



Is Duterte an autocrat?
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PHILIPPINE Fiesta

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Flores de Mayo
Page 10

Boracay now closed



SET FOR CLOSURE. The world-famous tourist destination is set to be closed to tourists for 6 months.

BY AIKA REY

Aklan, Philippines – Even without a publicized written order from President Rodrigo Duterte, the Philippines on Thursday, April 26, officially closed the world-famous island of Boracay for a 6-month rehabilitation period.

The President “verbally” ordered the island’s closure, saying Boracay has become a “cesspool.” Without presenting a master plan for Boracay’s rehabilitation, Duterte approved the recommendation of the environment, interior, and tourism departments to close Boracay to tourists for a maximum of 6 months.

Boracay’s rehabilitation

is set to proceed starting Thursday, with government agencies using regular budgets.

Malacañang had earlier downplayed the seemingly last-minute issuance of the written orders, saying the public didn’t need the documents to know about and prepare for the closure.

Duterte had ordered the closure of the popular tourist destination during a Cabinet meeting on April 4, around two months after he had first declared his intent to do so during a speech in Davao City. The country stands to lose P1.96 billion due to the decision, said Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia.

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Duterte urges 260,000 OFWs in Kuwait to come home

BY CHRISTINE AVENDANO

President Rodrigo Duterte called on the 260,000 Filipinos working in Kuwait, most of them employed as domestic helpers, to return home, saying the Gulf state apparently did not want their services anymore.



President Duterte said he could use funds given by China to “get all those who want to go home” and joked about robbing a bank to get more money.

“To you there in Kuwait, [to] those who are not really household helpers, I now appeal to your sense of patriotism: Come home, anyway there are now many jobs in the Philippines,” the

President said, addressing the overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Kuwait.

“I will look for money and I will get all, all the Filipino workers (in Kuwait),” he

Continued on page 4

Task force formed to solve killing of Cagayan priest



Photo by Paul Lopez

SLAIN PRIEST. Father Mark Ventura is shot dead by riding-in-tandem assailants on April 29, 2018.

BY RAYMON DULLANA

“I have ordered my men to conduct [a] thorough in-

vestigation for the possible identification and apprehension of suspects the soonest possible time,” says Chief Superintendent Jose Mario Espino. Continued on page 4

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Donald Duterte

BY JOEL ROCAMORA

What is disgusting about these two is not just that they encourage the worst instincts of people, they themselves are stuck in the mire, the stinky bottom

“This president is unethical, and untethered to truth and institutional values...His leadership is transactional, ego driven and about personal loyalty.”

If you thought I was describing Duterte with this quote, you would be wrong but also right. It actually describes Donald Trump in a just released book by former FBI director James Comey. You would also be right because it describes Duterte as well.

Identifying similarities between the Duterte and Trump personalities and regimes should help us understand the uncomfortable spot that Americans and Filipinos find themselves in. Even more useful would be to contrast how resistance has developed in the two countries.

I could write a whole book on Rody Trump. They are uncannily similar in so many ways. I want to focus on their disgusting treatment of women. We could start with Jojo Abinales' angry eloquence.

“Sexual reprobates like their women weak and submissive to hide their impending impotence but, more importantly, because they want to conceal what they are terrified of: strong women. They reserve their venom on those women because these women's ability, intelligence, standing, and grace bring into stark contrast these scalawags' ignorance, pettiness, narcissism, and

their paranoia.”

This is not just a matter of their expletive-laced language. Senator Liela de Lima has been in jail for more than a year on trumped-

up charges. Chief Justice Sereno is about to be railroaded out of the Supreme Court. Vice President Leni Robredo and Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales have been threatened with impeachment. Senator Risa Hontiveros has two pending cases filed by Duterte minions. The latest victim is Sister Patricia Fox, a frail, 71-year-old ailing nun, jailed overnight on Duterte's orders.

Senator Sonny Trillanes and Commission on Human Rights Chair Chito Gascon, consistent critics of the Duterte administration, have only been treated to verbal attacks. Do you see the logic here? Hindi kaya dahil ang macho natin na presidente ay takot sa lalaki? Dapat matakot siya sa babae.

What Digong and Donald do not understand is that popular beliefs, a country's culture, is constantly, if unevenly changing. Part of Philippine and American culture is backward, sexist, violent, racist. A president's responsibility is to represent, to advance, the best elements of a country's culture, respect for other people and their communities, in the end, decency. What is disgusting about these two is not just that they encourage the worst instincts of people, they themselves are stuck in the mire, the stinky bottom.

In what other ways are Donald and Rody similar? The numbers supporting Digong's violence do not



just come out of his mouth. The numbers blazing out of the barrels of police guns and their hirelings mount to scandalous levels. Donald cannot out-violence Rody. He cannot encourage extrajudicial killings. At best he sends his planes to target Assad in Syria and support the violence of fascist fringe groups in the US.

Fact is, both regimes are weak and incompetent. Both have ramshackle Cabinets with high turnover. Digong makes things worse with his penchant for “shoot from the hip” positions, later revised or explained away, making life extremely difficult for those who have to implement them.

Uncertainty in personnel and policy creates opportunities for corruption. There are more than enough syndicates moving quickly into these spaces. Both have children and in-laws widely rumored to head syndicates.

Digong has already done irreparable damage to painstakingly-built political institutions. Because he and his legal advisers disregard the law, Digong has left our judicial system, starting with the Supreme Court, in shambles. American political institutions have shown more resiliency. Trump has had great difficulty with the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Special Prosecutor appointed by the DOJ might still succeed in laying the groundwork for Trump's impeachment.

Opposition to Trump has gone much further than opposition here. This is not just because American political institutions

provide a stronger base for resistance. In the Philippines, only the Senate has provided an institutional base for opposition. The party-based opposition, led by the LP and Akbayan, is still in its initial stages. I am envious of the dynamism and energy of the women's movement, striking public school teachers, and amazingly, teenage-led mass movements in the US. Anti-Duterte mobilizations have been sporadic and do not yet have the momentum of the American resistance.

Trump may be closer to being removed than Duterte. The mid-term elections in the US in November will surely turn Trump into a lame duck president. We will have to wait till May 2019.

Instead of the possible opposition majorities in both the House and the Senate in the US, the best we can hope for is a stronger opposition minority in the Senate. We need to support the groups building up opposition to these two.

In the meantime, we need to suck it up, limit the nausea our “leaders” provoke.

Boracay: From pristine island to fragile paradise

BY SOFIA TOMACRUZ

Despite counting itself among the best islands of the world, Boracay has struggled to keep up with its fame. A look at its history shows warning signs at least a decade-old.

It's been consistently named one of the best islands in the world, but a glimpse at Boracay's history shows how the island has struggled to keep up with its fame.

After about two months since President Rodrigo Duterte first made mention of Boracay in February 2018, the tourist island on Thursday, April 26, closed its shores for 6 months.

“You go into the water, it's smelly. Smell of what? Shit. Because everything that goes out in Boracay...it's destroying the environment or the Republic of the Philippines and creating a disaster coming,” Duterte said last February 10.

During the closure period, various government agencies and stakeholders will seek to address the island's environmental woes. How did Boracay go from a pristine island to a fragile paradise in just a few years?

Stewards

The beginnings of the island as we know it today trace back to the 1910s when Don Lamberto H. Tirol and Sofia Ner Gonzales-Tirol – also known as “Lola Sofing” maintained the land they owned by first planting fruit trees on the open land.

According to microfilm manuscripts from the National Library, Tirol was formerly a mayor. From 1901 to 1920, he was also one of the early executives of the Municipality of Mankato before becoming a judge of Buruanga, presently known as the Municipality of Malay.

Meanwhile, Gonzales-Tirol rose to fame as “the woman behind the greening of Boracay.”

A Sunday Times article reprinted in the 1980s described her role: “Lola Sofing brought in labourers from the mainland to clear the primeval debris. She then started the greening of Boracay by planting fruit trees, particularly coconut, on the open land.”

Prior to the stewardship of Tirol and Gonzales, the report also described the island as a “stark, coral outcrop wreathed with thorns trees and mangroves,” inhabited by the Ati tribe.

Around 1930, land was placed under the Torrens System, and the Tirol couple was granted a title of ownership.

Following Tirol's death during the latter part of the decade, Gonzales-Tirol took on new vigor in cultivating the island as she administered a coconut plantation in Boracay. As the years passed, others came and placed their stake on the island.



Editor's Note

Being away on vacation in our mother land does not mean out of touch with what's happening within our Fil-Am community in Sacramento. With much gratitude to the social media, I still got to see what went on. I enjoyed viewing what was shared online and felt like a part in the fun and excitement of the celebration in our community.

This is the time where I can relate in the celebration of reaching important milestones in our life such as retirement, wedding anniversary, or just plain celebrations such as birthdays, birth announcements, graduations, and even the celebration of life. With this, I say congratulations and best wishes to everyone celebrating these momentous occasions.

On our end with Philippine Fiesta News, what we celebrate this month of May is our 17th year in publication. We remain forever grateful to our contributors and hoping that we all have the longevity and good health to carry on this mission for our Fil-Am community.

Our big days are coming! One is the Big Day of Giving and another is the Filipino Fiesta in time to celebrate the 120th Anniversary of Philippine Independence. Which ever charitable organization you choose to give, remember that it will always be for a good cause.

Rize All Art Center will be having their 3rd recital for the year, which will be held on May 21 at the Cosumnes Oaks Performing Art Center.

Have a fun time with these upcoming events in our community and be safe always!

Still,
Dinnah San Pedro



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Philippines loses bid to void Chinese names for Benham Rise features

BY CAMILLE DIOLA

MANILA, Philippines — The government's recent protest over China's naming of five features in Philippines-controlled underwater region Benham Rise came too late after years of inaction.

President Rodrigo Duterte is set to sail this week in hopes of making a statement that the Philippines "owns" the underwater ridge, now called Philippine Rise. The gesture, however, comes after an international body confirmed Chinese names for features in the Philippines' maritime backyard.

In a letter to an overseas office of the Department of Foreign Affairs on March 6, 2018 seen by Philstar.com, the International Hydrographic Organization refused to reverse the approval of Chinese proposals to name undersea features Haidongqing Seamount, Jinghao Seamount, Tianbao Seamount, Jujiu Seamounts and Cuiqiao Hill.

The letter was in response to the Philippine delegation to UNESCO's request dated February 28, 2018 to nullify the names. The Philippines argued that it had jurisdiction over the features under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, or UNCLOS.

The country also argued that China conducted an underwater survey in Benham Rise in 2004 that led to the naming of the features without the Philippines' consent.

Hans Werner Schenke, chair of the IHO's Sub-committee on Undersea Feature Names or SCUFN, was quick to point out that UNCLOS has "legally no explicit effect with regard to the naming of undersea features in EEZs."

China's proposals followed all guidelines and rules of his office, Schenke explained. To grant the Philippines' request after the names have been adopted would give precedence to other possible revisions based on different inter-

pretations.

Even if one country's naming of features in other countries' EEZs does not signify its rights over them, the Philippines lost the chance to make more relevant parts of its own maritime domain.

Maritime law expert Jay Batongbacal was the first to reveal China's plan to name five features in Benham earlier this year. He was technical advisor when the Philippines petitioned a UN-backed body in 2009 to grant an extension of its continental shelf in the Benham Rise region. The country was granted the award in 2012.

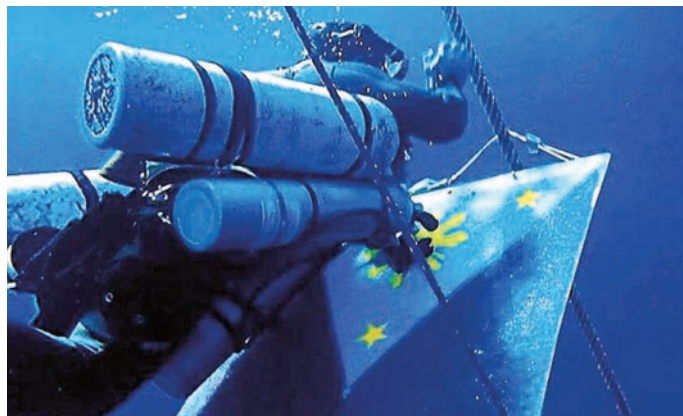
Batongbacal already warned that a complaint against Beijing's move would possibly be futile since the naming process had already concluded.

"It may be a bit embarrassing that we are too late the hero and we are objecting all of a sudden... it's going to be awkward and in a way, already out of order," Batongbacal told radio dzMM in February.

He was right. In the response to the DFA office in March, IHO subcommittee chair Schenke noted the peculiarity of the Philippines' request.

While there were past submissions which affected features within other countries' EEZs, "this is the first time ever that the SCUFN received this sort of objection of a country which claims authority about the affected EEZ," Schenke wrote.

Another reason the DFA gave cited the subcommittee's past rejections of naming proposals. It argued that the Chinese naming of the seamounts was "politically sensitive... given the complex geo-

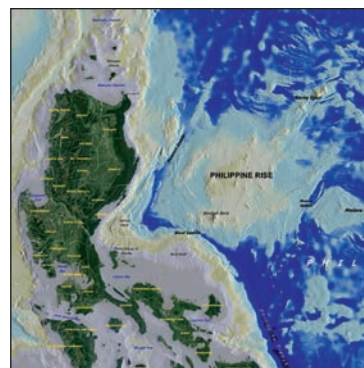


The new maritime marker will be composed of buoys to complement an earlier Philippine flag that combined government forces installed underwater at one of the highest submarine mountains in the area last year.

political situation," referring to the longstanding dispute between Manila and Beijing over the South China Sea.

This reasoning was also rebuffed.

For Schenke and other members of the naming authority, terms used by China had "no political sensitivity at all." Based on past documents, Haidongqing Sea-



A NAMRIA map showing undersea region Benham Rise, which was recently renamed Philippine Rise.

mount was named after a falcon symbolic to the Chinese. Jinghao Seamount and Tianbao Seamount, meanwhile, express Chinese aspirations for an ideal life and stability, respectively.

This leaves the Philippines with one remaining move to reverse the names given to features under

its care.

"The only option for nullification... would be a submission of China to withdraw from their proposed naming," the subcommittee said. This entails diplomatic measures for Manila to ask Beijing to withdraw the names.

It sounds easier than in practice since the Asian giant is unlikely to pull away at the bidding of its smaller maritime rival.

Earlier this year Beijing insisted that it followed the procedure in giving names to the underwater mountains.

The government sat on it

Even before the granting of the Philippines' extended continental shelf within Benham Rise in 2012, government instruments already conducted a complete bathymetric survey of Benham Rise. This measured and documented the depth and shape of the seabed.

The National Mapping and Resource Information Authority was the lead agency for such efforts, contributing significantly to an existing public databank from past surveys of the undersea region.

"Majority of the area in the Philippine Rise was covered by [our teams]," said Commodore Jacinto Cablayan, director of hydrography at NAMRIA, in a televised interview with ANC's "Future Perfect" in February.

Cablayan said that since his office had already covered the extent of Benham's bathymetry, the only surveys left to do in the area are those with scientific and economic aims.

The government then already had the data it needed about the sea plateau but from 2012 to 2017—

spanning the Aquino and Duterte administrations—the Philippines failed to propose a single name before the IHO's SCUFN.

"There is no submission," Cablayan said in Filipino, admitting that his office could have made the move. "Maybe we were just a bit occupied."

"Because we do all the works, we do the maintenance of the ship, we do navigation, we do survey, Maybe we were focused on that," he told ANC.

Batongbacal, in a separate interview with the STAR in February, said state leadership "sat on the recommendations." NAMRIA, for one, already had proposals drafted to name the features after Philippines trees and birds.

UP Institute for Maritime Affairs and Law of the Sea Director Jay Batongbacal attends the Senate Committee hearing on State of Maritime Research by Filipino Scientists and Exploration Studies on the Benham Rise and the West Philippine Sea at the Senate on Feb. 26, 2018. STAR/Geremy Pintolo, file

"The technical people knew about the naming proposals and made recommendations for action. Leadership sat on them as well, Batongbacal said.

Silver lining

China may have beaten the Philippines in christening five Benham Rise features but the complaint sent to the IHO yielded at least one seemingly inadvertent benefit.

Schenke, the chair of the IHO naming subcommittee SCUFN, offered to require consultations with the Philippines should any country wish to name features located within its EEZ and extended continental shelf in the future.

The SCUFN also vowed to report the issue at its next meeting in October to explore possible improvements to naming guidelines and procedures.



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New destinations for Filipino workers are Russia, China



The Moscow City business district in Moscow, Russia. (Andrey Rudakov/Bloomberg)

BY BLOOMBERG

Russia and China are just some of the promising destinations for Filipinos looking for jobs abroad as the Philippines seeks to cut its reliance on the Middle East.

“Russia is opening their market for the first time to the Philippines,” Bernard Olalia, head of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, said in an interview in his office in Manila. “They want a government-to-government deployment scheme, just like what we did with China.”

Russia is hiring skilled workers in construction and services and China is asking the Philippines to send over 2,000 English teachers this year, Olalia said on April 20. The Czech Republic and San Marino are also negotiating labor deals, he said.

For decades, the Philippines has relied on money sent home by millions of overseas workers to boost the economy and support

the currency. The funds – estimated by the World Bank to be \$33 billion last year – account for about 10 percent of gross domestic product and are the nation’s largest source of foreign exchange after exports.

With exports faltering and stocks suffering outflows, officials are banking on remittances to help stabilize the peso, Asia’s worst-performing currency this year. The peso has lost more than 4 percent against the dollar in 2018.

The Middle East remains the largest destination for land-based workers with more than 1 million deployed in 2016, accounting for 63 percent of the total. But the brutal killing of a domestic worker, whose body was found stuffed in a freezer in Kuwait, pushed President Rodrigo Duterte to order a deployment ban to the Arab state since February.

The Philippines is flexing its muscle to protect work-

ers in other Middle Eastern countries amid cases of employer abuse, Olalia said. A deployment ban to Saudi Arabia isn’t far-fetched unless better labor conditions are provided, he said.

“We don’t mind advising the President to impose a deployment ban in countries where our Filipino workers are suffering so much, like Kuwait,” Olalia said.

The outlook for labor demand is strong and deployment will keep growing, Olalia said. Aging populations are prompting Japan and South Korea to place more job orders for Filipino health workers, while Singapore is looking to hire in its technology sector.

According to Olalia, the administration’s policy now is to focus on skilled workers and professionals, whose working conditions are significantly better.

Duterte urges 260,000 OFWs in Kuwait to come home

From page 1

told about 6,000 members of the Filipino community in Singapore, where he had attended the 32nd Association of Southeast Asian Nations Summit.

‘Bad news’

The President told his audience at Big Box center that he had “bad news” about the diplomatic row between Kuwait and the Philippines over the recent rescue of abused Filipino maids by Philippine Embassy staff in Kuwait.

The rescue had angered the Kuwaiti government, saying the act violated the country’s sovereignty and ordered Philippine Ambassador Rene Villa to leave the country.

The President said ties between the two nations were

now “being put to the test.”

“I plead that since there is a total ban on deployment, I don’t want them anymore to [go to Kuwait] because apparently [the Kuwaitis] do not like them,” he said.

“Do not hurt” the Filipino workers and “treat them deserving of a human being,” he appealed to the Kuwaitis.

He did not say how many or what kind of jobs awaited those willing to heed his call to return.

‘Diplomatic ruckus’

Despite what he described as a “diplomatic ruckus” between the two countries, the President said there was no anger or hatred in his heart toward Kuwait.

He was thankful to Kuwait for helping OFWs, whom he said owed a debt of gratitude to the Gulf state.

“If the presence of Filipinos is a burden to you,

allow us to get them out,” the President said. “As the President of the nation, it behooves upon me to do something.”

On Friday, presidential spokesperson Harry Roque said the President would announce an important “course of action” in connection with the diplomatic crisis.

Roque said the President’s move would be “Solomonic” and “dramatic.”

He said the President arrived at the decision on the Kuwait problem on his own, “something he personally crafted” and that it was “not specially recommended by anyone.”

“It shows his experience on governance and there’s wisdom I guess even in the number of years of leadership and as well as in his age,” Roque said.

Task force formed to solve killing of Cagayan priest

From page 1

The Philippine National Police (PNP) Cagayan Valley regional unit formed a task force to investigate the brutal killing of Father Mark Ventura on Sunday, April 29.

In a statement, the Police Regional Office 2 (PRO2) said Chief Superintendent Jose Mario Espino ordered the formation of Special Investigation Task Group-Ventura to speed up the resolution of the case.

The 37-year-old Ventura was shot dead on Sunday just as he was blessing children, after he celebrated Mass in Barangay Piña Weste in Gattaran, Cagayan.

The priest sustained fatal wounds in his head and chest. He was declared dead on the spot by responding police and rescue units.

The riding-in-tandem as-

sailants, who both wore helmets, have yet to be identified.

Right after the killing, the PRO2 said Espino ordered an “intensified hot pursuit” against the suspects, instructing all police chiefs around Gattaran town to set up checkpoints along all possible escape routes of the gunmen.

“I have ordered my men to conduct [a] thorough investigation for the possible identification and apprehension of suspects the soonest possible time,” Espino said.

Calls for justice

Dioceses, religious organizations, priests, friends, and supporters of Ventura in Cagayan took to social media to call for justice. In a Facebook post, Father Fredel Agatep, a priest in the Minor Basilica of Piat, initiated a movement by posting a

black photo with the words, “I am Fr Mark Ventura.”

The post came with a statement urging people to make the photo their profile picture, to take a “firm stand” against killers and terrorists.

“Any one of us can become a victim of killers and terrorists. Let us stand firm and denounce any form of destruction of human life,” reads the statement.

Local officials also denounced Ventura’s killing.

“I denounce the senseless killing of Fr Mark Ventura. I hope the perpetrators will be brought to justice the soonest possible time,” said Cagayan 3rd District Representative Randy Ting.

Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba said he already ordered provincial police chief Senior Superintendent Warren Tolito to probe the killing, as he also condemned the crime.

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PerryScope
By PERRY DIAZ

Is Duterte an autocrat?

If there is one thing that President Rodrigo Duterte resents is to call him an “autocrat.” Not only is he autocratic, he is a “threat to democracy.” That’s according to a U.S. intelligence report, which names the firebrand leader among the “threats to democracy in Southeast Asia.” Duterte was particularly reacting to the World-wide Threat Assessment (WTA) report released by Daniel Coats, U.S. Director of National Intelligence last February 13, 2018.

Duterte’s spokesman Harry Roque said that it is “myopic and speculative at best,” saying that it could hurt ties between the U.S. and the Philippines, which have been military allies for 67 years.

But WTA cited Duterte’s war on illegal drug trade – which has so far killed almost 4,000 since the mid-2016 – as the reason for its anti-Duterte views. It also referenced Duterte’s plans to impose a nationwide martial law, suspension of the Constitution, and to declare a “revolutionary government,” and extensive use of social media against critics. WTA based its report on the findings of Freedom House, which said: “We note that more governments are using propaganda and misinformation in social media to influence foreign and domestic audiences.” Among those cited were Thai officials and Cambodia’s Prime Minister Hun Sen as Southeast Asian leaders who threaten democracy and human rights. The WTA report also said: “Democracy and human rights in many Southeast Asian nations will remain fragile in 2018 because of autocratic tendencies, rampant corruption and cronyism.”

But unlike the Thai officials and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen who did not deny the WTA allegations, the Duterte administration is in a state of denial. “Duterte is not an autocrat,” Roque asserted. “He adheres to the rule of law and remains loyal to the constitution,” Roque said. He went on to say: “Our media



President Rodrigo Duterte

are still able to broadcast and print what they want -- ‘fake news’ included. Our judiciary and the courts are functioning as usual. Our legislature remains independent and basic services are still being delivered.”

However, Roque did not address the fact that there are still political prisoners such as Sen. Leila de Lima who is detained by the police on trumped-up charges of drug possession. After more than a year in detention, De Lima remains under police custody.

Extrajudicial killings

But the most serious problem of the Duterte administration is the alleged extrajudicial killings of suspected illegal drug pushers and users. The most notorious police operation against them is “Oplan Tokhang,” which involves the “visitation” of alleged drug personalities by “tokhangers.” The tokhangers are members of special teams who are trained to go after suspected illegal drug personalities to convince them to surrender to the police. In some cases, the suspected drug personalities fight back and ended up killed in gun battles. But there were cases where Oplan Tokhang was used by erring and corrupt police officers for their own benefit.

For a short period of time, the Oplan Tokhang was suspended due to police abuses. However, Duterte ordered the Philippine National Police (PNP) to resume the controversial operation last December. Oplan Double Barrel, another controversial anti-drug operation was also implemented.

Oplan Tokhang is the government’s flagship campaign against illegal drugs. Oplan Tokhang and Oplan Double Barrel work in tandem against suspected drug personalities. Oplan Tokhang is the “lower barrel approach,” which is mainly

visiting suspected drug personalities to convince them to surrender. Oplan Double Barrel, on the other hand, is the “upper barrel approach,” which is to go after high value targets (HVTs). A lot of times, these HVTs are terminated when they resist arrests. Oplan Double Barrel is unconstitutional because it expressly authorizes the police to kill suspected drug personalities.

And then there are the gun-for-hire police officers that moonlight as hitmen. Police said about a third of the 9,000 people who have been killed since Duterte took office were shot by officers in self-defense during legitimate anti-drug operations. Human rights monitors believe the remaining two-thirds were killed by paid assassins operating with police backing or by police disguised as vigilantes.

There is another police operation known as “Masa Masid.” It requires all barangays to establish a “drop box system” to anonymously report suspected criminals. Crimes are reported by anyone who suspects -- rightly or wrongly -- that another person is a criminal.

Masa Masid is likened to the Kempeitai during the Japanese occupation in the Philippines and the secret police Gestapo in Nazi Germany. By allowing the submission of complaints through a drop box gives any person the opportunity to report any person even if they are completely innocent.

And since Duterte is the president, he has command responsibility over the implementation of Oplan Tokhang, Oplan Double Barrel, and Masa Masid. These are the tools used to control and subjugate people. Yes, in this regard, Duterte is an autocrat. (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

SWS: Pinoys had involuntary hunger

The number of Filipinos who experienced unintentional hunger in the past three months has decreased to 9.9 percent or an estimated 2.3 million families, based on the first quarter 2018 Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey results.



Photo by Jansen Romero

By ELLALYN DE VERA-RUIZ

The nationwide survey conducted from March 23 to 27 among 1,200 respondents found that 9.9 percent or 2.3 million families experienced involuntary hunger at least once in the past three months. This is six points below the 15.9 percent or an estimated 3.6 million families who experienced involuntary hunger in the last quarter of 2017.

The measure of hunger refers to involuntary suffering because the respondents answer a survey question that specifies hunger due to lack of food to eat.

SWS attributed the lower hunger rate to decreases in the number of families who experienced hunger in all areas.

The 9.9 percent hunger rate consisted of 6 percent (190,000 families) in Metro Manila, 11 percent (1.1 million families) in the rest of Luzon, 13 percent (583,000 families)

in Visayas, and 7.3 percent (390,000 families) in Mindanao.

The quarterly hunger in March 2018 is the sum of 8.6 percent (about 2 million families) who experienced moderate hunger and 1.3 percent (about 306,000 families) who experienced severe hunger.

SWS defines moderate hunger as those who experienced hunger “only once” or “a few times” in the last three months, while severe hunger refers to those who experienced it “often” or “always” in the last three months.

Meanwhile, the few who did not state their frequency of hunger were classified under moderate hunger.

Moderate hunger fell by 3.6 points, from 12.2 percent in December 2017 to 8.6 percent in March 2018. This is the lowest since the 7.9 percent in June 2017.

In Metro Manila, moderate hunger fell by 5.3 points, from 10 percent in Decem-

ber to 4.7 percent in March.

Moderate hunger also declined in the rest of Luzon by 2.7 points, from 12.7 percent in December to 10 percent in March; in Visayas by 1.7 points, from 12.7 percent in December to 11 percent in March; and in Mindanao by 6.3 points, from 12.3 percent in December to 6 percent in March.

Likewise, severe hunger fell by 2.4 points, from 3.7 percent in December to 1.3 percent in March. This is the lowest since the 1.2 percent in September 2003.

Severe hunger in Metro Manila fell by 3.4 points, from 4.7 percent in December to 1.3 percent in March; as well as in the rest of Luzon by four points, from 5 percent in December to 1 percent in March; and in Mindanao by 1.7 points, from 3 percent in December to 1.33 percent in March.

However, severe hunger in Visayas rose by 1.3 points, from 0.7 percent in December to 2 percent in March.

Boracay now closed

From page 1

The President earlier admitted he has no master plan for Boracay. Residents have also complained of the lack of clear guidelines and adequate

compensation for workers whose livelihood may be affected by the closure. Commercial establishments in Boracay will also take a hit due to the prohibition against tourists, a significant

contributor to the island’s economy.

Malacañang, however, insists the closure is the only way to once and for all solve Boracay’s environmental issues.


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Actress Molly Ringwald thanks Southwest Airlines for helping save her dad's life



Festival Emperor Bob Ringwald of the Fulton Street Jazz Band rides with his daughter actress Molly Ringwald in the parade at the Sacramento Music Festival in Old Sacramento on Saturday, May 26, 2012. Photo by Lezlie Sterling

By MICHAEL MCGOUGH

Actress Molly Ringwald thanked Southwest Airlines publicly on Twitter this week, saying the swift decision to emergency land a plane saved her father's life.

She also thanked a doctor on board the plane for providing medical attention.

"Because of their speed and professionalism, my father's life was saved," Ringwald tweeted.

Ringwald did not specify in Thursday's tweet whether she was also on the plane. Her father, Bob Ringwald, is blind.

Help us deliver journalism that makes a difference in our community.

Southwest, very active on Twitter, responded to the actress's praise: "Molly, we are so happy to hear that your father was taken care of by our crew today. We would love to follow-up further so that we can recognize

our crew."

However, in a statement to Fox News, a spokesman wrote that they could not publicly share any more details about the nature of Ringwald's emergency.

Molly Ringwald, 50, was born and raised in Roseville. She's best known for her roles in 1980s hit movies including "The Breakfast Club," "Sixteen Candles" and "Pretty in Pink."

Bob Ringwald is a jazz pianist and leader of Sacramento's Fulton Street Jazz Band. His daughter appeared as a special guest on a recording by the group at the age of 6.

About a week ago, Southwest faced a lot of bad press and left a horrifying impression on some fliers after a blown engine accident on one of its flights killed one passenger.

Come and say hello: Local mall to get a visit from the Hello Kitty Cafe



Customers line up at the Hello Kitty Cafe Truck in 2015. The truck will visit Roseville on May 5. Courtesy of the Hello Kitty Cafe Truck

BY NOEL HARRIS

Fans of Hello Kitty can soon pick up snacks and collectibles inspired by the fictional character.

The Hello Kitty Cafe Truck will be parked on the promenade of Westfield Galleria at Roseville on May 5 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Customers will be able to purchase exclusive treats, including cookies, macarons

and pocket pies, according to a release.

Along with the food items, bow-shaped water bottles, key chains, T-shirts and more will be available.

This is the fourth year the truck will visit Roseville. It made its debut in October 2014 as part of the first food-related venture by Sanrio, the company that created Hello Kitty and several other characters.

Big Day of Giving

Big Day of Giving is quickly approaching. Big Day of Giving is when more than 600 nonprofits will come together to raise money for their nonprofits. This Big Day of Giving, choose My Sister's House and the survivors we help.

Thanks to our generous donor, May O. Lee, the first \$2000 donated on Big Day of Giving for My Sister's House will be matched!

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My Sister's House 17th Anniversary Gala Monday, May 21st Crest Theater, 1013 K Street



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Filipino Activist Claims He Was Given Weapons, Tortured At SFO

Filed Under: International Coalition for Human Rights, Jerome Aladdin Succor Aba, Philippines, San Francisco, SFO, U.S. Customs and Border Protection

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (CBS SF) — A human rights activist who was attempting to visit the U.S. from the Philippines last week claims he was supplied with weapons and tortured by federal agents during a 28-hour detention at San Francisco International Airport.

Jerome Aladdin Aba arrived at SFO around 8 p.m. last Tuesday, but was detained for questioning by U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents due to unspecified problems with his visa. He was eventually denied entry, and was placed on a departing flight to Manila around 12:30 a.m. Thursday.

In a subsequent news conference, Aba said he was forced to strip naked in an air-conditioned room and stand in front of a large fan during a lengthy interrogation.

Aba claims he was questioned extensively about his political beliefs and President Rodrigo Duterte's controversial drug war, which has been condemned by human rights activists who say that thousands have died in the ensuing civil unrest.

President Donald Trump has praised Duterte's actions, saying his Filipino counterpart has done an unbelievable job combating illicit drugs, according to an article by the New York Times last May. This was one of the human rights issues Aba was visiting the U.S. to discuss.

One of his interrogating officers, identified only as Lopez, repeatedly touched a handgun he was wearing and said he would "not hesitate to shoot," Aba said.



Jerome Aladdin Succor Aba

While in detention, Aba said he was left alone with a gun and later a hand grenade in an apparent attempt to tempt him into using the weapons. He has speculated that this may have been an effort to portray him as a suicide bomber.

Before authorizing his release, Aba claims he was coerced into signing a blank document. He included the letters U.P. to indicate that he did so under pressure or duress, but federal agents reportedly made him sign another one and then forced him to record a video statement saying that he hadn't been tortured.

A U.S. Customs and Border Protection spokesman said Tuesday in a statement that the agency is aware of the allegations, but claimed they are false.

Customs officials say he was not asked to remove his clothing. Their officers would never give Aba access to a weapon he could potentially use against them, and their airport personnel don't have hand grenades.

Among other forms of mistreatment, Aba said he informed customs officials that he could not eat pork due to his religious beliefs as

a Muslim, and they responded by offering him a ham sandwich after depriving him of food for 24 hours.

Agency officials said Aba was kept in a "lounge" area with reclining chairs and blankets where he had access to food, water and bathroom facilities.

They refuted Aba's claims about the ham sandwich, saying that while he was in custody they provided an egg and cheese sandwich as well as a turkey and cheese sandwich. He was also offered noodles, but declined.

"No pork was provided and no religious discrimination took place," a CBP spokesman said in a statement.

Aba and his colleagues with the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines have called on U.S. Sen. Diane Feinstein and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, to condemn the alleged actions of the customs agents involved in Aba's case.

Their offices did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the matter.

East Area Rapist suspect faces judge more than 40 years after notorious spree began



Joseph James DeAngelo, 72, appeared for the first time in a packed jail courtroom after investigators said they cracked Sacramento's biggest unsolved crime spree.

BY DARRELL SMITH

He was once a lawman, later a foul-tempered family man with a manicured lawn who for decades, authorities say, had hidden his horrors from the world.

On Friday, Joseph James DeAngelo was a man behind bars in a crowded Sacramento courtroom facing murder charges in an alleged horrific attack 40 years ago that prosecutors say was part of the notorious East Area Rapist spree that terrified California.

DeAngelo, 72, appeared for the first time in a packed jail courtroom after investigators said they cracked Sacramento's biggest unsolved crime spree. He faces two counts of murder in the 1978 slaying of a couple in Rancho Cordova, the first two murder charges of 12 he's expected to face.

He arrived around 1:45 p.m. in a wheelchair wearing the standard orange jail garb, appearing frail with his eyes barely open. He whispered "yes" when Judge Michael Sweet asked if he was DeAngelo.

Latest news by email

The afternoon's latest local news

Minutes later, the hearing was over, with DeAngelo not entering a plea after charges were read. Sweet appointed public defender Diane Howard and scheduled the next hearing for May 14.

The hearing came more than four decades after the start of a terrifying run that involved the dozen homicides, more than 50 rapes and a string of other crimes between 1974 and 1986.

DeAngelo was arrested outside his home Tuesday afternoon and booked into the county jail on two charges of murder in the February 1978 slayings of Katie and Brian Maggione in Rancho

Cordova.

Hours before the hearing, reporters and local residents waited outside the small jail courtroom.

"For people who grew up here it changed who we were as a community," said Renee Voelker, a lifelong Sacramento resident who was hoping to get into the hearing. "To have this man finally caught while I'm still alive - and while he's still alive - it's an exciting time. This brings closure to all those people who were affected at his hands and who directly and indirectly were affected as a community."

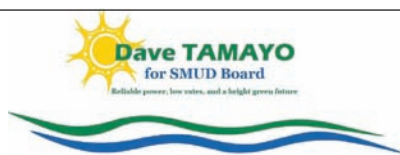
He faced arraignment in Sacramento Superior Court on Friday, but authorities still must determine where he ultimately will stand trial and whether he faces death penalty prosecutions.

Some of the murders were committed at a time when the death penalty had been ruled unconstitutional, but others are eligible. Schubert said she wants to meet with prosecutors from the counties where DeAngelo is suspected of murders and plan a joint prosecution similar to that used in the Luis Bracamontes cop-killing trial that ended with a death penalty sentence on Wednesday.

"It makes sense to do it in one county," she said, adding that the case could be moved to Southern California because 10 of the 12 murder victims were killed there.

"The majority of the murders happened down in Southern California, so I'm comfortable with wherever it's going to be as long as everybody gets to be a participant," she said.

Prosecutors also must grapple with whether to file rape charges against DeAngelo because for many cases the statute of limitations has expired.



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PerryScope

BY PERRY DIAZ

It's time to invoke the 25th Amendment

He's been called crazy, erratic, loose cannon, and other unpleasant names, but President Donald Trump continues what he does best: make a fool of himself with his antics and tantrums. He'd insult people who don't agree with him and put down others at the slightest misunderstanding. He loves to fire subordinates who don't see it his way or utter comments that would humiliate him or contravene his policies. And those who couldn't stomach his management style, quit.

His Republican Party mates in Congress -- out of fear -- wouldn't dare contradict or oppose him. Only those who have decided not to seek re-election this year, have the courage to openly criticize him. The rest of the GOP pack would act as lapdogs, willing to do what the master wants them to do.

But there is a growing number of Republicans who have decided not to seek re-election because they believe that Trump's unpopularity is hindering their own chances of winning another term.

With midterm elections coming up in seven months, there is apprehension among GOP congressmen that the November election would be a bloodbath and that the Republican Party would lose control of the House of Representatives and, possibly, the Senate. And with the Democrats taking control over either or both chambers, Trump would not survive the last two years of his term. The Democrats would make sure that a midterm defeat for Trump would drive the final nail into Trump's political

coffin.

In Putin's pocket

However, nobody should be presumptuous enough to put an end to the Trump presidency. With the aid of Russian hackers and local Trump operatives, Trump could repeat the 2016 "win" that is now the subject of investigation by Special Prosecutor Robert Mueller. As one political observer said, "Trump is in Putin's pocket." What Putin allegedly did in 2016 to help Trump win, he could do it again in 2020.

The question is: how much work has the Trump organization already done that would put Trump's reelection campaign ahead of potential Democratic presidential wannabes? With Trump's reelection campaign already in the process of structuring, he's way ahead in the game. He'd be a formidable



Russian President Vladimir Putin

foe in 2020.

It would be hard to stop him in the polls. His base in the Republican Party is solidly loyal to him. You're looking at 30-35%, which is more than enough to win the primaries and clinch the Republican nomination. However, the anti-Trump faction in the GOP is growing; but it is not enough to deny him the nomination. The only way to stop him is to remove him from the presidency before the 2020 elections. They can impeach him. But it is a lengthy process and there is no guarantee that it will succeed.

The other option is to invoke the 25th Amendment. If done right, it could remove Trump even before the midterm elections and stop him from hurting the country. With each day that he stays in office, the U.S. is losing in the geopolitical game big time. Russia, China, and Iran are becoming bolder in challenging America's position as the world's superpower. North Korea is now working towards developing nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missiles that could reach anywhere in the U.S.

Meanwhile, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – commonly known as the Iran nuclear agreement – is in jeopardy of being scrapped. The JCPOA was finalized in Vienna in July 2015 with the participation of the U.S., China, the European Union, France, Germany, Iran, Russia, and the United Kingdom. It blocked Iran's pathways to a nuclear bomb and prevented a new war in the Middle East. This landmark agreement was reached in exchange for a waiver of nuclear-related sanctions. But Trump wants to renegotiate the JCPOA. He threatened to withdraw from it, which could cause Iran to go rogue and restart its nuclear program.

Hardline neoconservatives

Recently, Trump abruptly changed his national security team, which included National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. He fired both of them and appointed former CIA Director Mike Pompeo as Secretary of State and ultra-hawk John Bolton as National Security Advisor.

But they're both unqualified for the jobs they're taking over. Pompeo was a hardline Republican congressman before Trump tapped him to be the nation's spymaster. Now, with zero foreign af-



fairs experience, Pompeo will be the nation's top diplomat.

Bolton on the other hand is probably the most dangerous person to ever hold the job of advising the president on matters of state security. Known for advocating preemptive strikes on North Korea, Bolton's hawkish and neoconservative views on foreign policy would, in the opinion of many political observers, bring the U.S. closer to a nuclear war.

The question that keeps coming back to mind is: Why did Trump pick two war hawks to lead his national security team? Is he preparing the country to go to war? If so, then Congress should – nay, must! – do all it can to stop or remove him from office.

Unthinkable

Earlier, I mentioned the 25th Amendment. What's it all about? An article written by Jon Meacham provides the rationale for its enactment. He wrote: "On April 13, 1965, in the midst of a congressional debate over the proposed 25th Amendment to the Constitution dealing with presidential succession and incapacity, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, Representative Emanuel Celler of New York, dispensed with high-minded legal arguments. They were there, Celler said, to figure out what might be done if the unthinkable -- a deranged American President with nuclear weapons -- became thinkable. 'The President may be as nutty as a fruitcake,' Celler declared on the House floor. 'He may be utterly insane.' And for this reason, America needed a plan.

"Ratified two years later, the

amendment offered the country just that. And now, half a century on, the subject of whether President Donald Trump could face a removal from power under its terms is one of an ever widening conversation."

Many believe that Trump's recent misadventures in geopolitics, strange behavior, and questionable actions have led many to believe that he has gone off the deep end. It's time to invoke the 25th Amendment. It would enable the Vice President, with a majority of members of the Cabinet, to declare the President unable to discharge his duties, thus installing the Vice President as acting President pending a presidential appeal to, and vote by, the Congress. But would Congress vote down an appeal by Trump in the event he's declared unable to discharge his duties as President?

And this is where Vice President Mike Pence could use his personal appeal and charisma to convince the Cabinet members and the Republican congressional members that not only is Trump dangerously incompetent, Pence is ready to take the job and that he would be able to lead the country out of the quagmire that Trump has dragged the country into.

At the end of the day, it would come down to a question of loyalty and patriotism. Are the Cabinet members loyal to President Trump, to whom they owe their appointment? Or would patriotism and allegiance to the flag of the United States transcend party loyalty? (PerryDiaz@gmail.com)

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BY R. CARADO DIZON, PH.D.

Part III – Lessons Learned from the Hurricane Disaster

The shocking disaster wrought by Hurricane Maria all but blotted Puerto Rico from the Caribbean map.

This unforgettable event has also left behind, to both the islander victims (the respondents) and FEMA et al (the responders), a traumatic experience that will no doubt linger in their memories throughout their whole lifetime. Certainly, from out of these experiences they have learned some very important lessons following the maxim that “Experience is the Best Teacher”. These experiences and the lessons derived therefrom, for the most part, form the official Report and Recommendations” submitted by FEMA on the completion of the vast relief operations to such disaster.

(N.B. What is presented in this last portion of the 3-part series is far from that Final Report. Rather, it is merely a random account of the circumstances relative to the occurrence of Maria, the catastrophic storm that hit Puerto Rico on September, the hurricane month of 2017, in the Caribbean area. The materials gathered were taken from the wires of the Associated Press, from CNN newscasts and from the pages of TIME magazine on several 2017 and 2018 back issues. A grateful acknowledgment is hereby extended to them belatedly.)

Lesson Number One.

Hurricane Victims Caught Unprepared. With the exception of the FEMA-led group of first responders, nearly all of the miserable disaster victims were caught unprepared when Hurricane Maria struck the island that Disaster Day or D-Day, the 20th of September 2017. One disaster victim was heard to moan, “No water. No gasoline. No nada! “ This was while walking through the streets of San Juan which all the way appeared to have been wiped clean by the strong wind and rain, a day after the storm (TIME, 10-09-2017.) “Everything. I lost everything!” , echoed another victim in yet another San Juan neighborhood, 11 days after the tempest ripped off his entire

Cambio Climatico: A Hurricane Named Maria and the Warming Caribbean Sea Across the Shores of Puerto Rico

house. “. And we’re still waiting . They haven’t done nothing yet”, he added in a consolatory tone (TIME, 10-16-2017.)

A seemingly ignominious situation was brought to light by the first responders. Only a very small minority of the flood victims have secured flood insurance policies that were available, at minimal cost, in the locality under the auspices of the National Flood Insurance Program of the Federal government. FEMA identified them as a small group of well-to-do and well-informed proprietors of the well-managed beach resorts in the city.

Basically, they cater to the accommodation of foreign tourists who flock to the beautiful and healthfully sanitized white-sandy beaches that are the island’s main attraction almost every day of the year. Surely, the resorts’ clients are also covered by this type of insurance during their idyll in the various hotels and vacation lodges. Evidently, this group’s sense of preparedness enabled them to, at the very least, mitigate the degree of damage inflicted by the devastating hurricane.

On the other hand, the unprepared majority of the victims were even unaware that such insurance privilege existed in the first place. If they had flood insurance, their insurers would have advised them to “Give Room to the River”, i.e. not to build their homes in places they are most likely to drown.

Lesson Number Two.

Disaster Victims lack Sufficient Knowledge about the Climate Change Issue.

The FEMA-led first responders have discovered that most of the victim-respondents were not even knowledgeable of the science behind the Climate Change issue itself in the first place. Moreover, they are unaware that they too are partially responsible for the occurrence of the same. Proof of this is the age-old farming practice of the sugarcane planters in the island to burn their sugarcane plantations before and after harvest, in aid of clean cultivation. This practice has contributed much to the accumulation of carbon dioxide (CO2) gas in the atmosphere. The carbon gas from the smoke in the conflagration join with the other carbon gases emitted from the vari-

ous factories that burn sugarcane bagasse and other fossil fuels to power their factory machinery.

Altogether, they diffuse and build up and accumulate in the atmosphere to create the “greenhouse effect” that prevents the extra heat from the ground to escape into space and be re-radiated back to the ground. (In a typical greenhouse, the glass roofing and paneling let sunlight in to heat the plants but prevent much of the heat from getting out). This bad practice has probably been going on since the year 1515, when the sugarcane crop was introduced from nearby Santo Domingo by followers of Christopher Columbus who personally claimed the island in the name of Spain in 1493, on his second voyage to the New World.

Incidentally, the first responders themselves submit that the deficiency of climate change information is a communication problem . They also admitted that they were partly responsible for the failure of the climate change message to reach their intended receivers, themselves being part of the Federal Bureaucracy. Notwithstanding that several factors play a role in this sad scenario, yet one classic lesson is worthy of mention. This came from a recommendation of President Barack Obama when he addressed the Climate Change issue in 2014 – “ Friendly Persuasion.” Five days after the defeat of his Climate Change platform in the 2014 mid-term election, he summoned CBS anchor emeritus Bob Schieffer to the White House oval office for a one-on-one interview.

Some excerpts: OBAMA: “When you start governing, there is a tendency sometimes for one to start thinking, ‘As long as I got the policy right, then that’s what should matter’ . . . “ I do need to constantly remind myself and my team: It’s not enough to just build a better mousetrap. People don’t automatically come beating to your door. . . We’ve got to sell it. We’ve got to reach out to the other side and where possible, persuade.” (CBS Face the Nation, 11-09-2014.)



A road in the Roseau area is littered with structural debris, damaged vegetation and downed power poles and lines.

Lesson Number Three.

Disaster-caused Adversity breeds Opportunistic Behavior in People.

Again the FEMA group submit several circumstantial evidence to illustrate some effects of this kind of behavior. Carolyn Ward, a Puerto Rico FEMA officer, e-mailed about a case of an Atlanta wedding caterer who was awarded a \$ 156 million contract to deliver emergency meals to Puerto Ricans affected by Hurricane Maria; 125 million meals were ordered but only 50,000 were delivered – and without pouches to heat them up.

Consequently, FEMA sued this opportunist (carpetbagger) in court for breach of contract (TIME, 02-19-2018). “Needs go unmet six months after Maria hit Puerto Rico”, headlined another news report submitted by news correspondent Danica Soto, to the Associated Press on March 21, 2018. “ While crews have already restored water to 99 percent of clients and power to 93 percent of customers, 100,000 of them still remain in the dark and there are frequent power outages”, the report added.

The Associated Press also found out that of the \$28 billion pledged in Puerto Rico, only \$1.27 billion for a national assistance program have been disbursed, along with just a little more than \$430 million to repair public infrastructure. Causal effects of opportunistic behavior? “Let’s see what happens”, to borrow the expression of U.S.

President Donald Trump, an opportunistic non-believer of climate change.

(Please send any comments to romeodizon29@yahoo.com)

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Flores de Mayo

Compiled by DAVE SAN PEDRO

Flores de Mayo (Spanish for “flowers of May”) is a festival held in the Philippines in the month of May. It is one of the May devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary and lasts for the entire month.

The name of the festival is derived from the Spanish language word flores meaning “flowers.” Other names are “Flores de María” (“Flowers of Mary”) and “Álay” (Filipino for “offering”).

Santacruzan In the Bicolandia

In the Bicol Region, the ritual begins with the recitation of the rosary, and the last day is simply called the “katapusan”.

The traditional “María” with its respective meaning is said after the recitation of the Salve Regina in Spanish and the Litany of Loreto. After the ceremony, simple snacks are given to the children who attended the devotion. Alabasyón (from the Spanish for “praising”) is the term for prayers sung in honour of the Holy Cross.

In Western Visayas

The towns particularly in Iloilo has their respective puroks or streets and the barangays which has their respective chapel or house of prayer or even in the church where an image of the Virgin Mary is venerated and children gathers to have a simple catechism and teachings about the life and story of Mary, history of Marian apparitions, Christian doctrines and values, holistic values and virtues and other life’s teachings. They were also taught some prayers and some songs uniquely recited only during the Flores de Mayo and the children offer some flowers before the image of the Virgin Mary as a symbol of love, affection and veneration. This is a commemoration and reminiscent of the Our Lady of Fatima apparition to



the three children which first took place on the 13th of May in 1917. After a while, they were offered some snacks. Some churches and areas are giving children some paper tickets for actively participating and doing well during the catechism in which at the end of the month of May which also coincides with the end of the Flores de Mayo, the children redeem the value of the tickets which are school supplies ready for the school opening in June. Santacruzan is usually held during the last few days of May to coincide with the end of the catechism for children.

In the Katagalugan

Amongst the Tagalog people, the custom began after the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 and after the circa 1867 publication of Mariano Sevilla’s translation of the devotional “Flores de María” (“Flowers of Mary”), also known by its longer title “Mariquit na Bulaclac nasa Pagninilaynilay sa Buong Buannang Mayo ay Ini-

hahandog nañg maña Devoto cay María Santísima” (“Beautiful Flowers that in the Meditations in the Whole Month of May are Offered by Devotees to Mary Most Holy”).

One famous May tradition in Batangas (particularly in Lipa) is the Luglugan, or nightly devotion and party honoring the Virgin Mary. Held in structures called tuklóng, devotees offer flowers and prayers to an image of Mary every night. After the prayer, the Hermanos or Hermanas for the day will give away treats to the participants, followed by the party. The Luglugan lasts for a month until the Tapusan (“ending”) which is marked with a Mass, a Santacruzan and procession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and capped with a final Luglugan that lasts until the following morning.

A Santacruzan is a religio-historical beauty pageant held in many cities, towns, and even in small communities throughout the



Philippines during the month of May. One of the most colorful aspects of this festival, the pageant depicts the finding of the True Cross by Queen Helena, mother of Constantine the Great. Many movie and television personalities participate in the events and are featured in major santacruzan. This festival became part of Filipino traditions identified with youth, love, and romance.

A replica of the True Cross in solemn procession during the Flores de Mayo in Noveleta, Cavite

Prior to the Santacruzan, a novena is held in honor of the Holy Cross. The procession itself commemorates the search of the Holy Cross by Reyna Elena and her son, Emperor Constantine. It is said to have roots in the joyous thanksgiving celebrations that followed the finding of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem and its translation to Constantinople.



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Sunday, May 20, 2018
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Lent, Birthday Party & Egg Hunting

BY JOSE P. ABAYA, JR.

Childhood memories give us the moment to reminisce our innocent years when we playfully committed mischievous acts with our siblings, classmates in the primary school, our friends and even to ourselves.

We nostalgically remember the joyfulness of those years but there were days of the year devoted for religious observation when we were prohibited by our parents and elders not to create any kind of noise even in the manner of our conversation. That period of time was commonly referred to as the "Holy Week", a biblical annotation about the persecution and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

I always remember the image of my late mother when that period of time of the year is observed. My mother was just a simple woman and her humility was shown in her manner and the way she dressed herself. Her smile showed in her eyes and lips so captivating that it became contagious. She valued most truthfulness and honesty which she tried to inculcate into the minds of her children. Her love, patience and stamina as a mother could not be compared having guided and raised nine children with my father.

In all the years that I was with her and unlike my father, I never heard her raised her voice or uttered defamatory words even when she was upset of something else or from the repugnant behavior of anybody.

The religious belief of my mother was so



Photos by Faina Abaya



my grandson Lennox Abaya and as expected just like the previous years whether their birthday falls on such an event or not, they always celebrated their birthday.

profound that she started to observe Lent from the very start with prayers and other religious practices until the end of Holy week marking the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Ironically, despite my mother's deep religious devotion, she also acceded that the burial of Jesus Christ and His resurrection falling on Saturday and Sunday during Holy Week respectively were intended

for the children to enjoy and celebrate. She encouraged children to jump high at the stroke of twelve noon, so that they will be blessed with good health while growing up.

On Easter Sunday, she called up our neighbor's children to join us for egg hunting with real ones in celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ hidden in our backyard where different varieties of vegetables were planted. The eggs came from our small poultry where chickens laid white and brown eggs. My mother explained that egg hunting was not mentioned in the bible but the egg had been religiously interpreted to represent the tomb of Jesus Christ from which He arose. She also further elaborated that during the hunt of the tomb of Jesus Christ everyone overjoyed to have found the tomb empty indicating that Christ has resurrected and ascended to heaven.

Today, egg hunting becomes a game for both adult and children in the observance of Easter Sunday but the fresh or even hard boiled eggs during the hunting are now seldom used by the participants which has been customary during my time.

In the United States just like any other western countries that religiously observed Lent, egg hunting is just a usual event on Easter Sunday especially among children. But unlike what I had experienced when I was young in Ilagan, Isabela, Philippines the place where I was born and grew up, the eggs being hunted now are usually artificial eggs colorfully dyed or painted of various sizes filled with candies, money or anything that could make the finder happy. The event host usually gives prizes for the participants who will find the largest number of eggs, the smallest or even the one they called the golden egg.

This year 2018, Easter Sunday falls on April 1 coincided with the birthday of my twin sons John Marie and Benjamin with

The first venue of their birthday celebration was at the Capitol Bowling Recreation Center in West Sacramento where they invited their siblings and closest of friends with children to stretch a little bit of their arms by playing bowling against each other for fun. About ten family friends joined in the celebration and for four hours, all had enjoyed immensely the game especially the children who just rolled the bowling balls wildly. The participants were treated with pizza and cake for their lunch.

In afternoon of the same day, John and Audrey the parents of Lennox were invited by their childhood friends Miguel and Victoria Rivera to celebrate the birthday of Lennox in their residence with other children and their parents for egg hunting. Miguel and Victoria are typical hardworking American parents raising their three growing up children.

The children were the first to hunt colorful eggs made of plastic filled with candies and money hidden at the backyard of the hosts in different places. The children who could find the small egg, golden egg and the most number of eggs were given prizes. Just after the children egg hunting, the adult did the same for fun and they were also given prizes ranging from wine to make up kits and kitchen wares. Incidentally, this writer and wife Faina found an egg with a prize of six bottled Mexican beers and peanuts.

Just after the egg hunting, the hosts brought out a home baked birthday cake for everyone to share as they sang Happy Birthday to Lennox. Our profound gratitude to Miquel and Victoria for such a wonderful day to everyone who attended the party of Lennox, Thank you very much. Just I remember the legacy left by my mother during Lent and egg hunting, I also found out that birthday celebrations could now assimilate into one to make it a joyous Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Until next time!

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Spring Brunch



Spring Brunch of the Pacific Rim Heritage Foundation held last April 21, 2018 at Florin Creek Recreation Center. The proceed of the event will go to the Filipino Cultural Center Fund. The working team were Jose & Lilia Rivera, Mercy Guerrero, Alberta Pena Mina, Henry Domondon, Alex & Ling Avera, Aida Azurin, Melchor Munar, Norm and Vicky Johson, and Dick Mason.

UNLUCAI



Meeting of UNLUCAI on April 21, 2018 with officers and members in Sacramento, CA



Filipino Community of Sacramento & Vicinity Scholarship Award Program (FCSV-SAP)

Scholarship Application Information 2017-2018 Academic Year

The FCSV-SAP was established to support and advance the goals of the Filipino American youth by providing monetary scholarship to them.

Qualifications and Requirements:

- Must be of Filipino or Filipino American descent
- Must be a high school graduate in 2018.
- Must provide a certified school transcript with the completed application, List of School & Community Activities, and Essay, by due date of May 16, 2018.
- Must have a qualifying Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 or above. **Applications with GPA below 3.5 will not be accepted.**
- Must provide a brief written biography at the time of the personal interview on June 16, 2018.
- To receive application form via email and also to receive pertinent information about the interview, etc., send your request to:
Email address: leilaeleccion@gmail.com
- Be available to attend the annual scholarship award ceremony on Sunday, July 15, 2018 at the Jose Rizal Community Center, 7320 Florin Mall Drive, Sacramento, CA 95823

NOTE: Your application must be complete and post-marked no later than the **deadline of May 16, 2018**. A certified school transcript must accompany your application or will not be accepted. Please follow all the instructions as provided on the application form.

You may submit your completed application form in person. Please make an appointment via email.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Leila Pereira, Chairman - leilaeleccion@gmail.com (916) 955-8147
Mercedes V. Guerrero, FCSV President - Mrcdsgrrr2@gmail.com

Komiks

Buhay Pinoy by Dave San Pedro



Baby shower for the daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Jones

BY FAINA E. ABAYA

Couple who entered into marriage are expected to build a family with at least one child whether that kind of marriage is different from the ordinary. But with due respect to same sex marriage, baby shower is usually referred to the coming child of an expecting mother as opposed to such kind of marriage wherein the couple will have children through the process of legal adoption.

Baby shower is either held before or after the delivery of the child by the mother depending on the tradition and culture of the parents. Accordingly, baby shower is traditional held for the first born child of a married couple, however, this can be held also to succeeding children.

In the beginning baby shower is held to be exclusively attended by female friends, relatives and members of the families of the married couple. However, this tradition has evolved with the passing of time that today, especially, in the United States where baby showers are now being attended by both sexes and even children themselves.

The words "baby shower" are usually interpreted to mean that the coming child is being showered with gifts from those who will attend the event. In addition, some



Joseph and Liz

of those who have attended could be selected by the parents to guide the child to mold her or him to become upright adult or even help the parents for the child's wellbeing as she or he grows up. Baby shower is usually hosted by close friends or relatives of the expecting parents and during the event games and other activities are held to make the occasion joyful and memorable.

Following such tradition, Joseph and Elizabeth who are expecting their first child were convinced by her Aunties Liza Valentine and Fainalita Ngo to hold baby shower for their child and

they likewise volunteered to host the event. The occasion was held at the Falls complex in Elk Grove, California on April 15, 2018. Most of the invited guests were co-workers of Elizabeth at Sutter Roseville Hospital and Joseph who is on active military service with the US Coast Guard. The immediate members of the expecting parents were also present together with relatives and closest of friends.

The Baby Shower Room



Cousins



Siblings and relatives

as designated by the management of the complex was well decorated with pink and white balloons and well-arranged eight round tables that could accommodate at least 10 persons per table with center piece for each table a baby box containing teddy bear inside. Liza Valentine opened the event by expressing her gratitude to all on behalf of the expect-

ing mother and husband for having graciously accepted their invitations to enjoy the occasion with them.

Immediately thereafter, a buffet style lunch was served with combination of Filipino, Vietnamese, Italian and American foods as well as fresh fruits and pastries on the side with giveaway French macarons.



Greatgrandparents, Jun and Faina Abaya

While the attendees were enjoying their lunch, a video was shown chronicling the young lives of the expecting parents.

After lunch, the hosts started games which were explained by Amanda Abaya and Kristina Balneg on how to play and win prizes if they will at least approximate the questions propounded. And just for fun, one query was about the measurement of the waistline of the expecting mother and many other questions were also asked. Those who answered the questions correctly received token prizes.

Indeed, the memorable occasion was immensely enjoyed by everyone and at the end Elizabeth expressed her thanks to all for the gifts received intended to her daughter who will be due to see the world in late May 2018.

Incidentally, the coming daughter of Elizabeth and Joseph will be our first great daughter of this writer and husband Jun Abaya. To all who conveyed their best wishes for the child, we say THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Those seen enjoying the occasion were; Joey and Sheryl Abaya, Leyla Taber, John Jones, Kay and Angie Singh, Nicole Moreno, Karissa Christopher, Lucinda Gabaldon, Sophee Pham, Elizabeth Belvis, Bessie Samaniego, Josie Sy, Di- Anne New, Henry and Tina Bambao, Greg and Sharleen Sy, Philip and Eleanor Sy, Lea, Aleya and Gianella Samaniego, Jojo and Michelle Abaya, Kim Samaniego, John, Audrey, Lennox and Korben Abaya, John Nino and Amanda Abaya, Mike Valentine, Hieu Ngo, Rochelle and Melissa Estepa, Joseph and Beverly Estepa, Mikey Valentine and many others.



UNLUCAI Birthday celebrants for April, May, and June, Fely Eplana, Cora Ojascastro, Estenelle Dumaguang, Gina de Ynchausti and Zaldy Estepa.



MARIE MILLER with husband Stephen APRIL 30

Calendar of Events

MAY 19, 2018 (SAT.)
 Dinner and Dance and
 Coronation of Santa Elena &
 Emperador Constantino
 Time: 6/pm/11/pm
 Donation:\$20,00
May 20,2018 (SUN.)
 Santa Cruzan
 Procession and mass
 2/pm. Procession
 3/pm. Mass
 Place : St. Paul Catholic church



MAY 21, 2018 (MON.)
 (My Sister's House)
RISE 17th ANNIVERSARY GALA
 VIP Reception: 4:30-6pm
 Show 6:00pm
 Crest Theater



JUNE 3, 2018 (SUN.)
FILIPINO FIESTA of SACRAMENTO
 10AM - 5PM
 Jose Rizal Community Center
 7230 Florin Mall Dr. Sacramento
 FREE Admission



Birthdays



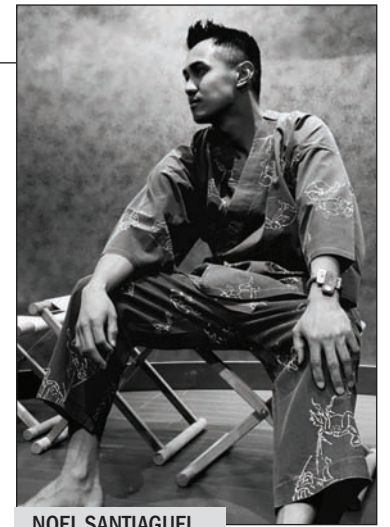
DANE SAN PEDRO & fiancée Amanda
 APRIL 17



ARDEN ABELEDA & wife Nelda
 MAY 11



WARNITA RODRIGO VILLANOZA
 APRIL 28



NOEL SANTIAGUEL
 MAY 26



Dr. JOSE VILLARICA
 MAY 22



JOSE RIVERA
 MAY 18



FAINA ABAYA & hubby Jun
 MAY 18



DALE ESPERANTE & wife Melita
 MAY 12



BETH VELASCO & hubby Jess
 MAY 26

Anniversary



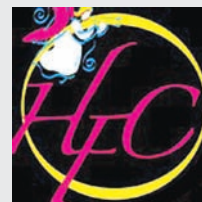
On April 27, 2018, **FEDERICO and CARMELITA CALINDAS** celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. They will continue their celebration on May 11, 2018 at the Country Club Event Center with their family and closest friends. Both are members of the Filipino American Veterans Association as well as The American Legion Magellan Post and Unit 604. Congratulations Fred and Lita!



SHEILA and JER CRISOLOGO
 29th Wedding Anniversary, April 29



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In Memory of Juanito Espano Esperante

By Dale Esperante and April Baez

Juanito E. Esperante, 78, entered eternal rest on Thursday, March 22, 2018, surrounded by his family at Doctors Hospital at Renaissance in Edinburg, Texas. Kuya Nito was born on December 27, 1939 in Manila, Philippines to Alfred Esperante and Rosario Espano Esperante. He was a long-time resident of McAllen, Texas and prior to his current marriage, a long-term resident of the San Francisco CA Bay Area where his siblings also reside.

His oldest daughter, April Baez, arranged a bay area homecoming for her dad on 14 Apr 2018. It started with a Celebration of Life at Crouching Tiger Restaurant in Redwood City. The Texas and California family members with their closest friends assembled in the restaurant at 11AM for the celebration of Juanito's life. At 2PM, a contingent of family members drove about an hour to Sausalito Harbor for the Marin Memorial. Marin Memorial Services offers

a dignified, affordable ash scattering service and memorial at sea ceremony aboard a luxurious 43' boat on the San Francisco Bay and Pacific Ocean.

Before sailing, the family received a respectful welcome from the skipper and the deck hand. After which, the skipper delivered his required safety briefing. It was a beautiful sunny and bright day for sailing yet an emotional one for the family members onboard. Upon reaching the area next to the Golden Bridge for the scattering of ashes, the family took a moment for a memorial prayer invoked by Juanito's youngest brother, me. After the prayer, April directed everyone to pick up a handful of bright flowers to sprinkle out in the water before the scattering of the ashes. To amplify the celebration, oldies but goodies songs were played starting with the song, "Johnny Angel," followed by "My Way," and other favorites.

Then it was time to scatter the ashes. Juanito's fam-



ily was the first group to scatter the ashes: wife Malou, children April-Jomar-Trina, grandson Cody, sister-in-law Len Howden of Texas, and son-in-law Carlos. Then Juanito's siblings, nieces, and nephews. I was standing next to the edge of the yacht while the ashes were being scattered when the wind blew some ashes all over me with some getting into my eye. I told everyone that it was my brother's way of giving me a last embrace. His wife and children followed the wish of my brother—for his ashes to be scattered in the bay next to the Golden Gate Bridge.

It was indeed an extraordinarily beautiful day for a memorial at sea. It was also the first for the family to board a yacht in the bay area, thanks to my brother. Thank you Juanito for being a part of our lives, may you now Rest in Peace. In Our Hearts You Remain.



Lion Maryann Bamba

Lion Maryann was 57 years old and married to Lion Mark Bamba. She was Treasurer of Maharlika Lions Club as well as the LCIF Coordinator. Lion Maryann's dedicated and tireless work was instrumental in the success of our 2018 Medical Mission to the Philippines which insured our winning of District 4-C5 Humanitarian Award for 2018. Lion Maryann's dedication to service inspired the well-being and quality of life of those she served. Lion Maryann Bamba will be missed by her friends and family.



Necita Ruiz

August 16, 1939 - April 25, 2018
Born in Numancia, Aklan, Philippines



Necita Ruiz passed away in Daly City, California. Currently she lives in San Francisco and previously lived in Elk Grove, CA. Necita was the past president and advisor of The Aklan Association of Sacramento and Vicinity.

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Mr. Chill

BY WILFREDO G. VILLANUEVA

He prepared well for the Bar Exams in 1999, and when an acquaintance who called by mobile phone read his name from a list faxed by the Supreme Court to the Department of Justice, he knew from the pit of his stomach that he would be number one because he had studied for it. Waiting for the results, his family, especially his mom, couldn't eat. He felt normal, in his words he was "chill." His mom actually collapsed at the ton of good news worth its weight in gold; he picked her up and proceeded to pose for press photographers, smiling, owning the moment as his mother wept and melted in his arms.

Florin Hilbay applies the same diligence and nonchalance to waves when he surfs in Baler, when he defends Senator Leila de Lima in Supreme Court en banc, when he sits down for an interview with The Society of Honor in the University of the Philippines College of Law on a lazy Saturday afternoon.

The sign at the door of his office in the college says Prof. Florin T. Hilbay. He has three positions: law instructor, writer in law publications, and recipient of various grants.

"I'm not bald," he said without a tone of defense, "I only shave my head because it makes me glide in the waves." Spoken like a surfer, hanging loose. Who cares?

Does he flinch, grimace or startle? Never caught him in a state of hesitation. He answers quickly, in fact before you finish pitching your question, he is already at first base. First time I talked with a person who comes at you like a bullet, you have no time to dodge, in a hurry but not rude, intelligent but not arrogant or patronizing.

He was not an honor student in Holy Child Catholic School in Tondo, Manila where he finished elementary, University of Santo Tomas high school "educ" and a degree in economics in the same university but he was always near the top. In UP Law, he finished no. 13 in his class and was awarded the Dean's Medal for Academic Excellence.

Studying full-time, he was a working student, as assistant to the Dean of the college, and assistant to a congressman.

He is the one of a few Filipinos to finish a masters in law in Yale University, on full scholarship. Yale accepts 23 students only for masters, and he made the grade. Go ahead, read that again. He has full-on bragging rights, but I don't see standoffishness in the man, just a lawyer explaining things in layman's terms, careful perhaps not to spook the daylight out of you if he trots out legal jargon. But he looks at you with a trained eye, wary for every muscle twitch or stutter, sizing you up probably,



Prof/Atty Florin Hilbay,
former Solicitor General

seeing if you can run with him in punishing pace. Pilo, as his friends call him, is a swimmer and runner as well. He picked sports that probably suit his temperament to forge ahead with or without companions, regardless of time and place, to set personal goals by his lonesome—a completionist, maverick, pioneer.

Of all the cases you handle, which is first priority, I asked.

"Leila is first, a live case, very symbolic. She's the first political prisoner, first high-profile detainee in the time of Duterte. Her fate is tied to the fate of this administration. It's an integral part of the regime, to make an example, to set the tone for the impunity that followed."

"The moment the Senate did not budge, the moment Supreme Court validated a fake case, admin felt empowered to do everything and anything. She's the first step in the road to impunity." How do you feel about what's happening?

"I can't be cynical; I should always be hopeful." No other words followed.

Succinct is power.

Did you ever consider living abroad, with your talents... My voice trailed.

"I never considered life abroad, I've always thought my life should be here."

His is a Cinderella story. Pilo's mother Lydia was born and raised in Cagayan Valley, who tried her luck in the big city where she met his father Rodrigo. She worked as a domestic helper. His father was a messenger in RCPI (Radio Communications of the Philippines, Inc.) of yore, delivering telegrams, granddaddy of text messaging. His father was a high school graduate, his mother finished elementary school.

Lydia is a religious person, a trait her son doesn't exemplify ("I'm spiritual, but not religious."). From being a household help, she cooked and sold fried lumpiang togue, lumpiang sariwa, kare-kare. She also hacked buy-and-sell dry goods from Divisoria. She's now 68 years old, and just recently underwent coronary artery bypass. Mother, be proud.

What's the origin of Florin?

"From Florin Gheoghiu, a great Romanian chess grandmaster. My father loves chess, and my brothers and I are named after grandmasters."

Pilo lives in a guarded community, and on weekends, he would bring his parents to their old haunts in Tondo where he grew up, so they can play tong-its and pusoy dos with friends in their old house in Amaranhagui street, between Pritil market and Tondo church.

How old were you during EDSA One?

"I was 12. The killing Ninoy Aquino was my political awakening. I don't remember being interested in politics before that."

"My father was anti-Marcos but not pro-Aquino. He would bring out his prized Akai stereo to the street so neighbors could listen to broadcast news of the People Power revolution. After RCPI, he landed a job in SITA (Société Internationale de Télécommunications Aéronautiques), where he became a teletype operator. He ended up as president of the union when he retired."

"My father was principled, read the newspapers, does puzzles, not a college graduate but very opinionated, likes discussions, strong-willed, chill. (That word again.—WGV) We used to play basketball together."

Why law?

"I didn't want to be a lawyer, wanted to work in the stock market, because I graduated economics in the University of Santo Tomas. When my classmates said they wanted to take up law, I took the entrance exams to the UP College of Law, because UP has more trees than other campuses, I told the panel who interviewed me. I was the only one who passed among my classmates; in graduating batch the only one from UST."

"We couldn't afford to pay for on-campus dorm, so I commuted: four jeepney rides one way, two hours each trip, from house to Tayuman, Tayuman to España, España to Fairview, from Philcoa, finally an "ikot" jeepney to Diliman campus."

Are you dilawan?

"No. My opinion as Solicitor General on the issue of whether Grace Poe is a natural-born citizen is that a founding in the Philippines is assumed to come from natural-born Filipino parents."

Did PNoy talk to you about it?

"To his credit, no. But it was my call, and I had to stick to the truth even if the admin at that time would have wanted Poe's disqualification. SolGen is independent, not subservient to appointing power. I was prepared to leave the office, but I finished my term co-terminus."

Hmm. SolGen Calida, are you reading this? Not an echo chamber, get it?

So what happens to rule of law?

"It's imperiled, in danger, under

attack. This is a very dark period in our history but we'll survive somehow. It'll be difficult to reconstruct our institutions. We have work to do."

Senator de Lima's case?

"Still waiting for the action of the Supreme Court on our motion for reconsideration, that there is no probable cause. The lull may mean they are not in agreement on the nature of the charges, that the case is a fake charge."

Is it time to call in the ICC (International Criminal Court) because our justice system may not be functioning?

"If the state is unable and unwilling to respond to impunity, it's time for ICC to intervene. That's why it was created."

President Duterte's threat to arrest ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda? "Nonsense."

How do you reconcile your being non-religious to the resistance that opposes President Duterte, a big portion of which is the fount of religiosity?

"We should find salvation ourselves. Divine intervention? If it helps, it helps. Can't exclude that possibility, but we can't simply hope for divine intervention."

"The Church has a moral obligation to intervene. I spoke to Bishop Broderick Pabillo (auxiliary bishop of Manila), I spoke to and am speaking before priests, for this is not a purely secular matter. It's a moral issue; the lives, freedoms, dignity of Filipinos is at stake. It's a matter that deeply affects public morality."

"The policy of killing, the policy of giving away our national territory, promoting fake news, the undignified way they conduct themselves. People in public office ought to act like model citizens. Everyone is affected by the example they give."

Conquered territory na ba tayo ng China?

"Politically we are. The President is compromised; he doesn't seem interested in the constitution, he wants to share our territory for joint development. That's an impeachable offense!"

Civil war?

"Don't think so, no conditions for it. AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) is commendable for standing its ground against a declaration of a revolutionary government."

Things to do?

"Plod on. Depends on what the admin is doing, we have to continue informing the public, to build a critical mass of outspoken citizens, because in the end politicians will listen to the people."

Talk to the Filipino people.

"As a lawyer, I have to say we have to resist if the constitution itself is not respected. The constitution says that martial law can be declared only in the event of invasion or rebellion, so pwede pang magsalita, our freedom of expres-

sion is intact."

Rate your happiness, satisfaction or fulfillment, ten being the highest.

Personal life? "Nine."

Professional life? "Ten."

Patriotism? "Ten."

Relationships? "Nine."

Being chill? "Ten."

Scholarship, continuing education? "Nine."

Helping others, like giving alms?

"I do give alms, regardless whether syndicate or not. Nine."

Satisfaction as a Filipino? "Ten."

Relationship with the sitting president?

"Last July 12, 2016, the President asked me and Supreme Court associate justice Francis Jardeleza on how we should react to the decision of international Arbitral Court rejecting China's nine-dash line claim. Soft landing, we said. Not to brag about it."

"But I don't agree with the policy to be friendly to China, disregarding the ruling."

"He wavers. He's been wavering with our rights. I don't know his reasons, but it's clear to me that what he's doing is wrong."

Boracay?

"I doubt that the closure is lawful, it's just that no one is complaining."

When is the time to finally say enough? "It's long overdue, we should have risen up a long time ago."

"I think we need to inform our citizens on the ground about what's happening. They have been able to control the pipelines of information, muzzled the critical press, tv, radio. Everything is essentially government propaganda, critical views are not able to reach the people. They might not like the policy of killing, how our national territory is not protected, that's why we have to go to the ground level, go to the country, to reach who are woke. Talk to your neighbors, house to house, the only way to do it."

Do you use social media?

"I tweet twice a day."

A run for the Senate?

"People are telling me that I should run, that they will support me, but it's difficult to decide. I just need to say what I need to say. It does not mean I have to run for public office."

What can you say about lawyers, are they part of the problem or part of the solution?

"Law schools form an important function. Lawyers are the soldiers of the legal system. As a law professor, what's important to me is to teach technique and principle to care for the rule of law."

Rule of law. Sweet music. Metaphorically, Mr. Chill is the principal player in the anti-Duterte orchestra, probably chief violinist, the dominant sound reaching the ears of an adoring audience.



BY GABRIEL ORTIGOZA, PHD

History of PMAEE in North Cotabato

My dream is to include my province of North Cotabato in the official list of Philippine Military Academy Entrance Examination (PMAEE).

In 2001, when I was still in the Corps of Professors of PMA, I gave PMA Entrance Examination at Southern Baptist College in Mlang, North Cotabato. It was the first PMAEE in the history of the province.

It so happened that I was the OIC of a special PMAEE given in the cities of Davao, General Santos, Koronadal, and Cotabato during that year. After I conducted PMAEE to four cities I went home in Mlang for a three-day R&R (Rest and Recreation).

I didn't waste my time doing nothing on my rest days. I gave PMAEE in my hometown of Mlang.

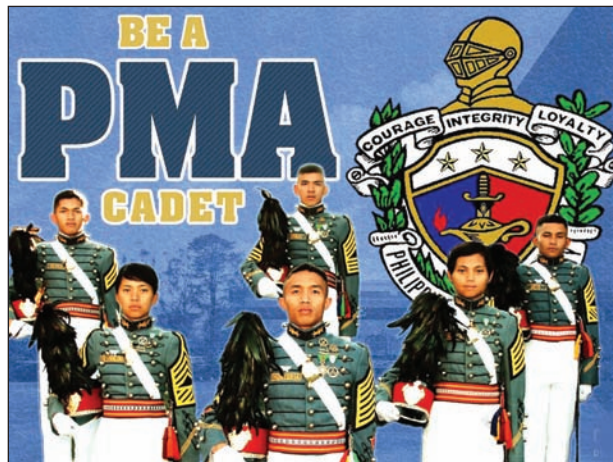
A day before the exam, I went to a radio station DXND in Kidapawan to announce the PMAEE at SBC. Thanks to my friend Grace Vergara-Tanghal for facilitating my public announcement and live interview at the station.

The following day, hundreds of youths in North Cotabato reported at the venue at Southern Baptist College in Mlang to take PMAEE as walk-in applicants.

Several examinees passed that examination but only two successfully graduated from PMA. One is my fellow from Mlang (IChantel Mae Tingson) and one is from Kidapawan (last name is Ancino). Both females and are officers of the Philippine Army.

While at PMA, I also took care of those cadets' families. Their mothers from North Cotabato visited these cadets in Baguio. I gladly welcomed them to stay in my quarters (house) and served as their host inside Fort Del Pilar.

When I resigned from PMA in 2003 to join my wife in California I thought my dream of making North Cotabato into the official



list of PMAEE Centers nationwide remains a dream.

A dream will remain a dream if you do not make it a goal. To reach a goal you must use SMART strategies to attain it. The acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and must be in a Time-frame.

In 2015, I posted a comment in a facebook group Mlang On My Mind about a cadet from Mlang who graduated in the top 10 among his PMA class. In that comment I mentioned the first ever PMAEE I gave in 2001.

Governor Emmy Lou "Lala" Talino-Mendoza read it and responded to that post. She asked me to bring back PMAEE to North Cotabato. I told the governor I will try my best to bring PMAEE to North Cotabato.

While in California, I looked back to this unfinished business and started coordinating with PMA officers whom I worked with when I was in the Corps of Professors. I communicated by sending letter requests. To make my request official I asked the provincial governor to send letter request to PMA Superintendent. For some reasons, which I don't know, our requests were denied.

In June 2016, I was on vacation in the Philippines and was able to visit Baguio City, my birthplace. While at PMA, I followed up my request for PMAEE to be given in Cotabato province. But for the second time that request was denied.

I still hope and pray that the youth of North Cotabato will someday be privileged to take PMAEE without going to other cities and provinces.

On 06 August 2016, Saturday, I sent a letter to Secretary Delfin Lorenzana

(PMA 73) of Department of National Defense. Lo and behold, on the August 8th, my request was granted. Yes, PMAEE is going to North Cotabato.

My snappiest salute to Sec. Delfin Lorenzana. Thank you sir for the speedy action. The youth of North Cotabato will benefit from PMAEE. Hats off to you sir.

It's a dream come true to me and to my fellows back home. What seems to be impossible is now possible and I thank God for this.

A team of PMA proctors came to provincial capitol on 21 August 2016 and conducted PMAEE.

I was told the following day, Monday, Gov. Mendoza announced to the attendees of Monday morning flag raising ceremony the successful PMAEE given at the provincial gymnasium and mentioned she was grateful to this writer for the effort to make PMAEE in North Cotabato materialized.

On Sunday, 19 August 2018, PMAEE is scheduled to be given in Provincial Capitol in Amas, North Cotabato. This is the 3rd consecutive year of PMAEE in my province of North Cotabato. (Brig. Gen. Joey Villanueva of PMA Academics Group updated this writer Tuesday, 24 April, saying PMAEE will be conducted every second Sunday of September which means this year's PMAEE is scheduled on 09 September 2018).

Applicants who registered and walk-in applicants (those who have not registered yet) may proceed to provincial capitol to take PMAEE.

The AFP needs good leaders and you may be one of them.

(gabbyortig@yahoo.com)

The Korean War

BY GABRIEL ORTIGOZA, PHD

Korea used to be an independent kingdom but was occupied by Japan beginning 1905 following the Russo-Japanese War and was formally annexed by Japan in 1910.

Following World War II, Korea was divided with the northern half under Soviet Communist control and the southern half was supported by the United States and Western Powers.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) or the communist North Korea is located above the 37th parallel with Pyongyang as its capital city; on the other hand, the Republic of Korea (ROK) or the progressive democratic South Korea occupy the southern part of the parallel with Seoul as its capital city.

The withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea in January 1950 made the South stand on its own which the opportunistic North had waited.

On June 25 1950, 18,000 DPRK troops crossed the 37th Parallel heading south and captured the capital city of Seoul within 72 hours.

The United Nations immediately responded by sending troops from member countries which are signatories to the U.N. charter, Philippines is included; the U.N. troops was headed by General Douglas MacArthur.

North Korean troops continued its invasion and violent attacks towards Pusan, a city located at the southeastern part of South Korea and was considered to be the last defense headquarters of the U.N. troops.

On September 15, 1950, Gen. MacArthur and his troops made a surprise and daring amphibious



North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, walked across the inter-Korean border to meet the South's president, Moon Jae-in. No North Korean leader had made the journey in the two countries' 70-year history of bitter rivalry.

landing in Inchon cutting the North Korean supply lines.

The North Korean troops were forced to retreat back to the 37th Parallel to regroup and to get its military supplies.

On October 14th, the U.N. troops led by MacArthur attacked and followed the retreating and confused North Korean forces beyond the boarder capturing the capital city Pyongyang.

On November 1st, China came into the scene and helped North Korea by sending 18,000 Chinese troops and pushed the U.N. forces back to the boarder and attacked further south and recaptured Seoul.

On November 24th, Gen. MacArthur made a counter attack by sending his troops to the northern part of North Korea but because of Chinese superior in numbers who were advancing south, the U.N. forces retreated.

General Matthew Ridgeway led his troops and made a counter attack against the aggressive communist forces which caused the Chinese to retreat to the boarder.

On April 11, 1951, U.S. President Harry Truman relieved Gen. Douglas MacArthur for criticizing his policy on war and replaced him with Gen. Matthew Ridgeway.

On April 22nd, the U.N. forces made its attack against the huge number of communist troops until

they regained the capital city of Seoul.

The Chinese renewed the aggression by sending 450,000 troops to fight against the U.N. forces situated in the border and in the capital city.

On June 15, 1951, the United Nations forces under the command of U.S. General Van Fleet were able to counter the attack which caused heavy casualties on the Chinese troops and made the communist to retreat.

At the end of June a stalemate developed and stabilized the situation in the boarder but then the war continued and protracted until 1953 when the issue of Prisoners-Of-War (POW) was resolved which made both parties exchanged POWs.

On July 27, 1953 an armistice was concluded that suspended the war between the communist DPRK and the democratic ROK.

There were 950,000 Chinese and 600,000 North Koreans died and wounded, including a son of Mao Tse Tung as one of the KIAs (Killed-In-Action); there were 185,000 South Koreans, 125,000 U.S., and 12,000 U.N. troops died and wounded in the Korean War.

Sixty plus years after the war, the historic meeting of South and North Korea presidents at the DMZ on 26 April 2018 commences a positive resolution of over six decades of conflict in the Korean peninsula. (gabbyortig@yahoo.com)



365 Guidelines To Live By

BY NANCY CRISTI BAUTISTA

Some of the following do not have any scientific proof behind them. These are just personal tips or guidelines on how to live healthy, easily and happily. Get medical approval prior to the medical application. Doing just at least one of these everyday may bring a positive outlook to life.

May:

1. Electrical Equipment:

Unplug all electrical equipment when not in use. It is also wise to do the same during a storm.

2. Tips:

Listen to tips and advices. You might learn something.

3. Sides Of A Story:

Remember that there are always two sides of a story. Find the truth.

4. Petty Things:

If something is too petty to worry, maybe it is better to let it go.

5. Coupons:

Use coupons wisely. It is a waste to use a coupon to buy an item that you do not really need.

6. Gossiping:

Avoid gossiping. It will only lead to trouble.

7. Good-Intending Friends:

Watch out for so-called "good-intending" friends. They might actually have another intention.

8. Recycle:

Recycling is difficult to do, but, it is a must.

9. Hand Washing:

Wash hands frequently and properly.

10. Items After Each Use:

Have the habit of putting back the item after each use. You will appreciate it next time you want to use them again.

11. Emergency Drill:

Practice fire drill, natural disaster drill and other emergency drill routinely with the family.

12. Office Of The Government::

Respect the office of the government, no matter what your political affiliation is.

13. Obeying The Laws:

The laws of God and of the land are written for the salvation of the soul and to create order and to avoid chaos.

14. Washing Foods:

To avoid getting parasites, wash all foods well prior to using them, especially the ones to be eaten fresh. Brush and use dish soap, when necessary.

15. Good Rapport With The Physician:

Have a good rapport with your trusted physician. Take advantage of texts or e-mails. They are free, fast

24. Bigger Cooking Utensils:

To avoid spillage in cooking, use a larger pot or pan than the perceived size of food to be cooked. Simple tip, but, very essential.

25. Heating The House:

Set the thermostat of the house to a slightly below the comfortable level, then, just use a portable heater where you would sit down

to watch tv, or do your paper work, etc...{Much lower heating bill}

26. Dog Tricks:

Teach your dog a trick daily. Use a small dog food or treat until the trick is learned, then, proceed to another trick. The next time, let the dog review what was learned from

the beginning. Be patient and you and your dog will enjoy the bonding.

27. Dish Brush:

Use a long-handled brush to hand wash the dishes. You will not have to touch the grease and you could use the hottest water possible.

28. Multiple Scented Candle:

When cooking or having some company, light multiple scented candles in different, safe strategic places in the house. Do not forget to put them out after.

29. Silent Prayer:

Say a silent prayer anytime, anywhere.

30. Leg Cramp:

When leg cramp is being experienced, place the foot down, while massaging the affected leg. The cramping will disappear faster.

31. Wash Top Of Canned Good:

Always wash top of a canned good with soap and water prior to opening it. Canned goods might be stored in places where rats might be releasing themselves especially during floods. This condition could lead to Leptospirosis, an infectious disease that is caused by a close contact with water, soil or animals that contaminate the ground with infected urine. Some of the symptoms are severe high fever of 100.4 F with chills, headache, and muscle ache. Get the advice of your physician as soon as these occur.

and documented.

16. Vote Wisely:

Practice your right to vote. Vote wisely, Vote on who could make your state or the country better.

17. House/Car Repair:

Do not let the house or car repair wait. The right time could be a regrettable decision.

18. Last Will And Testament:

While still strong and able, make all the legal and necessary last will and testament.

19. Electronic Help/Technician:

Before calling the authentic electronic help/technician for repair, try to unplug the device first for ten seconds and plug it again.

20. 2178 Multiplied By 4:

The number 2178 multiplied by number 4 equals the original numbers, but, inverted {8712}. What's the point? Nothing, just because.

21. Happy Thoughts:

At least once a day, have a happy thought. Laugh or smile as often as you can.

22. Pen And Pan:

Always bring a pen and pad with you to jot down things that could be used someday. Now, with the modern electronics, one may use them instead.

23. Careful On Every Movement:

It is a fact that today, your body will be older than yesterday, and there is no warning, so just be careful in your every movement.



Nadine Lustre, James Reid enjoy Phuket in Thailand

BY CLARIZEL G. ABANILLA

Kapamilya ace love team James Reid and Nadine Lustre takes a quick break from their hectic schedules and jetted off to Phuket, Thailand for a beach getaway.

The news was shared to the public on Thursday by their management, Viva Artists Agency via Instagram.

Lustre was captured in her sexy 2-piece bikini. The shot was courtesy of Reid.

In a video posted also by Viva, Lustre was seen walking through a beautiful resort by the beach as Reid takes her video. Their management wishes them well and has their



Nadine Lustre and James Reid.

best wishes on their vacation.

Their much-awaited romance movie "Never Not

Love You" is hitting cinemas on March 31. It was directed by blockbuster director Antoinette Jadaone.

Kathryn Bernardo shares photos of Daniel Padilla's 'Great Gatsby' birthday party

BY JAN MILO SEVERO

"Teen Queen" Kathryn Bernardo shared through her Instagram story what has happened on "Teen King" Daniel Padilla's Great Gatsby-themed 23rd birthday party on Thursday night.

On her first story, Kathryn was showing her outfit for the celebration and she captioned the post with "DJP-inspired outfit."

On the next stories, a band was seen playing The Beatles song "I Wanna Hold You Hand" while Daniel is singing in their table, next to Kathryn, who was taking the video.

The next stories showed Daniel blowing his cake, while attendees of his birthday were singing him the birthday song.

The birthday boy also jammed with the band and sang The Beatles' classic "Something."

Robin Padilla's wife, Mariel Rodriguez, also shared on her Instagram story Daniel's celebration.



Singer-actor Daniel Padilla celebrated his birthday on April 26 (left); his lady love Kathryn Bernardo wearing a Daniel-inspired

Mariel captured a video of Daniel together with his parents Karla Estrada and Rommel Padilla. Karla said in the video how grateful she is for the visitors of her son's birthday.

In a mall tour last week for their endorsement, Vivo V9 smartphone, KathNiel celebrated Daniel's birthday in advance. Kathryn has a birthday wish for her love team partner and ru-

mored boyfriend.

"Magawa niya sana lahat ng gusto niyang gawin kasi ang dami niyang plano. I'm sure maeexcite ang lahat 'pag nalaman nila 'yun, so sana magawa niya 'yun lahat. And of course 'yung health niya parati lang okay, ayon ang importante," Kathryn said.

Since KathNiel celebrate their birthdays one month apart, Daniel also has a wish for his partner, which celebrated her birthday last March 26.

"Sana magawa mo lahat ang gusto mo gawin. Lahat naman tayo seeking for happiness, so sana maging masaya ka. Nandito naman ako kaya okay ka na," Daniel said, creating loud cheers and "kilig feels" from the crowd.

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Vina on taking on daring roles

BY STEPHANIE MARIE BERNARDINO

At 42, seasoned actress-singer Vina Morales is still slaying the scene by doing roles out of her comfort zone.

Two years after she was seen as Catherine Pelayo-Reyes/Kazuko on comedy-drama series "Born For You," she returns this month on the Precious Hearts Romances series "Araw Gabi." She plays Celestina de Alegre who is one of the main antagonists to lead characters played by JM de Guzman and Barbie Imperial.

At a press conference, Vina revealed that during the first three days of taping alone, she donned swimsuits thrice for several bed scenes with her "boy toy" on the show, Victor Silayan.



Vina Morales

"Sabi ko 'Diyos ko Lord ano 'to feeling bagets?' Pero in-fairness lumalaban (ako.)," she shared.

It was her first time to work with the young actor and she felt awkward during their intimate scenes as they did not get the chance to take sensuality workshop.

"Medyo nahirapan ako because I'm not used to these kind of scenes," she admitted. "Kasi alam mo nu'ng early days ang ginagawa kong movies or show ay medyo conservative ng konti."

"So dito si Direk kung ano-anong mga pinapagawa sa amin. Nakaka-stress pero kahit first time ko to work with Victor, he's very gentleman so I thanked him for that," she added.

Victor said he was respectful during their scenes.

"Miss Vina makes the work easy. Also, she's a very beautiful actress, a very generous actress," he said.

One of the directors, Theodore Boborol, felt challenged shooting the intimate scene as he still sees Vina's character in "Ang Utol Kong Hoodlum."

"Tuwing nagla-love scene sobrang nakakatawa kasi imbes na nenerbyusin kami eh tawa kami ng tawa kasi kine-choreograph namin na 'Oh on top naman siya,'" he shared. "Pero basta they should watch out for their love scene kasi sobrang ang galing nilang dalawa. 'Pag napanuod nila hindi mahalatang tawanan lang kami

ng tawanan habang ginagawa ang eksena."

How did Vina prepare for the role? Well, she was required to have Amazon-like physique.

"Yung role ko kasi I'm one of the owners of El Paraiso, ako 'yung matinding kaaway at numero unong kalaban ni Adrian (JM). But, ako I had my dark childhood na even on my younger days, mga 16 years old, I became a prostitute. So may mga background story talaga parang maging ganu'n 'yung character niya - maging strong pero also a loving mom," she noted.

In fact, she admitted the directors, staff and the casts were among the reason why she was able to gather her confidence to play her role well.

Another challenging part is that her character is always switching moods.

"Feeling nga namin lahat, parang bipolar lang ang peg namin. Kasi one scene mabait then sa ibang scene gustong pumapatay ng tao," she shared.

Vina finds "Araw Gabi" as compelling story full of love, mystery, and suspense. The series premieres April 30 on Kapamilya Gold.

Also joining the series are Rita Avila, Mina, Raymond Bagatsing, RK Bagatsing, Jane Oineza, Phoebe Walker, Paolo Angeles, Ysabel Ortega, Arlene Muhlach, Eric Nicolas, and Joshua Colet.

Kris Aquino on being a 'patola'

BY DENI ROSE AFINIDAD-BERNARDO

MANILA, Philippines — "Ay, sumasagot ako!" Kris Aquino declared when asked if she replies to bashers on social media, or in colloquial social media terms, if she is a "patola."

"I've learned kasi na parang if you're ready to throw it at me, be ready for me to defend myself," she told select members of the press, including Philstar.com, during a recent sit-down interview organized by Claritin, one of her endorsements.

Related Stories
Kris Aquino rants against James Yap, Korina Sanchez

During the interview, Kris enumerated the things that irk and compel her to fight back.

"Pag ang mga binibring-up nangyari mga 14 years



Kris Aquino

ago, sasabihin ko talaga, 'Ah, hello? Wala kang mahanap na kasalanan ko from today?' 'Yung parang ganon, dun lang ako nagreact. And especially 'pag binu-bully mga anak ko,' she said.

She recalled that she once told a basher who bullied her sons: "Tell me where you are because naka-retainer sa'kin si Attorney Sig Fortun. So, mahal s'ya at magaling s'yang lawyer so

kaya ko. At saka 'pag bata eh... Any mother would be..."

According to Kris, she can take any criticism, but she cannot take those directed toward her sons.

"You can criticize me, my hair, my makeup, my kaartehan, no big deal. But if it's integrity ng pamilya ko, if it's my children or the legacy of my parents, ay, be ready for a fight!"

Kris Aquino apologizes to Noynoy, Duterte, Mar after rant vs Korina Sanchez

Hours after lashing out against a former co-host and wife of a 2016 presidential candidate she endorsed, Kris Aquino turned to Instagram early morning Monday, April 23, to "apologize" to a bunch of people.

"I know I've unleashed a double edged sword. I know i've made enemies, and i've also found kindred spirits in MOTHERS who like me have felt that they have had ENOUGH & they had to take a stand & say I AM NOW FIGHTING BACK. I also know i have personal demons i need to exorcise because no matter what i still want to be someone my sons can be proud of... so i will collect my thoughts & try my best to forgive regardless of the fact no remorse has ever been shown," said Kris in an Instagram post accompanied by an all-black video with Whitney Houston's "Try It On My Own."

She added: "I apologize for including politics, but that is the unfortunate baggage & responsibility of my last name. But i will not delete any posts because my anger comes from the heart of a mother who has been unnecessary-

ily stepped on by someone who hasn't had the privilege of motherhood... I do sincerely apologize to my brother. And I apologize to President Duterte. And Mar, to you i am sorry. In the same way i would always wonder why i would be dragged into issues not of my doing- i was guilty of that tonight. I'll be back after i have found my peace. Until then, to all those who still found it in their hearts to understand & embrace me & my sons- you have my eternal gratitude. #laban."

On Sunday evening, April 22, Kris hit Korina for a Rated K episode that featured James Yap, her ex-husband and father to Bimby, Kris' 11-year-old son.

"Sampal sa mukha ko ang inilabas na feature ngayong gabi nung misis ni Mar Roxas. Yes, pinepersonal ko dahil binuwis ko ang kinabukasan namin ng mga anak ko ng walang inasahang kapalit. At ang ganti sa 'kin at sa mga anak ko ngayon ay binida pa ang deadbeat na tatay... I apologize sa Kuya ko, humihingi rin ako ng paumanhin sa ninang ko na nanay ni Mar - pero klarong klaro sa 'kin kung bakit ang nanalang pangulo ay si Duterte," she said in the earlier post.

The feature that the wife of

Mar Roxas came out with today is a slap to my face. Yes, I am taking this personally because I put my and my children's future on the line without expecting anything in return. And the apparent payback for me and my children is a feature on a deadbeat father. I apologize to my brother, as well as to my godmother who is Mar's mother - but it's clear now why it was Duterte who won as president.)

The segment was about James, his pregnant girlfriend, and two-year-old son.

Kris recently broke her silence yet again on James, whom she has always had a tricky relationship with.

The "Queen of All Media" lashed out against her former husband over rude statements he made about their son. Kris called James out for making statements about Bimby and their terse relationship, while allegedly failing to make the effort to spend time with his son.

Kris is the sister of former president Benigno Aquino III, who endorsed Mar Roxas for president in the 2016 elections. The two former senators remain close allies, and are both members of the Liberal Party.

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