clashing with constitutional requirements on martial law, we cannot help asking if President Duterte has decided to follow a path to one-man rule.

The Constitution says in Section 18, Article VII, that the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus can be suspended under martial law only for cases related to invasion and rebellion and that proper charges must be filed in three days or the suspects are released.

Yet, Mr. Duterte told soldiers last Friday that they were allowed to conduct searches and arrests without court warrants: "During martial law, your commanders, you, you can arrest any person, search any house. There is no more warrant needed."

The need for warrants was among the limitations written in the 1987 Constitution to prevent the repetition of abuses experienced under Marcosian martial law – which Mr. Duterte, incidentally, has described as "very good."

One week after he signed Proclamation No. 216 imposing martial law, Mr. Duterte has not issued the implementing guidelines for those affected, including soldiers who just carry out their superiors' orders and civilians who will have to rely on their survival instincts.

The President is a lawyer surrounded by legal advisers. It is perplexing to hear him tell soldiers to disregard the constitutional safeguards, and for him to ignore the Congress and the Supreme Court.

Some skeptics are asking if Mr. Duterte also has in mind scrapping the Constitution, like Marcos did in 1972 to lay the basis for one-man rule.

Duterte to defy Congress, SC?

DUTERTE-STYLE martial law is sure to be affirmed by a captive Congress once the super majorities in the Senate and the House of Representatives receive their, huh, marching orders.

A senator or congressman who values his political future, or that of family members, or their businesses, will do everything to be on the safe side – by staying close to the President who will carry the 2019 elections. Those whose dossiers in the Palace are ripe for harvest must also behave.

After sailing through the Congress, the martial law proclamation is likely to face a legal challenge before the Supreme Court where some citizens are set to question its factual basis.

The government must show that there was either an invasion or a rebellion in Mindanao – the two bases for declaring martial law – when the President signed the proclamation on May 23, 2017.

Must the reckoning be on that date, because the invasion or rebellion was alleged to have been the basis of the proclamation? What if there was no such situation that day, but the fighting in Marawi merely progressed into rebellion as a result of the proclamation?

Was the presence of a few foreign fighters in Marawi and/or the Maute terrorists' displaying ISIS flags

Continued on page 4

PerryScope
By Perry Diaz

Last May 15, President Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte met with Chinese President Xi Jinping during the "One Belt, One Road" summit in Beijing. Duterte told Xi, "We intend to drill oil there, if it's yours, well, that's your view, but my view is I can drill the oil, if there is some inside the bowels of the earth, because it is ours." According to Digong, Xi responded by saying that China would go to war with the Philippines if Digong insists on drilling for oil in the disputed South China Sea (SCS).

It must have been a rude awakening for Digong who had called Xi a "great president" not long ago. "China loves the Philippines and the Filipino people," Duterte once said of his new friend and idol. Who would go to war with a friend?

Clearly, things have changed between Duterte and Xi since last October when Duterte was in China on a state visit. During his speech in front of a group of Chinese officials and business leaders, Digong startled his audience when he announced his military and economic "separation" from the U.S. "America has lost now. I've realigned myself in your ideological flow. And maybe I will also go to Russia to talk to Putin and tell him that there are three of us against the world: China, Philippines and Russia. It's the only way."

He must have been thinking of being Julius Caesar who together with Pompey and Crassus formed the First Triumvirate during the early days of the Roman Republic. But Caesar or not, Digong certainly made a name for himself – Quixotic as it might seem -- in suggesting that the leaders of two nuclear powers accept him as co-equal.

Chinese double-speak

The following day, Digong backtracked from his "separation" declaration. In a press conference, he said he was only talking about "separation of foreign policy." Yeah, just like they say in the Philippines, "Dyok only." (Joke only).

But what is odd is that the Chinese sidestepped the "war threat." Beijing did not directly comment on Digong's version of his conversation with

Drill, Digong, drill



Xi. However, China said it would "work with the Philippines to peacefully resolve disputes through friendly consultation." While it might sound conciliatory, the genie is out of the bottle and nobody can put it back into the bottle. Indeed, Xi's message is indelibly clear: If Digong drills for oil, there will be war!

Retreat

While all concerned desire peaceful resolution of the maritime dispute, China will not compromise her claim of "irrefutable" sovereignty over the SCS. She considers the region as her "core national interest," which means: it is non-negotiable. And the only way to prevent war with China is to abandon the Philippines' claim to the Spratly Islands and the Scarborough Shoal, which is tantamount to a retreat.

What emboldened Xi to say the "W" without hesitation can be attributed to Digong's pacifist and defeatist position vis-à-vis the Philippines' claims. He squandered the bargaining chips the Philippines earned when the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague, Netherlands, issued a ruling in the Republic of the Philippines vs. People's Republic of China that invalidates the "nine-dash line," thus rendering China's claim null and void. Beijing immediately rejected the PCA's ruling.

Instead of pursuing the tribunal award, Digong set the ruling aside and cozied up to China like a Pekinese puppy licking its master's toes. As a result, Digong was rewarded with large amounts of financial loans for infrastructure and economic development projects. But for those who are familiar with how the Beijing puppet masters operate, they know that the financial loans would favor China in the long-term. With Digong on a "retreat" mode from the SCS maritime disputes, China is positioned to control Digong including his "inde-

pendent foreign policy" that he brags about. The truth is: Digong's foreign policy is anything but independent. In today's globalization, all countries have interdependent economic interests.

"Too weak"

His newly appointed Secretary of Foreign Affairs, his defeated vice presidential running mate Alan Peter Cayetano, has turned out to be an apologist for China. In his reaction to China's "war threat," Cayetano reportedly said the administration felt no need to file a protest against China, as there was no bullying by Chinese President Xi Jinping of President Duterte during their meeting in Beijing. But how could he give an objective opinion when he wasn't at the meeting? He merely interpreted what Digong told the media about Xi's "war threat." "My interpretation of the meeting is that there was no bullying or pushing around," Cayetano said. Clearly, it was biased, undiplomatic, and unprofessional. Simply put, a foreign affairs secretary shouldn't blurt out unsubstantiated statements that could embarrass the president contradicting him.

In an attempt to save face, Digong said he disclosed his conversation with Xi in response to criticism at home that he was "too weak" with China over the maritime disputes. But he has nobody to blame but himself. He admitted publicly that he didn't want to pursue the Philippines' claim because China was too strong.

Evidently, he is not going to defend the country's sovereignty because he concluded that the Philippines would lose in a war with China. Well, he's got a big problem because he should have known when he ran for president that Article II Section 3 of the Constitution states: "Civilian authority is, at all times, supreme over the military. The Armed Forces of the Philippines is the protector of the people

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Duterte rape joke an 'injustice' to soldiers – Robredo

By Nikko Dizon

Vice President Leni Robredo on Monday said the country's soldiers deserve "support and the highest respect" at this time that they are fighting for the people such that President Duterte's rape joke was an "injustice to them."

"It is an injustice to our soldiers that what's being implied is because it is martial law, they are already thinking, or that they have the license, to commit a crime as heinous as rape," Robredo said in response to a question asking for her comment on the joke that the President made before troops last week.

"It is not good to make a joke about rape because this is the time when our soldiers need our support. This is the time when we have to give our highest respect



Philippine Marines walk to the frontline in the continuing assaults to retake control of some areas of Marawi city Sunday, May 28, 2017 in southern Philippines. Philippine forces launched fresh airstrikes Sunday to drive out militants linked to the Islamic State group after days of fighting left corpses in the streets and hundreds of civilians begging for rescue from a besieged southern city.

to them that they need," the Vice President said.

Mr. Duterte declared martial law

in the whole of Mindanao on May 23 as fighting erupted between the military and the Maute group in

Marawi City where Abu Sayyaf terrorist leader Isnilon Hapilon was supposedly holed up.

On Friday, the President assured soldiers he will have their back if they were accused of human rights abuses while martial law was in place, saying they could rape up to three women and he would claim responsibility for the crime.

Mr. Duterte's joke elicited uproar even from his own supporters.

"Rape is not a joke. Rape is a heinous crime. It is expected that everyone from the President to me to the village watches, we are expected to ensure that [rape] does not happen and we have to ensure that whoever commits this crime will be jailed," Robredo said.

The President joking about rape

"does not help" the current security situation, she added.

"This is the time to reassure our people who are now anxious that [the abuses] would not take place," Robredo added.

Robredo was in Iligan City on Monday to visit the families temporarily staying at the Barangay Maria Cristina evacuation center, the soldiers who were wounded, as well as the wake of those who were killed in the fighting.

Robredo said the evacuees asked her how long they would have to stay in evacuation centers as many want to return home.

"Of course, we couldn't give an answer. The only thing I could say was we will make sure that government takes care of them," Robredo said..

Drill, Digong, drill

and the State. Its goal is to secure the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the national territory." Since Digong is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, he has the responsibility of protecting Philippine territory including parts of the Spratlys, the Scarborough Shoal, and the Benham Rise (renamed "Philippine Rise").

Flammable ice

In July 2016, Chinese geologists found deposits of methane hydrate – also known as "flammable ice" – beneath the SCS. Last month, Chinese engineers had successfully extracted natural gas from the frozen "flammable ice," which brings China a step closer to harnessing this new energy source. According to research, the gas deposits are densely packed – 1 cubic meter of methane hydrate can release 164 cubic meters of natural gas; thus, making it a valuable fuel

resource.

Recently, China conducted secret surveys in the 13-million-hectare Benham Rise that revealed huge deposits of methane hydrate. And just what happened in the Spratlys, China probably had set her eyes on Benham Rise for future exploration.

With a navy that doesn't have sufficient firepower to stop China from transgressing into Philippine territorial waters, Digong doesn't have too many options. However, Supreme Court Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio suggested one option. He said that the threat of China going to war if the Philippines extracts oil and gas in Recto (Reed) Bank, or in any area in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea), is a gross violation of the United Nations charter, the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in

Southeast Asia to which China and the Philippines are parties. Carpio also suggested that the Philippines revisit a joint maritime patrol arrangement with the U.S. and other allies. "The joint patrol of our EEZ [exclusive economic zone] with the U.S. and possibly other partners would be a combined strategic and tactical move for the Philippine government in defending our national interest and territorial integrity," he added.

Meanwhile, one wonders: What can Digong do right now to deflect China's "war threat"? Some geopolitical experts say that Xi was bluffing and that China wouldn't go to war with the Philippines knowing that the country has a mutual defense treaty with the U.S. I agree and my suggestion to the president is: "Drill, Digong, drill."

Like they say, "No guts, no glory." (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)



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2 Muslim women defend Christians

By Catherine S. Valente

ILIGAN CITY—Two Maranao women put their lives on the line to defend Christians when terrorists from the Maute group attacked Marawi City on Tuesday, prompting President Duterte to declare martial law in all of Mindanao.

Cris, a Bisaya (as Muslims and “lumad” [indigenous people] call non-Muslims) who lived with his family in Marawi, recalled that when a group of terrorists barged into the gun store in Basak Malutlut where he worked, “Ma’am Farida confronted them.”

“The confrontation was really eye to eye, which indicated the seriousness of the message and the personal resolve that Ma’am Farida was showing [to the gunmen],” Cris said.

The group’s leader ordered the guns and ammunition in the store hauled off and questioned Farida about her employees.

Farida stepped back to stand between her 13 male employees who were huddled together and the group of about 10 terrorists.

“You have to kill me first before you can even touch them!” Cris quoted Farida, speaking in the Maranao language, as telling the terrorists, mostly boys in their late teens.

Cris is one of Farida’s 17 employees who man her family’s two gun stores in Marawi, one in Basak Malutlut and another in Banggolo district, which was also looted.

At the start of the siege, 13 of the employees were in the Basak Malutlut store while four were in the Banggolo store.

Most of the 17 have been employed by Farida for more than a decade. Many live with their families at a



A military helicopter hovering by a mosque is seen through a shattered glass brought about by the fighting between government troops and Muslim militants who continue to hold their ground in some areas of Marawi city for almost a week, in southern Philippines.

compound in Basak Malutlut.

Had the terrorists seized them, their families would have been taken, too, Cris said.

Although official statistics show that non-Muslims account for just 1 percent of Marawi’s population, the actual proportion could be higher, as many Bisaya work and live in the city, mostly in commercial establishments and in the homes of well-off families.

These Bisaya have learned to speak Maranao and have assimilated well into the community.

Moro insurgency

Although without religious underpinnings, the Moro insurgency has created tensions between Muslims and Christians, especially in the conflict areas.

Decades of efforts at interfaith dialogue have contributed much to easing the situation. But the advent of Islamic radicalism has shaken anew these fragile relations.

The beheading of two sawmill workers by Maute terrorists in Butig town last year sent a chill through the Christian community in the city and caused unease even

among Muslim employees.

Cris said he believed that because the gun store employees were not harmed, the terrorists might have been interested in their technical skills.

When the terrorists left, Farida ordered the employees to get their families and led them to a relative’s house in Bangon, 6 kilometers away, Cris said.

There they were fetched by Farida’s uncle and taken to the family home in Padian, near the lake, where they were joined by the four other employees from the Banggolo gun store.

Escape to Iligan

At about 5 p.m. on Tuesday, as the terrorists took control of Marawi’s main districts, Zaynab, a development and humanitarian relief worker, was counting Christians who had taken refuge in the center

The following day, she gathered 20 of them, several staffers and a family member, and put them in vehicles that took them to Iligan, traveling the long southern route through Malabang to avoid the gridlock on the Iligan-Marawi road.

They traveled for 15 hours—thrice the normal time of the ride to Iligan—skipping meals, which was risky for a diabetic like Zaynab.

“I never minded the danger. I was prepared to die first before they (terrorists) could harm the Christians,” she said.

Surrender or die, AFP tells Maute

From page 1

meaning to say we can control who comes in and who comes out, who moves around and who doesn’t. And we’re trying to isolate all these pockets of resistance that have remained,” Padilla said earlier.

Security officials have assured lawmakers that the government was in control of the situation in Marawi with the resolve of ending the hostilities.

“We appreciate the concern of our senators and the full support that the Armed Forces is getting... In return, the Armed Forces has given the guarantee that we will implement this in the best way possible and in the fastest means,” Padilla told reporters following a closed door session with the senators.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan said they were told by Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana that the situation would return to normal by the end of the week.

“The Secretary of National Defense is saying that they are looking at being able to normalize the situation by Friday, by this week,” Pangilinan said.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) also assured the lawmakers that Metro Manila is safe from terror threats.

“We have not monitored any threats here in Metro Manila. However, we are continuously conducting monitoring. Intelligence operatives from AFP and Philippine National Police are monitoring critical areas here,” National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Oscar Albayalde said.

Albayalde though admitted some of the Maute gunmen have relatives living in Metro Manila.

President Duterte ear-

lier declared the crisis in Marawi City is expected to end by Friday.

The President’s announcement was in support of Lorenzana’s declared timetable that the bandits would be defeated by weekend.

The military dropped more bombs in the areas where the remaining Maute are believed to be holed up.

Troops often encounter sniper fire as they advance slowly to clear Marawi of rebels.

Padilla said government forces are working to “clear the city of all remnants of this group.”

The city of Marawi, home to some 200,000 people, has been under siege by Islamic State-linked Maute militants since a failed raid Tuesday last week on the suspected hideout of Isnilon Hapilon, a leader of the notorious Abu Sayyaf.

Hapilon got away and fighters loyal to him took over parts of the city, burning buildings and seizing about a dozen hostages, including a priest, Fr. Teresito Suganob, who reports said is appealing on behalf of the Maute gunmen to stop the fighting and withdraw all government forces in Marawi.

Hapilon is still hiding out in the city under the protection of the Maute who are desperately trying to find a way to “extricate” him, the military said.

“We are on track. I am updated regularly. Timetable is one week from May 25,” Lorenzana said.

Hit and run

The military however insists the drawn-out fight in Marawi is not a true sign of the militants’ strength, and that they even held back to spare civilian lives.

As of yesterday morning, AFP chief Gen. Eduardo Año said the military, work-

ing house-by-house, had cleared 70 percent of the city and the remaining militants were isolated.

Still, the Maute fighters have turned out to be remarkably well-armed and resilient.

Officials said the remaining Maute militants, estimated to be 50 gunmen, have shifted to hit-and-run tactics in a bid to lure troops into an ambush.

Brig. Gen. Custodio Parcon, commander of the AFP-Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi, said around 50 Maute gunmen are being pursued by troops in Barangay Mapandi.

“Just like the President has expressed, you know when you realize that you are not capable of fighting anymore and it’s not worth it on your side. It’s either you’re going to die or you surrender for the sake of peace,” Parcon said, referring to the remaining bandits.

Western Mindanao Command chief Lt. Gen. Carlito Galvez Jr. said the Maute are also using civilians as human shields by rejecting appeals for them to stand down to allow the evacuation of trapped civilians.

Brig. Gen. Rolando Joselito Bautista, commander of the Joint Task Force ZamPeLan and 1st Army Division, said the focus of government forces is to clear Marawi of militants, rescue trapped civilians and recover civilian casualties and victims in the fastest means possible.

The violence in Marawi prompted President Duterte to declare martial law and place the entire Mindanao region under military rule for 60 days.

Lawmakers had asked for a joint session of Congress to determine whether martial law is still necessary as required under the Constitution.

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5,000 MNLF fighters to help AFP

By Roel Pareño

Zamboanga City, Philippines – President Duterte has accepted the offer of Moro National Liberation Front chief Nur Misuari to deploy MNLF fighters in Marawi City and help the military defeat the Maute terror group.



President Rodrigo Duterte has accepted the offer of Moro National Liberation Front chief Nur Misuari to deploy MNLF fighters in Marawi City and help the military defeat the Maute terror group.

During a visit to wounded soldiers in Jolo on Saturday, Duterte urged the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the New People's Army (NPA) to do the same.

Duterte cited a letter that Misuari sent him, offering 5,000 MNLF fighters in the fight against the terrorists.

In the letter, Misuari said the Marawi incident is an opportunity for them to show their mettle in helping the President and the people restore peace in Mindanao, particularly in Marawi.

The President was considering a suggestion to enlist the MILF and MNLF fighters as well as the NPA in the fight against the Maute.

In return, the government will give the secessionist fighters and guerrillas pay and privileges similar to what the members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) receive.

"I am announcing to all forces of the MI, MN, if this conflict will take long and if you want to join, cast your lot with the Republic... I will take you in as soldiers, same privileges, and I will build houses for you in some areas," Duterte said.

He called on the NPA rebels to leave their leaders who are waging conflict at the expense of civilians, to leave the ranks and join forces with the military in fighting the Islamic State terrorists.

Duterte said the NPA rebels are being fooled by their leaders, whom he said are the ones benefitting from the revolutionary taxes that the guerrillas collect or extort from the people.

"I am going to create a new division for you. Wala ng qualification, tatal mar-unong naman kayo mag-baril (no more qualifications, anyway you know how to shoot). Practice na

lang kayo ng kalabit. I am willing to take you in as soldiers of the Republic," Duterte said.

AFP spokesman Restituto Padilla, however, said the recruitment of rebels into the military has to undergo some processes.

He said Duterte made the statement to stress the need to unite against a common threat, citing former rebels from the MNLF and the Cordillera People's Liberation Army who had successfully integrated into the armed forces.

Drug lords

The President said the Marawi siege is financed by drug lords, who hide under the cover of the IS-influenced Maute group.

Duterte said drug lords support the operations of the terrorists, including arms supply.

He said the government has been overtaken by the scourge of the illegal drug trade in Marawi, and that the attack is not purely fueled by the IS.

He said the illegal drug trade is the root of the conflict, noting Marawi is a hotbed of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu and other illegal drugs in Mindanao.

He said the Maute brothers put up their own shabu laboratory in Marawi after learning that business for the so-called poor man's cocaine is brisk in Metro Manila.

He said a raid conducted in the backyard of the house of the Mautes' father was not reported in the media.

Duterte said Maute followers, who worked for some politicians, were lured by money and firearms.

The young Abu Sayyaf bandits, he said, were brainwashed by the so-called Islamic scholars and found

their way to the IS and Maute group.

Duterte said he used to frequent Marawi and Iligan in his younger years. He said the problem of extremism at first was due to the growing sense of nationalism among Filipinos following the invasion of Spain in 1521.

The President said Christians and Muslims, who joined the illegal drug operations in the area, were pressured by the government's anti-drug war. He said in a bid to get protection, these young men joined the Maute to pretend to fight for Islam.

"That's what happened to the Visayans who got involved in the shabu operations. After they were pressured by the government anti-drug war, they proclaimed themselves jihadists in order to be protected by the group," Duterte said.

He said it was one of the reasons there are a number of the so-called Islam converts or balik-Islam.

Duterte said criminal gangsters in Buldon town also joined the Maute group for protection.

He said the Maute brothers are into drug operations and pretending to be allied with the Islamic State because of the presence of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, who was anointed by IS as its leader in the Philippines.

"Iyan ang giyera ngayon. Actually, it started with drugs. And they were producing drugs halfway, not really to negosyo but to fund the terrorism kaya maraming armas (that's why they are well armed)," Duterte said, noting that was the war now, drugs to buy arms to further terrorism.



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Napoles tags Abad, 3 senators in PDAF

By Edu Punay

MANILA, Philippines - Alleged pork barrel scam mastermind Janet Lim-Napoles has implicated Senators Franklin Drilon, Antonio Trillanes IV and Leila de Lima in the multibillion-peso Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) scam, a claim that Drilon and Trillanes were quick to dismiss as harassment.

She also tagged former budget secretary Florencio Abad and another Cabinet official yet to be named.

In a press conference, Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre II said Napoles' lawyer, Stephen David, relayed to him the new revelations on the multibillion-peso pork barrel fund anomaly.

He added that David also mentioned several other senators that are to be included in the affidavit being prepared by Napoles.

"These lawmakers, they are saying, were involved in the scheme similar to the original PDAF offenses where they used Napoles' NGOs (non-government organizations) or corporations to get funds," Aguirre explained. "I believe they were already enumerated during the previous administration, but were not included because they were supposed to be (in the) suc-



Alleged pork barrel scam mastermind Janet Lim-Napoles has implicated Senators Franklin Drilon, Antonio Trillanes IV and Leila de Lima in the multibillion-peso Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF) scam, a claim that Drilon and Trillanes were quick to dismiss as harassment.

ceeding batches that never came."

While De Lima was not a lawmaker when the PDAF scam was carried out, Aguirre said Napoles would point out De Lima's involvement when her affidavit is finalized.

He refused to name the other senators and high-ranking government officials that are also being implicated, saying this information should come directly from Napoles.

He said Napoles' camp is planning to file plunder and other criminal charges against these officials, which would pave the way for the DOJ reinvestigation on the pork barrel anomaly.

If the DOJ finds probable cause, he said the findings

would be forwarded to the Office of the Ombudsman, which has primary jurisdiction over cases involving government officials.

"Definitely, Abad was mentioned. He is one of them," Aguirre recalled, adding that Napoles identified the former official as her mentor or instigator.

The justice chief believes Napoles is still eligible to become a state witness, citing a Supreme Court ruling which said that in the event there are two accused with almost the same level of guilt – the one who committed plunder and the instigator – it is the instigator that would be considered most guilty.

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales said Napoles could file the charges against previous officials but stressed that these would have no bearing on the cases already filed against her case in court.

Napoles, as a co-accused of several former and incumbent lawmakers in the alleged misuse of PDAF, is facing five plunder cases as well as multiple cases of graft, malversation of public funds, falsification and direct bribery.

Morales said it would be the ombudsman who will have the final say on whether Napoles can be a state witness against the alleged errant officials.

Filipino Family Fraternity Holds Annual Santa Cruzan

By Faina Abaya

On May 28, 2017, The Filipino Family Fraternity under the leadership of Aida Azurin holds their annual Santa Cruzan Procession at the Parish Social Hall, St. Paul Parish along 8720 Florin Rd. Sacramento, California.

All the participants and parishioners started the procession at about 2:00 PM, when everyone was in their proper place headed by Ray Oineza carrying the Black Cross. Most women wearing their favorite hats and umbrellas to cool themselves from the excruciating heat of the sun and freshly cut flowers of Roses were distributed to all for the offertory before the Blessed Mary.

After the Black Cross, the Knight of Columbus followed and the Angels in their white dresses and wings were just behind, namely; Angelina Tresca, Malina Tresca, Angela Claire, Juliesca Carrasca, Solana Cordero, and Josie Mariano followed, guided by Rose Basos and Linda Cordero.

Crown bearer Kaelyn Maxine Polivka was just behind the Carosa of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The



carriers of the cart were the Cordero brothers, Paul, Carlos, Philip III, and Philip IV.

The RVM Sisters led the Holy Rosary during the procession, while the Sagalas, Maria Bahoric and Naty Fontillas and the different organizations and the public followed.

Emperador Constantino David Hai Velasco Yee led the Empera-

tiz Sta. Elena Beth Velasco and Jess Velasco, then followed by Fr. Joyle Martinez.

The procession crossed through parking lot of the church compound towards the church proper where all the participants entered for the mass officiated by Fr. Joyle Martinez. After the mass, all the participants were treated with sumptuous dinner back to the

church hall courtesy of Maria Bahoric, Dr. Tony and Remy Solomon, Lourdes Belasco, Ling Avera, Aida Azurin and Carol Munar.

Congratulations to Aida Azurin, and all the officers of the Filipino Family Fraternity of Sacramento for such a wonderful Santa Cruzan.

Photos by Faina Abaya

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Source: gettyimages.com



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My Sister's House 16th Anniversary Gala



Riverview Media Photography/Tia Gemmell 2017.

More than 500 people attended the annual My Sister's House fundraiser and awards gala on May 18 at the Crest Theatre. The nonprofit provides culturally appropriate services to Asian-Pacific Islanders and other victims of domestic violence. This year, My Sister's House honored retired Sacramento County District Attorney Jan Scully and Putu Blanco of Paul Blanco's Good Car Company.

Raped and pregnant at 14, she sued and won \$1M in child-sex tourism case

By Sarah Horner

A Laotian-American woman from the Twin Cities was awarded nearly \$1 million Thursday after winning an unprecedented civil suit in U.S. District Court in Minneapolis that sought to hold a former Minnesota man accountable for violating child sex tourism and trafficking laws.

A jury found Panyia Vang was entitled to \$950,000 in damages. She said she was raped in Laos by Thiawachu Prataya when the Hmong-American man was visiting the country in 2006, according to Linda Miller, one of her attorneys.

The now-24-year-old was just 14 at the time and became pregnant with Thiawachu Prataya's child. She later moved to the Twin Cities with her family and was reportedly forced into a traditional Hmong marriage with Thiawachu Prataya. He was legally married to another woman at the time.

Thiawachu Prataya, who was never charged with a crime, was accused in court documents of threatening to keep Panyia Vang away from their child if she did not submit to his sexual demands as a "second" wife.

The jury reached its verdict after a trial on the civil case this week, Miller said.

She hopes it will send a strong message to the broader community about the consequences that await those interested in going abroad to have sex with underage girls, she said.

"This was the first case using this statute, so this is just the beginning," Miller said. "There are a lot of people who would like to go to Laos and have sex with children and they make excuses for themselves."

The legal victory hopefully will help change that, Miller said.

Thiawachu Prataya's attorneys did not immediately respond to calls for comment Thurs

Panyia Vang filed the federal lawsuit in 2012, but it was stayed for a time as both sides pursued trying the case in the court of public opinion on a planned NBC-TV show called "Law and Order: You the Jury."

It caught the attention of producers after gaining local, national and international coverage as an un-



Panyia Vang. In an unprecedented federal lawsuit, Panyia Vang, 22, a Twin Cities resident, is seeking \$450,000 from the Minneapolis man who allegedly raped and impregnated her before binding her to a traditional Hmong marriage.

precedented case that cast a spotlight on a taboo but acknowledged "open secret" within the Hmong community: the plight of Hmong child brides and polygamy.

The TV plans eventually were scrapped and the case started moving forward again in the traditional legal system in January.

According to court documents, Thiawachu Prataya admitted to traveling to Laos in 2006 and having sex with Panyia Vang. Married to a woman in Minnesota at the time of his trip, he has said that he didn't know Panyia Vang was a minor and that



Sia Her, executive director of the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, in her St. Paul office. The council introduced legislation on violence against Asian women and children in Minnesota.

the sex was consensual.

The two had talked on the phone before his visit and arrangements were made for her to make the 12-hour trip from her family's rural home to the capital city of Vientiane.

Panyia Vang said she was under the impression that she would be auditioning for a music video.

Thiawachu Prataya, then 43, coaxed her to his ho-

tel room with promises of new clothes, according to the lawsuit. Once there, he raped her repeatedly over the course of three days, she alleged in the lawsuit.

Panyia Vang became pregnant and had a child in early 2007.

She moved to the Twin Cities area on a visa from her father in 2009. Thiawachu Prataya, who lived in Minneapolis, now lives out of state.

Thiawachu Prataya denied the rape, sex tourism and trafficking allegations, according to court documents.

His attorney, Der Yang, previously called Panyia Vang's allegations in the suit "disingenuous" and said they were the result of a "disgruntled mother" who lost a custody dispute.

VERDICT VINDICATION
The jury's verdict Thursday left Panyia Vang feeling "fabulous," Miller said.

"She feels vindicated," Miller said. "Now the questions that many people, including her husband, brought up to her all the time have been answered and she can move forward with her life."

Panyia Vang told the Pioneer Press via an interpreter in 2015 that she experienced a backlash in the Hmong community after coming forward with her story. Still, she said at the time, she believed it was right to stay the course and expose exploitation.

Sia Her, executive director of the Minnesota Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, has been a vocal critic of child sexual tourism and international abusive marriages in the Hmong community.

The practice involves Hmong men returning to Laos or other countries in Southeast Asia to have sexual relationships with and sometimes marry significantly younger women or underage girls. In some cases, the men are married to wives in the United States.

Panyia Vang's case helped elevate a well-known but seldom discussed problem within the Hmong community that has long been tearing some families apart, Sia Her said.

"We hope that this unprecedented case and the verdict send a strong message to practitioners of abusive in-

Putin a bigger threat than Islamic State —US Senator McCain

Agence France-Presse

Russian President Vladimir Putin is a bigger threat to world.

Republican McCain — one of US President Trump's most outspoken critics in his own party — said Russia's alleged meddling in elections was a danger to democracy.

"I think he (Putin) is the premier and most important threat, more so than ISIS," McCain, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation late Monday.

"I think ISIS can do terrible things ... but it is the Russians who are trying, who tried to destroy the very fundamental of democracy and that is to change the outcome of an American election.

"I have seen no evidence they succeeded but they tried and they are still trying. They just tried to affect the outcome of the French election.

"So I view Vladimir Putin, who has dismembered the Ukraine, a sovereign nation, who is putting pressure on the Baltics, I view the Russians as the far greatest challenge that we have."



Senator John McCain. AFP

McCain's comments come with the Trump team embroiled in controversy over its relationship with Moscow, which US intelligence agencies say tried to sway last November's election in the property tycoon's favor.

A broad investigation into Russia's apparent meddling is being led by Robert Mueller, a respected former FBI director who was given wide powers to pursue the case as a special counsel.

The US Senate and House Intelligence committees are also leading their own probes.

Over the weekend the furor pierced the innermost circle of the White House

with reports that Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner sought a secret communications link to Russia — an allegation the president called "fabricated."

Asked about the Kushner revelation, McCain, in Australia on a visit, said: "My view of it is I don't like it.

"I know that some administration officials are saying 'well that's standard procedure'.

"I don't think that it's standard procedure prior to the inauguration of a president of the United States by someone who is not in an appointed position."

When put to him by the ABC that some people feel nervous about international security with Trump as president, McCain said he understood why.

"I am nervous from time to time," he said. "I do believe that the president has great confidence in the national security team. I do believe most of the time that he accepts their advice and counsel.

"Can I tell you that he does (that) all the time? No. Does it bother me? Yes, it bothers me."

international marriage that the United States will not tolerate the sexual exploitation of children," Sia Her said in a written statement.

Because of the work of Sia Her and others, the 2015 Legislature established the Working Group on Violence Against Asian Women and Children to study the issue of gender-based violence within the local Asian community and the prevalence

of international abusive marriages.

The report was completed in recent months, and Sia Her's office intends to use that to continue conversations aimed at curbing the issue.

Sia Her also intends to use the report's findings to introduce to lawmakers proposals to help address the problem.

"Abusive international marriage' is one of the most

often whispered-about and identified problem in our largest Asian community, the Hmong, in Minnesota," Sia Her said.

After Thursday's verdict, Miller said Panyia Vang is anxious to move forward. She testified for some five hours during the trial, Miller added.

"I am just so proud of her and how she has grown and how she is going to continue to grow," Miller said.



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By Perry Diaz

Did Xi take Trump for a ride?

When President Donald Trump met his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping at his luxurious resort Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida last April 6, he was hoping that Xi would accept his invitation to stay at the posh resort. Well, Xi politely declined and instead stayed at a nearby hotel. But other than that, their summit was deemed a “success.” Trump got something of geopolitical value that he thought would solve his North Korea dilemma. And Xi got something of great economic value that he coveted so much. But how do you measure who got more? It’s like comparing apples and oranges, right?



N. Korea’s recent test launch of new ballistic missile Hwasong-12, which North Korea claims could reach the U.S.

After the recent Trump-Xi summit at Mar-a-Lago in Florida, Trump’s hard-line stance against China melted like a marshmallow over a fire. After two days of negotiations, Trump declared that China was not a “currency manipulator” and decided to maintain the status quo on trade issues. That’s a 180-degree turnaround from his position during the presidential campaign.

When Xi went back home, he ordered shipments of coal from North Korea to be turned back. Trump was ebullient when he got the news. He said that China took a “big step” in easing tensions between the two countries. He described his relationship with Xi as one with “good chemistry” and praised Xi for banning North Korean coal.

But what has that to do with the North Korea “nuclear” problem? North Korea continues her nuclear program including developing intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) that could reach the U.S. Since the Trump-Xi summit, North Korea had attempted to launch ballistic missiles but failed when the missiles exploded in flight. The following day that South Korea elected Moon Jae-In as president, North Korea launched another missile test. It was successful. This

led Moon to comment that war with North Korea was a “high possibility.”

“Nuclear card”

Meanwhile, the situation in the South China Sea (SCS) has drastically changed: China put militarization of the region in high gear. In an attempt to please – or appease – China, Trump isn’t doing anything. He even turned down three requests from the Pacific Fleet to conduct freedom of navigation operations (FONOPs) with 12 miles of China’s militarized islands in the Spratlys. And in an act of arrogance, China’s ambassador to the U.S. demanded that Trump remove the Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, Admiral Harry Harris Jr., who has been

a strong proponent of FONOP. But what reportedly irked China was when Harris called China “aggressive,” saying the country does not “seem to respect the international agreements they’ve signed.” He was referring to the Permanent



Senkaku Islands.

Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling that rejected China’s “nine-dash line” claim, which covered 80% of the SCS.

Evidently, Xi has put Trump on ice by playing the North Korea “nuclear card.” In other words, North Korea can now pursue her nuclear program, knowing that Trump wouldn’t do anything to stop her for as long as Xi pursues the “denuclearization” of the Korean Peninsula. But for North Korea watchers, denuclearization is not going to happen because China wouldn’t allow it to happen.



U.S. President Donald Trump interacts with Chinese President Xi Jinping at Mar-a-Lago resort.

If China wanted it to happen, she could have done it long time ago.

Another thing that’s not going to happen is Korean reunification. If reunification were going to happen, it would be under a democratic government and China wouldn’t allow that to happen.

Sea-of-Japan. Indeed, a divided Korea — with North Korea possessing nuclear weapons — would serve as a security buffer between China and the U.S. forces stationed just south of the demilitarized zone (DMZ). But if the North Korean communist government collapses and the Korean Peninsula is reunified under the South Korea government, China will lose a strategic advantage over the western part of the Sea of Japan; thus, giving South Korea and Japan full control of the Sea of Japan. This would allow South Korea and Japan to block the Korea Strait — which connects the Sea of Japan and the East China Sea (ECS) — if hostility with China erupts.

It’s important to note that ECS is a hotly disputed region between China and Japan. The dispute is about ownership of the Senkaku Islands, a group of eight uninhabited isles and islets administered by Japan but contested by China. The sea’s strategic value is important to China because it connects to the SCS through the Taiwan Strait. To the east of the ECS is the Ryukyu archipelago, which is Japanese territory and to the west is China.

Arbital tribunal

This brings us back to the SCS, which China claims by virtue of the “nine-dash line,” an arbitrary line that demarcates 80% of the South China Sea. But last July, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague, Netherlands, issued a ruling in the Republic of the Philippines vs. People’s Republic of China that invalidates

the “nine-dash line,” thus rendering China’s claim null and void. Beijing immediately rejected the PCA’s ruling.

Meanwhile, the newly elected President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines, who was sworn into office just 12 days prior to the PCA tribunal award, had a different idea. Instead of pursuing the PCA’s award, he “temporarily” set it aside. During an event at the Libingan ng mga Bayani (Heroes’ Cemetery), Duterte told Chinese Ambassador Zhao Jinhua that he does not want to go to war with China. Duterte then proposed that both the Philippines and China should just have a “soft landing everywhere.” After Duterte’s decision to set the tribunal award temporarily, China showered the Philippines with financial loans.



Xi Jinping asked the PLA to be ready for a “regional war.”

Rude awakening

Last May 15, Duterte met with Chinese President Xi Jinping during the “One Belt, One Road” summit in Beijing. Duterte told Xi, “We intend to drill oil there, if it’s yours, well, that’s your view, but my view is I can drill the oil, if there is some inside the bowels of the earth, because it is ours.” Xi responded, saying: “Well, if you force this, we’ll be forced to tell you the truth. We will go to war. We will fight you.”

It must have been a rude awaken-

ing for Duterte who had called Xi a “great president.” “China loves the Philippines and the Filipino people,” Duterte once said of his new friend and idol. Who would go to war with a friend? Clearly, things have changed, which begs the question: Why the direct and undiplomatic verbal assault on Duterte?

Xi knows that Duterte is weak — very weak — who by his own admission said “We cannot stop China from doing its thing. What do you want me to do? Declare war against China? I can, but we’ll lose all our military and policemen tomorrow!” If Xi uses Sun Tzu’s “Art of War” tactics, he knows that not only Duterte is weak; U.S. President Donald Trump is weak, too. And this raises the question:



Nine-dash line.

Would Trump honor the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) if Duterte invoked it? If no, then the Philippines would be helplessly at the mercy of China. And for as long as Xi keeps promising Trump that he’s working to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, Trump would remain neutral in the territorial disputes in the SCS.

When Xi warned Duterte, “We will go to war,” he knew exactly what Duterte would do: Withdraw. And if Duterte has the cajones to proceed drilling for oil, what would Xi do? Would he ask Trump to rein in Duterte just like when Trump asked Xi to rein in North Korea’s “supreme leader,” Kim Jong-un?

Indeed, any way it’s played out, Xi wins. He keeps North Korea nuclear-armed and the South China Sea in his possession. Which makes one wonder: Did Xi take Trump for a ride when they met at Mar-a-Lago?

(PerryDiaz@gmail.com)



By Gabriel Ortigoza, PhD

While on official visit in Russia, Philippine President Rodrigo Roa Duterte placed all of Mindanao under Martial Law on Wednesday, 23 May 2017 effective 10 pm. PRRD signed Proclamation Number 216 declaring a state of martial law and suspending the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in the whole of Mindanao due to Marawi City Siege by terrorist group Maute.

What is Martial Law?

Martial Law is a state existing when military authorities administered government or exercise control over civilians in domestic territory.

What is Writ of Habeas Corpus?

FindLaw defined writ of habeas corpus (which literally means to “produce the body”) as a court order to a person or agency holding someone in custody (such as a warden) to deliver the imprisoned individual to the court issuing the order and to show a valid reason for that person’s detention.

Legal Basis

The President has military power to declare martial law. The legal basis is written in Article VII Section 18 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which reads, in part: “The President shall be the Commander-in-Chief of all armed forces of the Philippines and whenever it becomes necessary, he may call out such armed forces to prevent or suppress lawless violence, invasion or rebellion. In case of invasion or

rebellion, when the public safety requires it, he may, for a period not exceeding sixty days, suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus or place the Philippines or any part thereof under martial law. Within forty-eight hours from the proclamation of martial law or the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, the President shall submit a report in person or in writing to the Congress. The Congress, voting jointly, by a vote of at least a majority of all its Members in regular or special session, may revoke such proclamation or suspension, which revocation shall not be set aside by the President. Upon the initiative of

of removing from the allegiance to said Government or its laws, the territory of the Philippines or any part thereof, of any body of

Martial Law



President Rodrigo Duterte declares Martial Law while in Russia.

Role of Congress

Article VII Section 18 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which reads, in part: “The Congress, if not in session, shall within twenty-four hours following such proclamation or suspension, convene in accordance with its rules without need of a call.”

Role of Supreme Court

Article VII Section 18 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which reads, in part: “The Supreme Court may review, in an appropriate proceeding filed by any citizen, the sufficiency of the factual basis of the proclamation of martial law or the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus or the extension thereof, and must promulgate its decision thereon within thirty days from its filing.”

Related Experiences

It is not the first time that the Philippines was placed on Mar-



Martial law under Ferdinand Marcos regime.



Protesters oppose Martial Law.

the President, the Congress may, in the same manner, extend such proclamation or suspension for a period to be determined by the Congress, if the invasion, or rebellion shall persist and public safety requires it.”

The President also referred to Article 134 of the Revised Penal Code, as amended by Republic Act Number 5958 as basis for the declaration of martial law. It reads, in part: “Crime of rebellion or insurrection is committed by raising and taking arms against the Government for the purpose

land, naval or other armed forces, or depriving the Chief Executive or the Legislature, wholly or partly, of any of their powers or prerogatives.”

Grounds on Declaring Martial Law

The framers of 1987 Philippine Constitution were careful enough to incorporate strict guidelines should the President put the Philippines or part thereof under Martial Law. The two grounds on declaring Martial Law are invasion and rebellion.

tial Law. On 21 September 1972, President Ferdinand Edralin Marcos put the entire country under Martial Law when Mr. Marcos signed Proclamation 1081. Marcos lifted Martial Law on 17 January 1981. During February 1986 EDSA revolution, Marcos and his family fled the Philippines to seek political asylum in Hawaii. In 1999, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo put the entire province of Maguindanao under Martial Law after the Maguindanao Massacre which happened on 29 November 2009.

In addition to their present duties, President Rodrigo Duterte appointed Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana as Administrator of Martial Law and AFP Chief of Staff General Eduardo Ano as the Implementor of Martial Law.

The Duterte administration shall assure the Filipino people that this martial law won’t be the same martial law experienced under President Marcos and that no human rights shall be violated in its implementation (gabbyortig@yahoo.com).

(The writer is a former military professor at Philippine Military Academy who used to teach Philippine Constitution, Public Policy, International Relation, Human Resources Management, Principles of Management, and Economics)

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The Mustard Seed

By **Nenita B. Daquipa, MD**

One spring, 12 years ago during a surgical workshop in California, our classmate Dr. Renato Rivera met a man who was wearing a scapular, the one we Catholics wear to show our fealty to an Almighty Being.

The stranger talked about his adventures in Haiti, South America, and other underdeveloped countries. How exhilarating it had been for him! Then he asked Renato the \$64,000,000.00 question: what have you done for your fellow Filipinos? Renato, who had a longtime fear of flying, imagined where and how to begin. In fact he had not visited his homeland since he ventured to the USA 30 years prior. Dr. Antonio Daquipa, a fellow classmate, had been doing surgical missions to the Philippines since 1994, inviting Renato to join, but he refused the invitation due to this fear of flying.

The stranger paved the path



Dr. Renato Rivera and the US Surgical Mission Team

for Renato to follow: where to gather supplies, medicines, equipments, and how to recruit. Renato allowed this challenge to marinate in his consciousness just for a little while and finally realized it was his calling. The tiny mustard seed was making its presence known. One autumn day, he accepted the call. Operation Giving Back started in the winter of 2006. Thanks to a lot of prayers and Divine Providence, the mission was able to attract

many highly skilled volunteers. Dr Rivera called on Dr Antonio Daquipa to help.

Tony and I have joined Renato on 4 of his missions, the latest one on February 20-24, 2017. Let me share what transpired that week.

Our volunteer surgeons are highly successful practicing physicians who believe in the precept of giving to neighbor, helping the sick, the ill, the elderly, the down-

trodden, as well as the improvement of medical care in the third world. It's all about love. This was a very highly talented, dynamic group of passionate physicians believing that somewhere over the rainbow is happiness and health for everyone, and some people just needing a little lift to reach it. Here was chairman of surgery, there was chair of trauma medicine, here was a pioneer in telemedicine, there was chair of head and neck surgery with interest in melanoma, she was chair of pediatric cardiovascular anesthesia, he was chair of liver transplant anesthesia group, he was consultant from their surgery group, he was an internist. One had been in the peace corp, had been a nurse and was now a chief resident. All

were from renowned medical institutions. There were medical students and medical residents, allowed credit for volunteering by their various university schools. They assisted surgeries, one of many goals of our missions. Where else can a surgical resident assist at an open cholecystectomy these days! They were optimistic, caring, joyful nurses who provided calm and serenity

to patients anxiously facing an unbelievable grace that was being given to them.



Volunteer Surgeons



Dr. Nenita and Dr. Antonio Daquipa

No mission could succeed without a venue. Our dear classmate Dr. Melinda Regner-Borja and her lovely daughter Dr. Mia filled this gap at their Borja Family Hospital.

All of us followed different paths to Bohol, like the three magi who followed where the star led them. Gathering from all corners of the United States--New

York, Illinois, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Utah, Massachusetts, Missouri, Arizona, California, and Texas--to perform 120 general surgery cases including goiters, thyroid cancers, myomas, sarcomas, breast cancers, inguinal hernias, gallstones, as well as 44 uterine and ovarian tumors for a total of 164 beneficiaries..

As is typical of hospitable Boholanos, we were hosted by the Governor, organizations like the Rotary Club and Gift of Life Foundation, and civic minded individuals, who all provided the group with opportunities for relaxation, delightful distractions from the day's stresses, as well as a taste of Boholano delicacies. Calorie counting was on vacation!!!

Just like the mustard seed, Renato's "Giving back" missions have grown and spread branches to alleviate the suffering of the least of our brethren as well as enriching our medical experiences.

We sincerely thank all of our volunteers for their loving sacrifice and their assistance in making some lives a little bit better.

- Refat Latifi MD
- Dirk Noyes MD
- Catherine Noyes
- Antonio Daquipa MD
- Nenita Daquipa MD
- James Foxworthy MD
- Shiela Foxworthy RN
- Lone Simpson RN
- Keith Simpson
- David Yutuc MD
- Michael Kleinman MD

- Renato Rivera MD
- Rose Wascher RN
- Katelyn Chondra RN
- Eladio Chatto MD
- Judith Chatto
- Brock Kabat
- Irony Sage MD
- Tony Lucas MD
- Stephanie Schock MD
- Pamela Wilson MD
- Sowmya Kantameni MD
- Elizabeth Rodis-Jamero RN!

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UNLUCAI Holds 35th Anniversary Celebration as Cristina Bambao Takes Leadership

By Faina E. Abaya

Everyone likes to reminisce the good old days because the memories of yester-years will always haunt us, especially, in the place where we spent the happiest moments of our young lives.

Who can forget our unguarded and unsophisticated playful young years with our neighbors, school classmates, closest of friends and our own respective families, perhaps, no one can just simply obscure those memories. They are embedded in our whole beings which can return as we nostalgically look into the horizon or even up in the sky with twinkling stars of the night. And the seeming loneliness when thinking those memories can only be eased by the presence of those whom we have spent those recurring memories.

That was what had happened when the United Naguilian, La Union, Circle of American, Inc. held the celebration of their 35th Anniversary on May 27, 2017 at the plush Hilton West Hotel on Harvard St., Sacramento, CA. The memorable event also coincided with the induction of the UNLUCAI officers for 2017-2019 term. As expected, most of those who attended were those familiar faces we always had in mind who came from as far as England, Canada and different places in the United State but still they were our town mates whom we had enjoyed their company at the town we left behind.

The Ballroom was decorated in accordance with the high standard set up of the world renown Hilton hotel chain. As soon as every one of the more 160 guests and members settled on their respective tables, the program which was ably co-emceed by Sonia Delizo and Jamie Mora started with the singing of both the National Anthems of the United States and Philippines by Geena Bambao. The invocation was delivered by Dickie Bernal who implored the guidance of the Devine Providence for the successful celebration and the bonding of the Naguilanders who most of them as mentioned traveled from far places just to be with their town mates to reminisce once more their happy moments when they were in their beloved town.

Immediately thereafter, a sumptuous dinner buffet style was served with typical American cuisine entrée of salad, steak, fish, mashed potato, pasta, asparagus, assorted chocolate and cheese cake for



UNLUCAI President Cristina Bambao



The induction of the incoming officers by guest speaker Delia Vita, President of Naguilian Alliance Network.



Awardees for their achievements in their respective communities and beyond.



Entertainment by Remy Solomon



UNLUCAI officers and members for 2017 - 2019

desserts. Just after dinner, the outgoing President Henry Bambao delivered his welcome address, saying in conclusion, "Your attendance makes our Filipino American Community vibrant, progressive and united as we pursue hand in hand commendable purpose, aiming always for the betterment of our community".

The guest speaker Delia Vita, the President of Naguilian Alliance Network was introduced by Erna Bambao. The guest speaker traced how UNLUCAI was funded by her parents Fred and Adel Vita which started as just a family social organization for the members until it blossoms into a worldwide organization with meaningful purposes for the best interest of their communities and the town of Naguilian. She also added, that the UNLUCAI through the guidance of its dynamic leaders and members, it has been a model organization that champions solidarity and

commitment to teamwork among all affiliated organizations worldwide.

Delia Vita also took the honor to induct the incoming officers. President Cristina Bambao in her acceptance speech said "As I accept the responsibility of my office, I would like to assure everyone with the guidance of the Devine Providence and your steadfast cooperation, we will continue our meritorious programs traditionally put into action and reality by my predecessors to benefit one and all".

Jun Abaya presented the Anniversary Awardees for their achievements in their respective communities and beyond. Pete Ferrer and Henry Bambao both former presidents of UNLUCAI were given the Leadership Awards for leading many meritorious achievements during their terms that redounded to the best interest of their com-

munity and the town of Naguilian. Joven and Elena Aromin for Achievement Award by giving financial grants to 15 deserving students to finish their Vocational Courses for their immediate em-

ployment.

Appreciation Award was given to Dave and Dinnah San Pedro for disseminating through their publication (PF NEWS) which has a global internet connection the greatness of our Cultural Heritage. A Posthumous Award was given to the late Ed Vita for his humanitarian works during his lifetime that greatly helped the less fortunate in his community and the town of Naguilian.

Entertainment was provided by Remy Solomon our community Diva who as usual mesmerized her audience with her professional like rendition of the song entitled "How did you know" by Gary Va-

Continued on page 12



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By Dale Esperante

Fred and Carmelita Calindas welcomed family and friends to their granddaughter Caitlin's Debut at The Haggins Oaks Golf Complex's Pavilion Hall on 6 May 2017.

The golf complex's guest services included a chauffeured golf cart ride from the parking lot to the white-tent Pavilion, a distance away. Appetizers, cold lemonade, iced-tea, a large cask of ice, coffee selections, and a bar served the arriving guests. Next to the pavilion is an artificial grass area where the little ones played. Located nearby is a gazebo overlooking the 18-hole award winning Alister Mackenzie golf course. Photo enthusiasts frequented the white gazebo. A photo booth and an ample supply of masks and accessories were also available in the pavilion for the guests to enjoy. The developed photos were printed in two, one print was a souvenir for the guest while the other was for inclusion in Caitlin's album left with a brief note as a memento.

"What is a Debut? A Debut is a traditional Filipino coming-of-age celebration for young Filipino women in which it celebrates a young woman's 18th birthday, the age of maturity in the Philippines. The Philippine Debut is

truly a tradition that eras back from the Spanish era. It is significant of the 'Quinceanera' festivity of the Spaniards which a young lady rejoices at the age of fifteen. The term Debutante is from the French word 'Deb' for 'female beginner'. The deb is a young lady who comes from the aristocratic class who is formally presented and introduced to the society in a formal 'debut' as soon as she reaches the age of maturity. The age in which this event is remembered is one recognized with adjustments during the Spanish & Filipino customs." The information in this paragraph was derived from an informational card provided by the organizer.

Caitlin thanks the following special people in her life for making her Broadway-themed Debut a successful beautiful event:

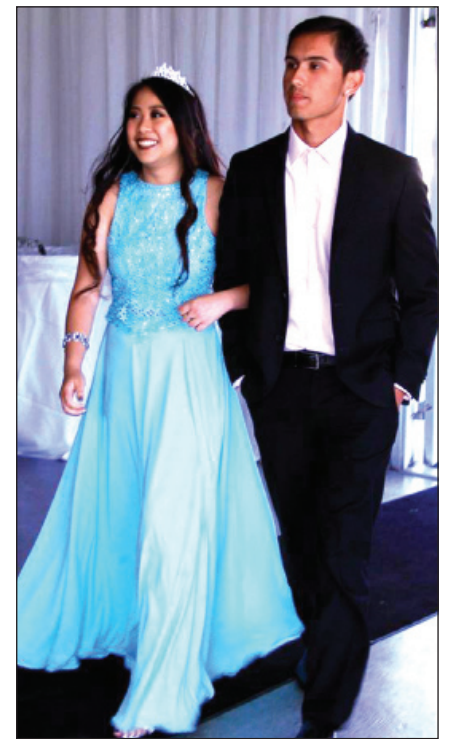
Happy 18th Caitlin Nubla!



Caitlin Nubla



Tap Dancing Crew from River City Theater



Caitlin and cousin Dominick



With mom, grandparents and her escort.



Filipino community of Sacramento.

Photos by Dale Esperante

Parents -Darren and Carmela Yamamoto of Sacramento
Dad - Dr. Vincent Nubla from Maui, Hawaii
Grandparents - Federico and Carmelita Calindas of Sacramento
Grandparents - Carmelo Vasquez

and Teresita Nubla of Fremont, CA
Uncle & Aunt - Uncle Frederic and Aunty Terry Calindas of Elk Grove
Caitlin sends super-props to the following who made her Debut

super-special:
My Sister and Best Friend, Lauren Nubla, who sang with me.
My Tap Dancing Crew from River City Theatre Company for performing with me.
My Master of Ceremonies, Uncle Gerald Dabi of Elk Grove.
The DJ, Ed Cordero, and Photographers Phil Cordero & Crew.
My family and Friends who took part in the 18 Roses & 18 Candles presentations.
My Escort, Cousin, and Best Friend--Dominick Piegaro of Dublin, CA.

Caitlin, on behalf of the world of grownups, Welcome Young Woman! You are part of the future generation of leaders, and with your help, we know the world will remain a wonderful place.

UNLUCAI Holds 35th Anniversary Celebration

From page 11

lenciano and the D' Dreamgirls, who likewise regaled their audience with their well-designed colorful outfit as they danced the "Bailando Dance" showing the beauty, elegance and gracefulness of their movements, the dancers are Edna Villanueva, Janet Tabora, Fe Alvarez, Annabel Pimentel and Marian Kronemeyer.

The lucky winners of the raffle with their corresponding prizes were, first prize of \$200 went to Marian Kronemeyer, second prize of \$150 went to Olive Jackson. Continued music and dancing from Line Dance to the latest craze movements were played showing

the grace and virtuosity of the attendees on the dance floor until closing time.

The UNLUCAI officers for

2017-19 term are: Cristina Bambao, President; Dickie Bernal, Vice President; Jane Bambao, Secretary; Josie Pabros, Asst. Secretary; Edgar Avena, Treasurer; Erna Bambao, Asst. Treasurer; Letty Cheng and Eli Floresca, Auditors; Mannie Ojascastro, Jun Pa-



bro, Zaldy Estepa and Rudy Delizo, Sgt. -At-Armas; Jun Abaya, Parliamentarian; Faina Abaya, PRO; Tino Floresca, Henry Bambao, Fely Esplana, Charity Avena and Sonia Delizo, Board of

Directors.

Seen enjoying the event were; Tony and Lydia Yadao, Dr. Tony and Remy Solomon, Joe and Lilia Rivera, Rick Rafanan, Henry and Welma Dumo, Femy and Rambert Nieva, Edna and Mark Rochenmacher, MaryAnn and Robert Salazar, Elsa and Walker Buck, Alicia and Roland Mata, Luis and Marilyn Vita, Teresa & Mike Salvador and many others.



Filipino American Veterans Association (FAVA) Annual Picnic



Members, family and friends of Filipino American Veterans Association, Inc.



2017 Filipino Fiesta Steering Committee



Getting ready for the biggest event of the Fil Am Community. It is the annual celebration of Philippine Independence Day at Jose Rizal Community Center in Sacramento on June 4, 2017. FFS members shown in this photo are Josie Patria, Lilia Rivera, Mercedes Guerrero, Aida Azurin, Joe Gonzales, Dick Mason, Frank Zabal, Lauren Carpio, Victoria Tagatac Debord and Edna de los Reyes.

A summer picnic is held by FAVA to show appreciation to the members for their continued support. The picnic at Elk Grove Regional Park on May 7, 2017 was enjoyed by all thanks to President Richard Weitzenberg and the organizing committee.



Any active duty military or veteran who served honorably in the United States Armed Forces is eligible to join this organization.



Julie SooHoo

Julie graduates from St. Francis Elementary School, held at the St. Francis Catholic Church on May 19, 2017. Her proud parents Lynda and Sheldon and grandparents Aida and Segundo Azurin wish her the very best as she attends St. Francis High School this fall.



Claire Alyssa Andres BS of Science in Neuroscience

Congratulations to Claire Alyssa Andres Wobbema for graduating Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience from Regis University in Denver, Colorado! Having served as the President for the Maharlika Leo Club, she graduated with honors from St. Francis High School in 2013 and entered the Regis University Honors Program with academic merit scholarships. After extensive leadership involvement, her senior year was spent as elected 2016-2017 Director of Health Awareness on the Executive Cabinet of Regis University. Claire demonstrated her passions by focusing her efforts toward making positive impacts on the physical and mental health of not only the student body, but also through education and outreach in the surrounding communities. We are so proud of you, Claire, and cannot wait to see where your goals lead you next. God bless you on your journey.

With love from mom, dad, papa, grandma, and sisters Katherine and Ava.

Shannon Deloso College of Ethnic Studies

Shannon Deloso found her way to SF State as a kinesiology major but found her love of ethnic studies after joining a half dozen clubs and became an Asian American Studies major with a double minor in race and resistance studies and education. The daughter of Filipino immigrants and a first-generation college student, Deloso was the president and CEO of Associated Students during the 2016-2017 academic year. Teaching a high school ethnic studies class in the San Francisco Unified School District and campaigning for the ethnic studies program at SF State helped her find her purpose, she said. "I'm a shy person," she said. "But ethnic studies was a turning point. I started to feel this urge to advocate more, to push myself."

Deloso was a member of the League of Filipino Students and Kappa Psi Epsilon, where she helped develop Mula Sa Ugat, the first Filipino American student organization coalition. She worked with Project Connect, and also served as the Associated Students representative for the College of Ethnic Studies in 2015-2016.



Her advice to current and future SF State students: take an ethnic studies course. That's even more important in today's political climate, she said. She plans to attend UCLA this fall and pursue a master's degree in education.

Calendar of Events

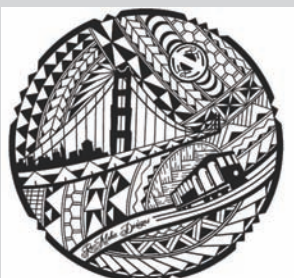
JUNE 3, 2017 (SAT.)
VALLEJO PISTA SA NAYON
 10AM - 6PM
 Vallejo Waterfront
 Mare Island Way
 Vallejo, CA
 707.648.6715



JUNE 4, 2017 (SUN.)
FILIPINO FIESTA of Sacramento
 Commemorating the 75th Anniversary
 of the Bataan Death March
 10AM - 5PM
 Jose Rizal Community Center
 7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento, Ca
 916.524.8008
 916.266.1923
 916.396.7863



SEPT. 2, 2017 (SAT.)
ALOHA POLY FEST
 11AM - 7PM
 San Francisco County Fair Building
 Golden Gate Park
 Charles Hamer
 Founder and Organizer
 415.374.3553



Birthdays



JUDY MENDOZA
JUNE 5



KRISTINE ADUCAYEN
JUNE 29



NANETTE NERONA
JUNE 24



TESS CARRASCA
JUNE 16



SAL MARCELLANA
JUNE 13



NACIAN SANTIAGUEL with Tiffany & Alayne
JUNE 18



DINNAH SAN PEDRO & hubby Dave
JUNE 21



TITO GALLARDO & wife Laami
JUNE 5



LYNNE MITCHELL & hubby Greg
JUNE 27



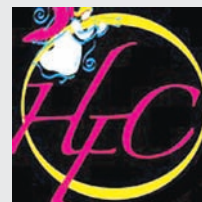
DAN and JINKY DOLAR
25th Wedding Anniversary, June 27



PETE and AGNES LOBO
60th Wedding Anniversary, May 28



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By Dale Esperante

Wedding in Monterey

The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey became the weekend hub for the wedding party of Mr. Leif Amper and Ms. Candice Manion. Fred and Marilou “Malou” Amper, the groom’s parents, invited their closest Sacramento friends to spend a night or two at the Gateway Inn, the hotel wing of the NPS.

Those who arrived on 12 May 2017 joined a sumptuous wedding rehearsal dinner at Chef Lee’s Mandarin House in Monterey hosted by Fred and Malou. After dinner, the Sacramento Filipino American Veterans Association’s (FAVA) Ladies met up in the capacious Ballroom of Club Del Monte to practice their dance performance for the wedding reception. About midnight, the dancers headed to their rooms in the east wing of Gateway Inn to retire for the night. Saturday morning, 13 May 2017, more wedding invitees arrived and checked in at the Inn to attend the garden wedding and to stay the night. At 4:00 p.m., the vaulted lobby of NPS became the pre-wedding reception area complete with a Host-Bar plus appetizers spread out on a central table.

The garden wedding started at

5:30 Saturday afternoon. Reverend John Freeseemann, an ordained minister from San Jose, kept Leif and Candice entertained as he officially celebrated the wedding ceremony with cheerful and funny narratives. After the momentous wedding vows, the Reverend ceremoniously announced the new Mr. and Mrs. Amper, Leif and Candice.

The Club Del Monte Ballroom, guesstimated 60 plus yards long with chandeliered ceiling three stories high, awed all who entered in the expanse of its grand hall. The bride and groom, the families and friends, the DJ, the ambiance, the prayer, the buffet line, and the awesomeness of the venue enhanced the celebration of the evening. The estimated 200 guests enjoyed the spaciousness of a ballroom that could easily handle 200 more.

The Naval Gateway Inn and Suites occupies the historic Del Monte Hotel and Resort—a national historic site dating back to 1878. It is a military lodging facility located on the Naval Postgraduate School grounds. Active and retired military personnel are authorized the use of the facilities of Del Monte Hotel and Resorts. Leif’s father, Fred, is retired military (Army and Air Force combined). Fred and wife Malou are entitled to military privileges and benefits.

The fabulous weekend in Monterey didn’t end right after the wedding reception. After checking out of the Naval Gateway Inn on Sunday morning, most of the guests met up at The Fandango’s Restaurant in Pacific Grove for a



Candice and Leif



Photos by Dale Esperante

wonderful Mothers’ Day and post-wedding luncheon. The great Monterey weekend with family members and friends was made possible by the memorable wedding ceremony and celebration of the newest Mr. and Mrs. Amper. Congratulations again Leif and Candice!

Leif and Candice’s Wedding VIPs and Entourage:

Groom’s Parents: Fred and Malou Amper

Bride’s Parents: John and Julie

Manion

Best Man: Aaron Amper

Maid of Honor: Cathy Manion

Groomsmen: Chaez Boswell, Eric Tam, Eric Floyd, Jason Cateriny, Angelo Vinco.

Bridesmaids: Anna Munar, Kia Vanderaa, Heather Kennedy, Nicole Narlock, Yvonne Perez.

Sponsors: Marvin Ganaden, Delia Amper, Arnel Amper, Ruth Ganaden

From Leif’s parents, Fred and Malou Amper:

“We want to thank our families &

friends from out of town who attended the wedding.

Tom & Lerma Amaba, Bella Nido, Mercedes Descargar, Danny & Gigi Perez, Ben & Remy Poquiz, Andy & Edna Tancioco, Dale & Melita Esperante, Manny & Marlie Ramos, Fel & Mila Reyes, Conrad & Lilia Torres, Matthew & Michelle Kelly, Charito Buss, Jheannifer Ferrer, Antonette Ferrer, Maritess Nabor.

Special Thanks to Dale Esperante for the Invocation.”

Congratulations Legionnaire Officers of Magellan Post 604!

By Dale Esperante

On 21 May 2017, The American Legion Magellan Post 604 membership elected their new Officers for Term 2017—2018:

- Commander - Luzviminda Molina
- 1st Vice Commander - Bobby Aglubat
- 2nd Vice Commander - Tom Amaba
- Chaplain - Dale Esperante
- Historian - Joe Gonzalez
- Judge Advocate - Bill Versoza
- Sgt-at-Arms - Dave Floresca
- Assistant Sgt-at-Arms - Bill Bostock
- Board of Directors - Fred Aquino – Ato Delacruz – Andy Tancioco – Marcos Evangelista – Paul Cordero

The positions of: Finance Officer – Adjutant – Service Officer, are appointed positions. Commander-Elect Luz will appoint the best qualified

members.

District 6 Commander Will Williams will install the new officers of Post 604, another historic occasion at Magellan Hall on 11 Jun 2017. Other District 6 officers, Northern California Area 1, and Department of California Officers may also be in attendance. Magellan Hall and the three acres of surrounding land at 8831 Gerber Road originally belonged to thirty-nine Filipino American farmers who served in the military during WWII. Magellan Hall was built in the late 1940s as a meeting place for Filipino American WWII veterans in the Sacramento Area. Magellan Post and Unit 604 members are welcome to attend the Installation of Officers Ceremony.



L-R: Bobby Aglubat, Dale Esperante, Tom Amaba and the new Magellan Post 604 Commander, Luzviminda Molina.

Congratulations American Legion Auxiliary Magellan Unit 604!

The Filipino American Ladies of the American Legion in Sacramento held their annual election on May 21, 2017.

Their 2017-2018 Officers are:

- President - Lilia Rivera
- 1st Vice. - Florentina Abad
- 2nd Vice. - Carmelita Calindas
- Secretary - Letecia O’Quinn
- Treasurer - Jocelyn Banag
- Sgt-at-arms - Remedios Mangosing
- Marshall - Erlinda Cordero

Executive Committee Members: Cynthia Amaba, Marilou Amper, Yasko Floresca, Bella Nido. President-Elect Lilia Rivera will fill the following appointed positions: Chaplain, Parliamentarian, Musician, Historian, and Program Chairs.

SHADOWS OF SHATTERED DREAM

By Fernando V. Decena

One of the long-standing concerns of poor families is their children's pursuit of higher education. When I graduated from high school, I had a dream of going to law school. However, my parents were unable to finance my college education because they were poor. They had no tangible properties to hypothecate to secure a loan. Thus, the unforgiving eloquence of poverty silenced my poignant dream seven decades ago.

In the third world countries like the Philippines, higher education has historically been the monopoly of the rich. However, today the government, after many years of neglect, finally found it fitting to level the playing field and enacted an education Magna Carta of the poor. The Free Higher Education Act of 2017 ensured that indigent students would not have similar experiences as former students before them.

The new law authorized free college tuition fees to all qualified poor students. However, the indigent students had to be enrolled to any of the 113 authorized state universities and colleges spread throughout the country. While it was too late for me, the drive to pursue higher education never diminished within me.

To keep my sanity when I couldn't go to school, I had volunteered to work at my uncle's law office. For over a year I labored working on legal documents and became proficient. It further reenergized my obsession in the study of law and was a great learning experience. Then, one day and out of the blue, my late godfather, Isabelo Soriano, called and volunteered to sponsor my college education to pursue a two-year program of my choice.

I can still vividly remember what he had said. "Two years of college would be a good starting point for pursuing further education later on."

The offer was for the academic year 1956-1957, and was accepted as an entrance scholar at the Feati Institute of Technology in Manila. As such, all tuition fees were fully paid that year. While the major was not in law but in secretarial science, I knew then that it would be the stepping stone to something bigger in the future.

In 1961 an injection of hope glowed a lot brighter. I received a notice to take the examination for enlistment in the United States Navy and passed. Unknown to the many recruits like me, there was a stipulation clause in the Status Forces Agreement between the Philippines and the United States. For security reasons, it limited the number of jobs available to Filipinos. We were only allowed to work at the officers' staterooms, serve meals in the wardroom, and cook in the kitchen. The majority of the recruits still believed that it was far better than languishing in the country without a job. Was I discouraged working in the kitchen and officers' quarters? Not really, except that my ego was bruised considering how I had much to offer in administrative fields.

During the height of the Vietnam conflict, I applied for college under the Associate Degree Completion Program (ADCOP) from the U.S. Navy. I was not accepted on my first try due to having insufficient pre-college credits: previous college units earned in the Philippines were only equivalent to a high school graduate degree in the United States.

In preparation for my continuing quest for higher education and another shot at the Navy's ADCOP program. I took Navy courses in



accounting, personnel administration, storekeeper, and journalism, and took the U.S. Navy Regulation course for officers. To satisfy my interest in law, I also enrolled in American Law and Procedure with the La Salle Extension University, a correspondence institution in Chicago, Illinois. It was my closest venture into law school, even though it was only correspondence. However, due to the rigors of operations in Vietnam and studying my professional advancement in my Navy career, I was compelled to withdraw from law studies after earning 60 credit units.

Interestingly enough, these 60-credit units earned from a university in the United States helped me qualify for the Associated Degree Program from the U.S. Navy in 1970. Two years after acceptance, I graduated from De Anza College with an Associate in Arts Degree in journalism. I was so excited and could hardly believe that I had finally earned a degree in the United States.

With a journalism degree under my belt, I applied to change my rating specialty to journalist. As a Filipino and with English as a second language, it was tough to break into the journalist rating culture at that time. However, as this was my second time to apply for cross-rating and I was supported by a U.S. earned degree, persistence paid off, and I became among the few lucky Filipino journalists in the U.S. Navy.

When I retired in 1981, I returned to work as a civilian with Patrol Squadron 31 (VP-31) based at

the Moffett Naval Air Station as editorial assistant with the training department until it was decommissioned in 1976. Meanwhile, I pursued my interest in financial planning after work. Eventually, I was licensed in securities and work for four years with Primerica Financial Services. The company sold securities, life insurance

and mortgage products. It was one of the top financial services in the industry at that time. However, when the five-year downturn of real estate and securities markets struck, I decided not to renew my licenses.

As I continued to search for opportunities in higher education, I became more inspired and motivated when an article in the Sacramento Bee of a 70-year old woman going back to college and graduating at 79 with a law degree from McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento. As a retiree with a fixed income, I could not afford tuition fees for law school in the United States. In contrast, college of law tuition in the Philippine was more affordable. So I applied at the college if law of Lyceum Northwestern University in the Philippines and received an acceptance letter contingent upon passing a panel interview. My family, however, disapproved of me going back to school in the country for health reasons.

Instead, I decided to complete my Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism and enrolled online at Americus University, graduating on August 13, 2002. Still in pursuit of higher education, I was referred to research the School of Professional Studies Program at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. The institution was one of the top state universities in the country, offering graduate and undergraduate degrees online. Their law program, however, required on-campus attendance. I

opted to pursue a master's in communication and graduated on December 10, 2010.

After a year of hiatus, the University of the Philippines offered online Doctorate of Communication program. Some of my important consideration for pursuing higher education were affordability and self-achievement, not for employment purposes. Tuition fees for the graduate program in the Philippines were cheaper at P1000 pesos a unit per semester excluding miscellaneous fees. When compared to similar programs in American universities, it was a 1000 USD per unit or higher, which was around PHP 40 to 1 USD in December 2012. The savings for such a program were indisputable.

As a matter of fact I applied for admission in 2012 and submitted the required portfolio of published works and the admission essay. I was one of the lucky eight offshore students of the forty two candidates admitted into the 2014-2015 academic year. I was excited and ready to move on, up the ladder towards highly valued intellectual asset—the Doctorate of Communication.

Classes started on the first week of August in 2014, but at 1:00 p.m. my wife summoned an ambulance as I had my second heart attack. I was whisked to the hospital and had my second bout of cardiac surgery. It was a harrowing experience, a collateral damage of the Agent Orange exposure during the Vietnam conflict. Having a second bout with the disease made me rethink my position as to whether it was wise to continue aiming for a prestigious degree or not.

With the family doctor's assessment to take it easy and to reduce stress, my wife, who is a retired nurse, agreed and asked me to withdraw from the program. She said, "Take care of your aging heart." It was one of the hardest decisions for me to make. I could not believe that another dream had to be given up and to be retired as a memory.



In loving memory of...



Eufrazio 'Apot' Magadia
June 2, 1941 - May 25, 2015



Loreto Delmendo Callao
April 22, 1926 - May 18, 2017

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The monsters we face

A look into our own fears and what they often say about us and how we participate in society

By Glenn Pernes

As a child who grew up in the province, I was inundated with tales of creatures of Philippine mythology. Some stories served as caution as in when my grandparents would advise me to chant "bari-bari" when passing through the backwoods so that the duwende would not hoodwink me and would grant me safe passage through their territory.

Some dealt with my recalcitrance such as when my aunts would tell me to behave or else the kapre would kidnap me, take me to his kingdom concealed within the cluster of acacia trees, and eventually roll me in a massive tobacco sheet and make a cigarette out of me.

These stories, by and large, and however cautionary, evoke fear. Accounts of these creatures in most regions in the country are replete with frightening descriptions of what they look like and what they can do to you if they take a liking to you or if you wittingly or otherwise invade their domicile.

For instance, the batibat, a demon in Iloko folklore, is described as a huge fat



Illustration by Dave San Pedro

woman with a disfigured face that lives in a hole in a post, which used to be an old tree. She then visits houses of unsuspecting sleeping victims, usually those who felled its former home, and suffocates them to death. Another well-known mythological creature is the aswang, which is sometimes said to take on the form of an attractive and meek lady in the day but detaches its torso from its lower body and morphs into a terrifying creature at night. It preys upon the young and the unborn, often feeding on their liver and heart.

A reflection of society

As horrifying as they are described, these beings

from the underworld are the staple of Filipino popular culture. The proliferation of such in komiks and movies show just how influential and effective they are in teaching values and instilling fear in the lives of Filipinos. The late Professor Maximo Ramos cited in his book, *The Creatures of Philippine Lower Mythology*, an instance where townsfolk in a barrio in southern Philippines would not dare cut down trees without asking the consent of the spirits they believe reside in them.

But more than inculcating terror, these lower mythological creatures also function as metaphors reflecting the anxieties and fixations of a society, especially in

a given historical moment as noted by cultural historians and authors Joseph Maddrey and David Skal. The monster in Homer's *Polyphemos* and the vampire in European folktales, according to Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, author of the book, *Monster Theory*, represented the then-nascent fear of the growing racialized immigrant communities in the continent. In the early 1800s, Mary Shelley's monster, popularly known as *Frankenstein's monster*, denoted distress over developing complex scientific advancements of that time. Similarly, Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's *The Incredible Hulk* was said to symbolize the perils of the atomic age, while George A. Romero's *Zombie* was believed to be a social commentary on industrial automation and mindless consumerism.

Other monsters and mythological creatures in Middle-Age Europe represented gender and racial anxieties, noted by Cohen. Given that most story tellers then were male and European, it's interesting to note that women and people of color were represented in stories as witches and werewolves and such as they were thought to threaten the status quo of the patriarchal society.

The fears that these western creatures epitomize are almost similar to what

Continued on page 18



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Disney opens 'Avatar' and 'Guardians of the Galaxy' attractions

AFP Relaxnews

This weekend marks the grand debut for two highly anticipated Disney attractions on both sides of the continental United States, with the opening of the "Avatar" theme park and the "Guardians of the Galaxy" attraction.



Extending on the big-screen success of "Guardians of the Galaxy 2" which is currently wrapping up in U.S. cinemas, the attraction at Disneyland Resort in Anaheim is set to open its doors officially to the public on Saturday.

At "Guardians of the Galaxy – Mission: Breakout!" visitors explore a warehouse-type fortress owned by the mysterious collector Tanaleer Tivan, who has imprisoned the Guardians of the Galaxy.

But unbeknownst to the Collector, Rocket Raccoon has escaped and is enlisting

the help of guests to free the Guardians who are trapped in glass cases.

Guests can also peruse Tanaleer Tivan's museum of artifacts such as fauna, relics and species collected throughout the universe and housed in glass cases.

Over on the other coast at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, "Pandora: The World of Avatar" also opens its doors to the public this weekend.

Highlights of the park, which recreates the world imagined by director James Cameron 4.4 light years

away from Earth, include the Na'vi River Journey ride, which sends guests down the sacred river hidden within a bioluminescent rainforest, and ends in an encounter with a Na-vi Shaman.

Thrill-seekers can get their hearts pumping on the Avatar Flight of Passage, which recreates the experience of riding on a winged Banshee over Pandora. Riders fly past floating mountains, rushing waterfalls and dense jungle.

The monsters we face

From page 18

their local counterparts represent. Professor Maximo Ramos wrote that during the Spanish colonization all the way to the American period, people living in far-flung areas in Northern and Southern Philippines were conditioned to be wary of the dayo or foreigners who may disrupt their way of living. The shapeshifting aswang in their folktales symbolized non-natives. Townsmen were encouraged to court and marry women within their barangays lest they bring ill fortune and danger to their community. The duwende, kapre, batibat and aghoy expressed the ill effects of the then-burgeoning industrialization, deforestation and environmental decay, and urbanization. Almost all stories involving these monsters and creatures caution natives to be extra vigilant in preserving the flora and fauna.

Fearing what we don't understand

As these folkloric creatures typically come from a mystical realm unknown to us, coming out mostly at night and attacking in the dark, they essentially mirror our human fear of what we do not understand. We avoid certain places and people, and shut down ideas because in actuality we fear the uncertain and unfamiliar. Some people consult fortune tellers, carry around anting-anting, and make chanting noises to ward off perceived evil elements and misfortunes.

Although these monsters are arguably linked to prohibited practices to reinforce good values and acceptable behavior, they also represent a kind of desire to make sense of and overcome seemingly unexplainable and hopeless situations, a desire for heroism and nobility to arise. And our folklore is filled with champions. There is a col-

lective desire to combat corruption, environmental degradation, drugs and criminality, and moral abasement, for justice, equality, peace and truth. There is a yearning to understand how our current society came to be and transcend practices and beliefs that keep us from progressing as a nation.

The aggression and domination these creatures symbolize are expressed within the constraints of liminality, which can evoke escapist fantasies. Every Halloween, people the world over celebrate the macabre for a night. There are tolerable levels of fright and horror in movies and literature. We take comfort in the fact that, at the end of a terrifying story, the monster is slain; the hero prevails. All because deep down, we believe it is only temporary and what comes after is liberation.

Tourists cancel bookings in PH

Hotels, resorts in Visayas starting to feel effects of martial law in Mindanao

By Cris Evert Lato

Cebu City—Hotels and resorts in the Visayas are bearing the brunt of the siege in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur province, that prompted President Duterte to declare martial law in Mindanao.



Bohol's beaches are among the top tourist attractions in the Visayas.

Travel agencies and online travel agents have canceled reservations, citing concerns about the country's peace and order situation as the main reason for foregoing plans to travel to the Philippines.

As of May 27, Be Grand Resort Bohol had a total of 53 room cancellations equivalent to 94 nights.

The canceled reservations had been made in the months of May and June, according to Ronalaine Fernandez-Sato, area communications manager of Be Resorts in Mactan and Bohol.

Cenelyn Manguilimotan, Cebu Parklane International Hotel general manager, said the hotel had also received cancellations although she could not yet give figures.

"It is already a series of events that happened one after another starting with the Abu Sayyaf in Bohol," said Manguilimotan, past president of Hotels, Resorts and Restaurants Association of Cebu.

Interrupted

"We were starting to recover and then the Marawi siege happened and then the declaration of martial law. We are just hoping that eventually the situation will be better," she said.

At the height of military operations against Abu Sayyaf members who tried to set up base in Bohol,

Manguilimotan said the group of hotels she used to represent had gotten 90 cancellations of bookings.

Abu Sayyaf members were later killed in separate operations in Bohol that lasted for more than a month since the terrorists entered Inabanga town on April 10.

Most of those who canceled their bookings were tourists from Korea, Japan and China.

More cancellations are expected as the United Kingdom (UK) advised its citizens to avoid travel to the western and central parts of Mindanao, particularly Marawi City, and consider traveling only if absolutely necessary.

The advisory released on Saturday also mentioned the lack of clarity on the implications of the declaration of martial law in Mindanao.

Security precautions

"The Foreign and Commonwealth Office continue to advise against all travel to western and parts of central Mindanao including Marawi City and against all but essential travel to the remainder of Mindanao," the advisory said.

UK citizens already in Marawi City were told to stay indoors, monitor the news and heed the advice of Philippine authorities in light of clashes between government forces and militants.

Fighting continues in Marawi City as government forces battle to flush out Muslim militants who have laid siege to parts of the city.

Manguilimotan said tour

operators were trying to assure guests that Marawi was far from Cebu and the declaration of martial law had kept the terrorists at bay.

But the explanations are not enough, said Patria Aurora "Dawnie" Roa, former director of the Department of Tourism's Central Visayas office.

"Any news about war in Mindanao is viewed as war in the Philippines," Roa said.

She said based on her 17-year experience as regional tourism chief, "news on clashes in Sulu or Basilan, which are not even regular destinations, always result in cancellations of bookings."

Loose talk dangerous

Mr. Duterte's statement about possibly extending martial law coverage to the Visayas is not helping ease fears, said Gordon Alan "Dondi" Joseph, head of Cebu Business Club.

"Will the talk of declaring martial law affect business? Of course," Joseph said.

The effect is felt immediately among tourists and foreign investors. "It gives the impression that we are unstable, politically immature, or incapable of solving our problems because of weak institutions," said Joseph, also honorary consul of The Netherlands in Cebu.

Chief Supt. Noli Taliño, director of the Central Visayas police, said the public should be assured that Cebu and the rest of Central Visayas were safe.

"Our security system is in place and there is no specific threat," he said.

Dj Ozgee

& Entertainment

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Kissing scenes still make Jennylyn nervous

By Allan Policarpio

While Jennylyn Mercado is no stranger to doing kissing scenes, they still never fail to make her nervous—more so when she needs to do them with an acting newbie, like Gil Cuerva, her leading man in GMA 7's adaptation of the popular Korean television series, "My Love from the Star."



Jennylyn Mercado

"Every kissing scene is different—and it can be tough when you're doing it with someone new. Once you sense that he's feeling awkward about it, you start feeling awkward, too. There was a scene that took us nine takes to get right!" she told the Inquirer at a recent press conference for the said primetime series, which starts airing on May 29.

Jennylyn, who has been in the business since 2003, is vastly more experienced. But in no way does it make her feel that she has the right to instruct Gil, who's starring in his very first acting stint. "I didn't guide him; that's our director Joyce Bernal's job. The best I could do is cheer us up," she said.

"I was like, 'Come on, let's do this!' And there's Direk teasing us that we won't be going home unless we nail it," added the Kapuso star, who nonetheless appreciates Gil's curiosity and willingness to learn.

"He's eager and open to the things being taught to him. I saw how much he has grown—from his auditions to when he finally got to work. He really wants to become an actor, and that's heartening to see," related Jennylyn, who plays Steffi Chavez, a beautiful but careless actress, who meets Matteo Domingo (Gil)—an intelligent but aloof extraterrestrial, forced to live on Earth.

"On the surface my character is happy and goofy, but she's really a sad person," Jennylyn said of Steffi. "This is one of the most

challenging roles I have tackled, because I have to appear crazy and over the top, but at the same time project sadness through my eyes."

Jennylyn, who celebrated her 30th birthday last May 15, said she couldn't ask for anything more, especially when it comes to her family life.

Her son with Patrick Garcia, 8-year-old Alex Jazz, received honors in school last month. "Every year, he gives me something to be proud about," she said. "It felt good seeing him go up the stage."

And though her aunt and adoptive mother, Mommy Lydia, passed away late last year, Jennylyn has reconnected with her estranged, biological father, Noli, whom she last saw after giving birth to Jazz. She and her father—a musician based in Seoul, South Korea—had never spent much time together, but their lines of communication were always open.

"Every New Year's Eve, Mommy Lydia and I typically check into a hotel and celebrate the occasion there. But this time, it was different... I was sad, so I thought of calling my father. He asked if I was OK, and I said no. Before long, he was talking about going back to the Philippines and living with me," she said.

Despite not having grown up with her father, Jennylyn said there was not much adjustment to make. "I feel comfortable with him. And I'm so happy that he and Jazz got along quickly," she said.

Jennylyn's relationship with boyfriend Dennis Trillo seems to be going well, too.

Asked if she and Dennis were already thinking about settling down, she said: "We don't talk much about future plans—engagement, wedding, etc. I don't think that would happen any time soon."

Arci Muñoz on love scene with Gerald Anderson: 'The wildest I've done, I didn't want it to end'

By Clarizel Abanilla

Bold and confident, Arci Muñoz had no qualms in giving it all for her love scene with Gerald Anderson in their new movie.



Gerald Anderson and Arci Muñoz.

Muñoz and Anderson reunites onscreen via Star Cinema's latest offering, "Can We Still Be Friends". Over a year ago, their experimental team-up on "Always Be My Maybe" was a certified hit, with their love scene in that film having earned praises.

But despite the level of intimacy they showcased in that previous film, Muñoz declared that her love scene with Anderson in "Can We Still Be Friends" is by far the wildest she's ever done.

"Kailangan ko talaga mag-shot (I needed to take a shot)," she said at the press conference for the film earlier today.

Muñoz revealed that she had to down a shot of vodka to give herself an extra boost to execute the scene. Anderson also did so to ease up the tension. The revelation led journalists to further ask about the details of the new love scene.

"Ito lang ang masasabi ko: 'yun yung pinaka-challenging na kailangan ko gawin sa buong pelikula, actually sa lahat ng nagawa ko, 'yun yung pinakamahirap na i-arte,'" Muñoz said.

(This is all I can say: it was the most

challenging scene I had to do in the movie. Actually, out of everything that I've done [in my career], it was the hardest scene I had to do as an actress.)

She even gushed about sweating profusely while she was doing the scene. The level of intimacy they projected even affected everybody in the production, said Muñoz: "Madaling araw na kasi 'nun at nagising lahat ng tao sa set. Ang hirap po kasi labanan. Ang ganda talaga, parang ayoko matapos."

(We shot the scene during the wee hours. It woke everyone up. It was hard to resist. It was really beautiful, as if I didn't want it to end.)

Directed by Prime Cruz, "Can We Still Be Friends" will hit theaters nationwide on

Erich Gonzales enjoys Siargao, flaunts fabulous figure

By Clarizel Abanilla

Kapamilya actress Erich Gonzales, without a doubt, is definitely in the roster of today's hottest celebrities.

In a recent Instagram post, the 26-year-old actress proudly showed off her toned body. She's clad in a two-piece navy blue bikini revealing her sculpted abs. She also shared a series of scenic beach snaps from her stay in Siargao.

Following her post, she easily earned praises from netizens who were simply in awe of her fabulous physique.

Not too long ago, the actress spiked headlines when news of her break-up with former boyfriend Daniel Matsunaga came out. It was a highly-publicized, bitter break-up reportedly with money-related issues.

But after a brief exchange of hurtful statements against each other, both parties ceased from giving away details about the breakup.

Now, the actress' posts seem to show that she's fully recovered and doing well, and more inspired to better herself on all aspects. Taking from her post, though without a caption, being in tip-top shape is a goal achieved.



Erich Gonzales

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