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Harper starts with controversial choices



Stephen Harper takes the oath of office as Canada's 22nd prime minister during a ceremony at Rideau Hall in Ottawa, February 6, 2006.

Mud slides bury a village in Leyte, Philippines



MANILA, Philippines - February 17, 2006 - The farming village is gone, swallowed whole by a wall of mud and boulders that swept down with terrifying speed Friday from a mountainside in the eastern

Philippines. Officials feared the death toll could climb past 1,500. "There are no signs of life, no

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Mud slides

Stephen Harper, sworn in as Canada's 22nd Prime Minister, last Monday, February 6, 2006, made some surprising choices to his Cabinet, naming David Eemrson, a former member of Paul Martin's cabinet to the post of International Trade Minister and appointing a non-elected member to head the Public Works Department, Michael Fortier who will be responsible for a large amount of taxpayers' money. Some political analysts considered these decisions bold moves as they are likely to stir controversies right at the beginning of his term which will be the first time in more than a decade that the Conservative Party will rule in this traditionally liberal nation.

The 46-year-old economist has vowed to cut taxes, get tough on crime and reconsider such hot-button issues as gay marriage. He takes over outgoing Liberal Party leader Paul Martin, whose 18-

month government built on the country's robust economy but was deeply marred by an ethics scandal that outraged many Canadians.

"As a government, our mission is clear," Harper said shortly after the swearing in ceremony. "We will act on the collective priorities of Canadians so that our country remains strong, independent and free."

Harper's personal politics are said to be in line with those of many Republicans in the neighbouring US -- he's anti-abortion and against gay marriage and big government -- and many believe rocky relations will now improve with the White House. But to govern effectively and remain in power, he'll have to balance his own beliefs with the many Canadians who disdain US President George Bush and the war in Iraq. He also has to show

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Harper

Homecoming parade for victorious Manny Pacquiao



Filipino Boxing hero Manny 'The Pacman' Pacquiao rides a float at a big homecoming parade as he is welcomed by the city of Manila, Philippines upon his return after winning the World Featherweight (Courtesy of: Joey de Leon, Manila, Philippines photographer)

MANILA, Philippines (AP) - Thousands of Filipinos lined the streets of Manila on Friday, January 27 to cheer local boxing hero Manny "Pac Man" Pacquiao on his triumphant return after defeating Mexican rival Erik Morales.

Pacquiao, (41-3-1, 32 knockouts) stopped Morales with a flurry of punches in the 10th round of their 12-round WBC super

featherweight title eliminator at Las Vegas on Saturday to avenge his defeat to the same fighter 10 months ago.

On Friday Pacquiao waved to fans from a truck decked with Philippine flags and sporting two large red boxing gloves as his

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Pacquiao

EDITORIAL

What's behind those mud slides?

Mud slides have been occurring almost regularly every year in the Philippines. They have caused so much hardships, devastation and loss of lives, particularly among the poor people who are living in areas where illegal logging is rampant. Everyone is aware of the problem but there seems to be nothing done about it. Although there are government people who are mandated to oversee that the law is being followed, they are apparently being bribed into cooperating with the powerful loggers.

It is often believed that it is impossible to solve the problem of illegal logging because of rampant corruption in the government at all levels - municipal, provincial, and national. There is a culture of "survival of the fittest" and "just mind your own business" if you want to live longer. Not only do they cut trees down without replacing them, they also apparently dig up earth wherever they can to sell to contractors and developers who are building subdivisions for those who can afford to buy. With these activities going on without fear of being caught because they are being protected by those who are in power, it is no wonder that there will be landslides that will occur regularly in vulnerable places where the poor are the most numerous. These types of calamities do not happen where there are rich people because they usually live in places that are absolutely safe and always in pristine condition.

Bearing in mind the helplessness of the poor and the ruthless power of rich loggers, what is the next step? Shall we stand by and let this cycle of tragedies happen to the poor people living near the denuded mountains? Shall we just depend on governments to act? Shall we let more tragedies to strike before taking any action? What can ordinary people do?

It seems that the first reaction to tragedies of this nature is to send

aid to the victims. The United States immediately responded by sending the Marines to dig up and rescue the survivors. Canada, although a little slower to react, is now responding with considerable financial aid. Filipino Canadians across the country are also actively raising funds to send to the Philippines. Although all these initiatives by both government and private citizens are admirable, they are not going to solve the problem of deadly mud slides that can bury whole towns and villages unless something is done to get to the root of the problem. The funds are certainly needed to give to the survivors who will need housing, food, and the means to earn a livelihood. But money alone is not sufficient to help them for a longer period of time. A more permanent solution will be to make people aware that they have the power to change their life if they learn to work with each other in the protection of their own environment.

The question then is: How do we begin to empower people to go beyond their own personal interests? Who will lead them out of their helplessness? From a distance, it is hard to imagine if there is anyone in the community who can be so concerned about the future that he or she will mobilize others to change things that are within their power to change. On the other hand, those of us who are away from our native land, we may need to reflect more deeply on whether or not we are also willing to go out of our way to do something in preventing mud slides from ever happening again. Although we cannot control floods and strong rains, we can always fortify the soil by planting more trees, and finding other ways to save the earth. After all, we are all living in the same planet. and we are not only helping others but we are also helping ourselves.

What else need to happen before we all wake up to do something about changing things that we have the power to change?

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

Filipino Solidarity Cooperative sets expansion plans

Last January 22, 2006, the Board of Directors and Committees of the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative held a meeting at Gilmore College to discuss expansion plans and to review financial results over the period of seven months. The directors of the cooperative are: Jose Gaviola, president; Ben Bade, vice-president; Rhoda Tremocha, secretary-treasurer, Magnolia Camat and Adelia Gayol, administrators. The two committees and their members are as follows:

Education and Training Development - Lourdes Fagsao, Domingo Loric, Jr., Josephine Villa, and Jocel Trinidad. Membership and Promotion - Lourdes Rosales, Maria Ruth Dima-ala and Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi.

The Cooperative has now added equipment which can store meat, fish and other frozen products. There are now many more varieties of

merchandise being offered for sale. It is now possible for consumers to make a "one stop shopping" for most of the things they need everyday.

A free seminar will be held on Sunday, March 19, 2006, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Gilmore College, 4950 Queen Mary Road Penthouse, to provide the public all the information they need regarding the cooperative movement, the limited liabilities of having stocks or shares in a cooperative, and the rights and responsibilities of stockholders.

Mr. Jose Gaviola, president, will discuss the management aspect, Mr. Eugene Salinas will explain the financial aspect, and Mr. Lei Mark will present the cooperative system and moderate the seminar.

If you are interested in listening to the speakers and understand how the cooperative works before signing up for membership, please call 514-485-7861 to reserve your space.

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Movement is Life and Chiropractic Delivers

This may sound a bit strange at first but if you think about it for a moment the truth of this statement begins to become more and more apparent. Without movement you could not sustain life: blood cells that don't move cannot transport oxygen, lungs that don't move can't breathe, hearts that don't move can't pump blood, and spines that don't move can't create the motion required for proper joint nutrition, for the activities of daily living, or for the stimulation of the joint-brain pathways required for proper brain and body function.

You heard correctly, movement (especially of the spine) is required for proper brain function for the coordination of activities such as concentration and learning, emotions, motor control, and organ function (including immune organs). Roger Sperry the recipient of the Nobel prize in 1982 for his work in brain research stated that the importance of movement of the spine in relation to brain function could be equated to that of a windmill that generates electricity for a power plant. He also stated that the more structurally distorted we are, the less energy we have for metabolism, for healing, and for thinking.

In fact research has shown that if you cut off the supply of information going to the brain, the brain will actually reach a state of coma! That's right, the brain does not simply control the body, the brain requires constant stimulation; it requires constant input from movement to keep the batteries charged.

Did you know that over half of all the nerve impulses being sent between your brain and body in your spinal cord are for the delivery of movement stimulation to the brain? Movement charges your brain's battery and makes you able to think better, feel better, and function better.

This is especially true for children because the effects of decreased stimulation of the brain in childhood have been linked to central motor impairment, developmental impairments, learning disabilities, concentration problems like ADHD,

behavioural problems such as violence and increased illnesses such as ear, nose, and throat infections, sleeping difficulties, and colic.

It should be obvious why it is so important to ensure every child has a properly moving and aligned spine as the spinal joints are the main source of sensory movement stimulation to the brain. If there is subluxation in the spine, movement and therefore essential nutrient delivery to the brain are compromised.

Not only does proper spinal movement increase overall health, decrease disease and improve the ability to create feelings of happiness and well-being, it also helps to reduce pain and discomfort and to diminish feelings of anxiety and stress. When it comes right down to it we are creatures designed for virtually constant movement living in a society that involves almost constant sitting. We are also clearly designed to have properly moving and aligned spines and many of our citizens are unknowingly walking around with subluxation in their spines because they have NEVER HAD A SPINAL HEALTH EXAM!! This is not a healthy combination and the result is that we have a population that is much less healthy and much more sick, tired, and disease ridden than is necessary.

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From Page 1 Harper

justification for appointing someone like Fortier who is not a member of Parliament, a move which seems to contradict his pledge to reform the Senate by appointing only elected Senators as one of his first steps in the new Parliament

Clutching his personal Bible,



Harper was sworn in by Alex Himelfarb, clerk of the Privy Council, and was presided over by Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean as he took the oath of office.

"We know that governing in a minority is not going to be easy," Harper said in a news conference following the ceremony at Rideau Hall. "But we have our legislative and governmental priorities and we will work with others to find shared goals and common ideas."

Just how much cooperation he will receive for his minority government remains to be seen. However, most people believe that no one wants to have another election so soon and may let the Harper government last a little while longer, giving time to the opposition parties, particularly the Liberals to re-group and rejuvenate themselves.

Stephen Harper has kept his

Harper's Cabinet - dominated by the West

Cabinet choices one of his closely guarded secrets. He gave a list of his appointments to the Governor General, Michaëlle Jean, on the day of the oath-taking ceremony.

There are 27 members of the Cabinet, including Harper himself, down from the previous government's 37. Nine MPs are from Ontario, 10 from the West, including four from Alberta, one from Manitoba and three from the Atlantic provinces, and four from Quebec. Prince Edward Island was shut out from the Cabinet, having elected no Tory MPs. Prominent cabinet postings include:

- Foreign Affairs - Peter MacKay. The former deputy Opposition leader and Nova Scotia MP has also serves as House leader and Justice critic.

- Heritage - Bev Oda. The Ontario MP served as Harper's critic for heritage. She is Canada's first parliamentarian of Japanese heritage.

- Finance - Jim Flaherty - A former Ontario finance minister, Flaherty is a lawyer by trade.
- Health - Tony Clement. Served as health minister under former Ontario premiers Mike Harris and Ernie Eves.
- Industry - Maxime Bernier. A star MP from Quebec, Bernier is a lawyer and prominent

businessman.

- Justice - Vic Toews. The Manitoba MP has been the province's justice and labour minister.

- Human Resources and Social Development - Diane Finley. The Ontario MP was first elected as MP in 2004.

- Labour - Jean-Pierre Blackburn. The Quebec MP is a businessman, college instructor and public relations consultant.

- Transport - Lawrence Cannon. Quebec MP is a former Liberal cabinet minister and has served as Harper's deputy chief of staff.



David Emerson

There were two surprises in Harper's cabinet: former Liberal cabinet minister David Emerson as international trade minister, and Michael Fortier, Harper's national campaign co-chair, who is not elected, but will serve as minister of public works and government services.

Emerson's defection from the Liberals was made public on Monday, boosting the Conservative party's seat to 125.

Harper has no MPs in any of the Canada's three biggest cities, and he told reporters he appointed Fortier -- a key business figure, party organizer in Quebec and a former president of the Progressive Conservative party -- because he needs a minister from Montreal in his cabinet.

But Harper said Fortier will run in the next federal election, and that he will step down from his Senate seat once he is elected to Parliament.

"Michael Fortier is leaving a lucrative, private sector job to take this [position] ... but it is only a temporary appointment. He has agreed that he will step down at the next federal election ... and so this Senate seat will be available for elections, and we'll be proceeding with Senate elections in the not-too-distant future."



Michael Fortier

The following list completes the Cabinet:

- Gordon O'Connor - Defence
- Tony Clement - Health
- Stockwell Day -- Public Safety
- Michael Fortier - Public Works
- David Emerson - International Trade and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics.
- Rona Ambrose - Environment
- Jim Prentice - Indian Affairs



Maxime Bernier

- John Baird - Treasury Board
- Gary Lunn - Natural Resources
- Monte Solberg - Citizenship and Immigration - Medicine Hat, Alta.
- Michael Chong, president of the Queen's Privy Council, minister of intergovernmental affairs and minister for sport - Wellington-Halton Hills, Ont.

- Rob Nicholson - Democratic reform (a new post) and Speaker of the House.

- Loyola Hearn, minister of fisheries and oceans - St. John's South-Mount Pearl, N.L.



Laurence Cannon

- Marjory LeBreton: Leader of the government in the Senate Senator/un-elected

- Rob Nicholson, House leader and minister for democratic reform Niagara Falls, Ont.

- Carol Skelton, minister of national revenue and minister of western

economic diversification

Saskatoon-Rosetown-Biggar, Sask.

- Chuck Strahl, agriculture and agri-food minister and minister for the Canadian Wheat Board Chilliwack-Fraser Canyon, B.C.

- Greg Thompson, minister of veterans affairs - New Brunswick Southwest, N.B.

- Josée Verner, minister of international co-operation and minister for la Francophonie and official languages.

A total of six women are now members of the new cabinet.

Stephen Harper announced after the cabinet meeting that Parliament will reconvene on April 3 and a new budget will be introduced.

Political analysts' and opponents' reactions

Academics and political observers alike made some comments that appear to shed light on Stephen Harper's decision to take bold steps, his willingness to take rough hits from all sides. Political experts said that "the cabinet - 27 members, including the prime minister - marks another deliberate step toward the pragmatic middle and away from the new Conservative party's ideological roots." Allan Tupper, a political scientist at the University of British Columbia said: "This seems to be a clear nod toward quite a pragmatic, centrist style of government. Faron Ellis, a career Reform-Alliance-Conservative party chronicler who teaches at Lethbridge Community College remarked: "This is the final transition away from Reform." With just three Alberta ministers - and as many from Ontario (nine) as all four western provinces combined - Harper has rejected playing up the old West Wants In slogan. But on balance, Harper's first cabinet seems a fiscally conservative, socially moderate model of regional balance, provincial experience and young and old. Harper said in his first news release as prime minister that the executive is "designed for work, not for show." According to Ellis, "This cabinet is about the next election as much as it's about the current minority Parliament." In fact, with western Liberal MPs having held the finance, health, industry and deputy prime minister jobs under the former Paul Martin government, David Taras of the University of Calgary argues that real cabinet influence has actually shifted east. Giving the economic posts to Quebec MPs underscore the significance of this province in the coming elections where 60% of the voters did not go for the Conservatives.

New Democrat leader Jack Layton said Harper's controversial decision to appoint a cabinet minister who was elected as a Liberal flies in the face of his election pledge to clean up government.

Aquino renews call for Arroyo to quit

Corazon Aquino, a former Philippine president and icon of a "people power" uprising that restored democracy in the Southeast Asian nation in 1986, on Tuesday renewed her call for Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to quit as leader.

Last July, Aquino turned her back on President Arroyo over allegations of vote-rigging and corruption after recordings of what the opposition said was Arroyo's conversations with an election

Filipinos have the right to know," said senator Benigno Aquino, was swept to power after a civilian-backed military mutiny ended the dictator's two-decade rule. She was president for six years until 1992.

She survived nearly a dozen army coup plots and attempts by two groups of soldiers -- one loyal to the ousted dictator and another that initially helped install her as president. Five years ago, Aquino reprised her role in a second "people power" uprising that removed Joseph Estrada from office and pushed up Arroyo from vice president. Aquino also helped Arroyo win the 2004 presidential elections.

On Sunday, Aquino attended a

In a talk with reporters on the side of a hearing on their coup d'etat case in Makati City Tuesday morning, one of the rebel soldiers, Air Force First Lieutenant Francisco Ashley Acedillo said the time had come for the public to choose between supporting either

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo or pushing for a change in government.

One of the alleged ringleaders of the uprising who was recaptured last January 27, Marine Captain Nicanor Faeldon, was surrounded by military police and intelligence agents but was able to mouth the words "Tuloy ang laban [The fight continues]" while lashing an "L" sign with his hands.

"I am repeating the call of Navy Lieutenant Antonio Trillanes IV for the people to choose -- remain in this corrupt regime run by corruption and deception, or stand up for change and the truth," Acedillo said.

"We are reiterating our appeal. Now is the right time," Acedillo said.

Acedillo said they were leaving it up to the people how to achieve change.

He said efforts to unseat Arroyo had become more "timely" ahead of the 20th anniversary of the 1986 People Power uprising that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

"We believe that support [from the public] is there. They are just waiting for the right time," he said, when asked to comment on the military's claim that they did not have the backing of the people.

Acedillo said they supported the call of four of their comrades, who escaped last January 17, for the public to wear arm bands and join street protests to press for Arroyo's resignation.

"They have our support... We trust that they will do the right thing at the right time," Acedillo said of Army Captain Nathaniel Rabonza and First

Lieutenants Lawrence San Juan, Patricio Bumidang Jr., and Sonny Sarmiento.

During a break from the trial, several women came up to the accused and gave them red roses.

Tuesday's hearing was Faeldon's first public appearance since his escape last December 14.

Three other alleged leaders of the July 27, 2003 uprising, Trillanes, Navy Lieutenant James Layug, and Marine Captain Gary Alejano, did not appear in court after filing a waiver on their appearance for Tuesday's proceedings.

Trillanes, Layug, Alejano, and Faeldon are detained at the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP) in Camp Aguinaldo.

The military deployed some 300 troops from the National Capital Region Command (NCRCom) to secure the court premises and thwart an alleged plan to spring the rebel soldiers from detention.

The mutineers and their security arrived in court at around 8:30 a.m. on board twelve military trucks and a bus. Each rebel officer was handcuffed to his guard. The handcuffs were removed only when they were seated in the courtroom.

Crowd dispersal units patrolled the perimeter of the court to guard against protest rallies.

Arroyo remains hounded by allegations that she cheated in the 2004 election. Attempts to oust her through impeachment and street protests last year failed.



Former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada met behind closed doors on Sunday, February 5 at the San Juan Medical Center after attending a thanksgiving Mass for the recovery of Estrada who underwent eye surgery on Wednesday. Senate President Franklin Drilon (middle) poses with them.

official during 2004 national polls. Former Philippine President Corazon Aquino answers media queries during an interview in Manila's Makati financial district February 7, 2006. "We Filipinos have the right to know," said Aquino. "So many questions left unanswered."

Aquino, wearing her trademark yellow dress, said she was open to an alliance with Arroyo's political foes but would not take part in any means outside the constitution to oust the president.

"I would still prefer that we do it through the constitutional process, that there will be resignation and eventually special elections," Aquino, 73, told a news conference on the anniversary of a snap presidential election 20 years ago. Aquino claimed to have won the snap polls, accusing dictator Ferdinand Marcos of stealing the election -- the trigger for the popular uprising in February 1986.

Aquino, the widow of Marcos's assassinated political rival, former Corazon Aquino, a former Philippine president and icon of a "people power" uprising that restored democracy in the Southeast Asian nation in 1986, on Tuesday renewed her call for Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to quit as leader.

Last July, Aquino turned her back on President Arroyo over allegations of vote-rigging and corruption after recordings of what the opposition said was Arroyo's conversations with an election official during 2004 national polls. Former Philippine President Corazon Aquino answers media queries during an interview in Manila's Makati financial district February 7, 2006. "We

mass with Arroyo's political foes, including Estrada and the widow of the action hero Fernando Poe Jr. Poe, who died in December 2004, nearly defeated Arroyo in the presidential elections earlier that year.

When asked whether she was considering an alliance with Estrada, Aquino said: "I'm not ruling out anything. Everything is so fluid these days."

Aquino said she continued to believe in "people power", calling on Filipinos to work together to help underprivileged people improve their lives.

For the 20th anniversary of the first popular uprising later this month, Aquino said she would hold her own celebration by launching projects to build houses for the poor and giving speeches to remind Filipinos about "people power".

"It's a little awkward walking or marching with people you are not in complete agreement with," Aquino said. "I will always be true to our democracy, true to our people."

Faeldon, mutiny leaders appear in court amid tight security

Manila, February 14, 2006 (UPDATE) THEY were handcuffed and under heavy guard, but the alleged leaders of a failed military mutiny in 2003 remained defiant, calling on the public to "stand up for change and the truth."

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From Page 1

Mud slides

rooftops, no nothing," Southern Leyte province Gov. Rosette Lerias said. The village of Guinsaugon, once a community of 2,500 people, now looks like a 100-acre patch of newly plowed land. Lerias said in radio and television interviews that many of the people in the affected area had been evacuated due to the



ongoing bad weather but had returned to their homes Friday after signs that the sun was coming out.

Rescue workers held little hope Saturday of finding survivors from a devastating landslide. Lt. Col. Raul Farnacio, the highest-ranking military officer at the scene of Friday's disaster, estimated the death toll at about 1,800 — nearly every man, woman and child who lived in Guinsaugon.

"Out of a population of 1,857, we have 57 survivors and 19 bodies," a grim Farnacio said as search efforts resumed Saturday in a drenching rain and high winds that made the task even more miserable. "We presume that more or less than 1,800 are feared dead."

"So many died. Our village is gone, everything was buried in mud. All the people are gone," survivor Eugene Pilo told GMA television Friday, hours after the landslide engulfed the village on Leyte island, 420 miles southeast of Manila.

Pilo, who fears he lost his wife and children, was at his brother's house when they felt the ground shake just before 10 a.m.

"Then the landslides struck," he recalled. "I ran out in the street, but I fell to the ground, along with my brother. There were big boulders — bigger than a house — and logs which rushed down." "It sounded like the mountain exploded, and the whole thing crumbled," said survivor Dario Libatan, who lost his wife and three children. "I could not see any house standing anymore."

Its 375 homes and elementary school were buried under mud up to 30 feet deep. Only a few small piles of debris hint at the devastation. Only a few jumbles of corrugated steel sheeting indicate Guinsaugon ever existed.

Saint Bernard village and another town also were affected, and about 3,000 evacuees huddled at a municipal hall.

Heavy rains preceded slide

Rescue workers were hampered by the thick, soft mud that remained unstable, along with flash floods spawned by two weeks of

downpours that dumped 27 inches of rain on the area. The constant showers were blamed on the La Nina weather phenomenon.

The governor asked for people to dig by hand, saying the mud was too soft for heavy equipment.

"I have a glimmer of hope, based on the rule of thumb — within 24 hours you can still find survivors," Lerias said. "After that, you move on to the recovery phase, but right now it's still rescue mode."

A second, minor landslide added to volunteers' jitters, and a helicopter pilot said the ground near the top of the mountain was still moving in late afternoon.

"You could see a patch of green, then mud where it was," Leo Dimaala said, estimating that half the mountain had collapsed.

Education officials said 250 pupils and teachers were believed to have been at the elementary school. Only one girl and a woman were rescued alive nearby.

Aerial TV footage showed a wide swath of mud alongside stretches of green rice paddies at the foothills of the scarred mountain.

Illegal logging a factor?

Survivors and others blamed illegal logging for contributing to the disaster.

Pat Vendetti, a London-based campaigner with the Greenpeace environmental action group, agreed that illegal logging may prove to have contributed to the mudslide.

"There were similar landslides at the end of 2004 and the end of 2003, both directly linked to illegal logging on land above villages, and both in the Philippines," said Vendetti.

A local official said he believed as many as 2,000 people may have been buried. Like much of the eastern Visayas island group, Leyte has experienced heavy rains for about 10 days. More than 20 people were killed in landslides earlier this week on the island.

Relief groups have called for drinking water, food, blankets and body bags to be brought to the scene. Philippine Navy and Coast Guard ships are rushing to the area and the United States says it is sending one of its Navy ships to assist in the relief operations. Dozens of U.S. troops are currently in the Philippines for a joint military exercise.

President Gloria Arroyo says she has ordered the entire naval force in the central Philippines region to the area.

Naval ships are being used as floating hospitals and command centres for the rescue operation.

They say recent heavy rainfall is more likely to blame.

The Philippines experiences about 20 typhoons each year.

Earlier this week, 16 people were killed when heavy rains and flash floods hit the south-eastern provinces.

In 2004, storms left about 1,800 people dead or missing in provinces northeast of the capital, Manila.

More than 5,000 people were killed in a combined flood and mudslide on Leyte in November 1991.

PHILIPPINE LANDSLIDE

Mudslides triggered by heavy rains buried hundreds of houses and a school in the Philippines on Friday.



Saint Bernard, Leyte Province
■ 1,800 missing, and 90% of one village is under mud, according to unconfirmed reports

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Stampede at Manila stadium kills at least 88 people, injures 280

Saturday, February 04, 2006

MANILA, Philippines (AP) - A stampede broke out early Saturday outside a stadium near Manila where thousands had lined up to watch a popular game show, killing at least 88 people and injuring 280 others, officials said.

About 30,000 people were waiting to get inside the stadium for the program "Wowowee" when the mayhem erupted, said Vicente Eusebio, the mayor of Pasig, the Manila suburb where the stampede occurred.

Philippine Red Cross chairman Sen. Richard Gordon said at least 88 people were confirmed dead and 280 others were hospitalized.

The mayor said the melee erupted as the crowd pushed and surged toward the gates, thinking they were open, pinning and trampling those in front.



Filipino protesters hold candles as they pray for stampede victims in Manila February 6, 2006.



Photo shows the dead and the injured at the Ultra stampede in Manila, Philippines, February 4, 2006.

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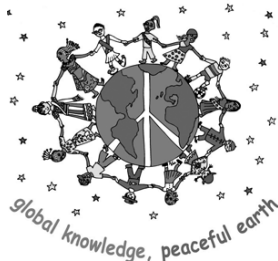
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Isaac T. Goodine

Global Perspectives



From Globalization to Internationalization

Last month, in this column, I presented a Creed of Peace, as enunciated by the late Ralph M. Lewis, ending with the words; "I am guilty of war when I think that the land of a man's birth must necessarily be the place of his livelihood." Now, as one of about 80 million trans-nationals working in the world today, I reiterate that I hold firmly to the belief and philosophy that the accident of one's place of birth need not determine where that person must live and work forever. The fact that there are so many millions of us working internationally, gives new meaning to cross-cultural communications. This is a result of three relatively recent explosions to which we are now adjusting: the explosion of human population; the explosion of knowledge; and the explosion of expectations. After the Second World War, there was steady expansion of economic integration which far outpaced both political and cultural integration until the last decade brought about cultural interdependence, because of television and the Internet, and we

are moving to one world in culture as well as economics. The earlier phase of integration of economic activities of trade, finance, and investment has generally been referred to as "Globalization", and the broader aspects such as educational exchanges and intercultural activities are now often referred to as "Internationalization". We are at a crossroads in the process and the interplay between globalization and internationalization must become more transparent, ethical, and better integrated to address three sets of long-term global issues: a) Maintaining peace and security, fighting terrorism, curtailing crime, and promoting human rights; (b) Fighting systemic corruption, curtailing rampant capitalism and correcting the unethical exploitation of human and natural resources; and c) Addressing the deep spiritual malaise whereby many people feel that they have no stake in a global society and believe that there is nothing they can do about it by ethical and/or legal means. The knowledge explosion has made

more people productive and this has raised expectations that include access to the ballot box as well as to the market place through jobs. When educated people are denied political and economic freedom their frustrations will contribute to the spiritual malaise we are experiencing today. Old paradigms no longer serve society and ethical leadership is needed to foster change. Activists, protestors, and terrorists, represent the tip of the iceberg. It was not the tip of the iceberg that sank the Titanic and a myopic focus on terrorists will not remove the underlying danger born of cynicism and mistrust harbored by disenfranchised and dispossessed people who have no hope. We need new approaches in leadership that include Diplomacy in economic, political, cultural and military affairs to restore trust in peacekeeping and military interventions based on military ethics and international law that will contribute to world peace—not just the absence of war.

There are about nine million transnational workers spread around the world from the Philippines alone, and this implies the concept of a team that is multi-disciplined and transcends national boundaries. Also, this requires a unique set of qualities that depend heavily on the internationalization of the learning process wherever the learning and skills development takes place. The real challenge is to identify rational and humane principles that we can work toward collectively. The human being is creative emotionally as well as intellectually. A feeling is a "thing" – just as a "thought" is a "thing." A practical outcome is realized when minds are attuned to understand or to see the same thing or to alter the thoughts until there is a common vision. This bringing together of thoughts, knowledge and emotional energy results in human synergy. This meeting of the minds creates

the emotional energy that empowers two or more minds to work creatively together. The synergistic approach shows that effective human action in dealing with any kind of crisis or challenge is dependent upon two key factors: (1) the Resources, both human and material, which can be brought to bear on the situation, and (2) the Process, how the resources are utilized in dealing with the situation. If either of the two factors is missing, the chance of success is nil. However, if people work together utilizing their resources rationally and humanely, they can produce results beyond the mere sum of their individual inputs. That is called synergy. It is also the premise on which participatory democratic administration is founded. The influence of a leader in a synergistic application is particularly critical in multi-disciplinary teams and working groups that transcend national boundaries. The knowledge base does not rest on just one person nor does the responsibility rest on only one pair of shoulders. Above all there must be a willingness to work for the good of all in our global society. To help us all to better understand the pitfalls of modern



society, here is an item that was published in a magazine in Singapore in the 1960s. "The Seven Deadly Sins of Society: Politics without principles; Pleasure without conscience; Knowledge without character; Wealth without work; Commerce without morality; Science without humanity; and Worship without sacrifice."



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Choice 2

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Salt and Pepper Squid
Shrimp in lobster sauce
Sweet and Sour Pork
Steamed Rice

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Filipino Montrealers poised to vote for 2007 RP Election

A resounding number of 104 Philippine passport holders are ready to exercise their right to vote during the

Gerard B. Angeles, Minister and Consul General of the Philippine Embassy to Canada, out of the total 104 voters registered last weekend, 89 were new registrants and 15 were transferring voting precinct primarily from Hong Kong. He and his Philippine Embassy team, together with the Honorary Consul Salvador Cabugao were very much encouraged by the turn-out and extended their gratitude to the network of community members, associations, Filipino establishments and the media that help sensitized Filipino citizens to the importance of not only exercising their democratic right to be heard but also of their potential ability to effect change in the Philippines. In an effort to build on this momentum, another

like myself may also be eligible to vote upon the reacquisition or retention of their Philippine citizenship under P.A. 9225, otherwise known as the "Citizenship Retention Act of 2003". Acquiring a Philippine Dual Citizenship is not as complicated as one would think. The main requirements are an

Two Local schools launch project with Filipino Parents

A first-ever project called



Parents from Ecole des Nations who attended the meeting on February 4, 2006

authenticated birth certificate which can be ordered via www.ecensus.com.ph, a Canadian naturalization document and documents such as an expired Philippine passport to validate previous Philippine citizenship.

Information brochures on the Overseas Absentee Voting Registration will remain available at Cubao Divisoria, FAMAS Philippine Centre and the Pearl Manila Restaurant. Supplementary information may be obtained from Montreal Honorary Consul General Salvador Cabugao at 344-2022 or from the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa at (613) 233-1121.

Makialam, makilahok, get involved in the your native country's nation-rebuilding efforts.

Partenariat école-famille-communauté, a partnership among the school, community and family, has been initiated by the l'École des Nations and l'École du Petit-Chapiteau elementary schools. Both schools are located at the heart of the Plamondon and Victoria area where the school population is a mixture of pupils from the Sri Lankan and Bangladeshi communities among others, however, Filipino pupils account for 50 per cent and more of the total population.

It is for this reason, among others, that the pilot project has been launched and is slated to last until 2006. The overall goal of the pilot project is to help Filipino pupils achieve their fullest academic potential. Together with a community liaison agent and resource persons from l'École des Nations, l'École



A partial photo of Montrealers who have responded to the Absentee Voting Law and registered at the office of the Honorary Consul, Mr. Salvador Cabugao

May 2007 Philippine election of the President, Vice-President, Senators and Party-List Representative. On 11 and 12 February 2006, the Philippine Honorary Consulate located on 6260 Victoria together with the staff from the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa, held an Overseas Absentee Voting Registration.

During an interview with Joseph

Overseas Absentee Voting Registration will be held in early spring, most probably in May, at the Office of the Philippine Honorary Consul in Montreal. Watch out for further details on this subject during the coming months.

If you are feeling left out of this electoral process, Filipino-Canadians



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du Petit-Chapiteau, La Table de Jeunesse and other community organizations based in the Côte-des-Neiges area, the project hopes to hear the concerns of parents with regard to their children's experience in learning French and identify possible measures that would help improve the situation. As it is with mutually-benefiting initiatives, the project will also the call upon parents to be more actively involved in their children's formative years by being involved in the schools' outreach programmes and information sessions.

To jump start this initiative parents such as Evelyn de Vera (mother of Genesis Cornelio), Nancy Hufancia (mother of Cyrus de la Cruz), Manuel Tungpalan (father of Jessica and Joyce Tungpalan), Josephine Abalos (mother of Mark Penullar) and Rosella Oriña (mother of Darryl and Danika Oriña) from l'École des Nations took time out of their hectic schedule to attend the first meeting on Saturday, 4 February of the parents of Filipino pupils at l'École des Nations.

Together with these key parents and Maria-Cécilia Gomez, our resource person from l'École des Nations, we were able to identify a supplementary school activity such as a reading and comprehension activity that can further help children understand the French language. Parents however emphasized that homework help after school still remains a necessary resource for those student who need it. On the fun side, a family outing is also planned for the near future, perhaps an outing to a typically Quebec get-away: La cabane à sucre or Sugaring Off.

For further information on this project or to participate in this initiative, please call Riza Esmeralda, community liaison agent, or drop by the Maria-Cécilia Gomez's room on Tuesdays from 4 pm to 6 pm or by calling 736-1537, 8162 at l'École des Nations and on Wednesdays at l'École du Petit-Chapiteau from 4 pm to 6 pm or by calling 736-8192 or 489-4467 (home). The library is closed Monday.

Activities for the spring break

If you are looking for activities for your children during the break, look no further than the CDN-NDG area. The CDN-NDG Borough has organized a number of activities for the week of 6 to 10 March. Here are the details.

Côte-des-Neiges Sports Centre, 4880 Van Horne, Telephone: 342-9988. A sports camp will be held for children ages 7 to 12, from Monday to Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., except on Wednesday, when hours are 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$50 for the 1st child, \$45 for the 2nd and \$40 for the 3rd or more from the same family. The cost of an outing on Wednesday is included. To register, bring the child's health insurance card, a passport-size photo, the parent's social insurance number and payment (cash, cheque or bank or postal money order).

Notre-Dame-de-Grâce Community Centre, 3757 Prud'homme, Telephone: 484-6123. Children can take part in all sorts of activities (outings, crafts, sports, games and surprises), from Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The cost for the week is \$95, along with \$25 for outings and the membership card. Extended care will also be available, at an additional \$5 per day, from 8 to 9 a.m. and 5 to 6 p.m. Walkley Community Centre, 6650 Côte Saint-Luc, Telephone: 369-9449. All

kinds of activities (films, cooking, bowling, outings and more) will be held from Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The cost for the week, including activity fees, is \$75. Extended care is also available, but the cost has not yet been determined.

Bill Durnan, 4988 Vézina, Telephone: 872-6073. Plenty of activities are planned for spring break week. Introductory figure skating lessons will be offered Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., for ages 7 to 17, as well as supervised pick-up hockey for players 17 and under, Monday to Friday, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. Family free skate every day, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Doug Harvey, 4985 West Hill, Telephone: 872-6028. Free skate, Monday to Friday between 3 and 5 p.m. Côte-des-Neiges Pool, 4880 Van Horne, Telephone: 342-9988. Free swim times from Monday to Friday. No charge for children with membership cards. They can get a free membership card by coming to the pool with a parent and bringing a passport-size ID photo.

Mackay Rehabilitation Centre, 3500 Décarie, Telephone: 482-0500. The Vio-Camp day camp, specializing in adapted physical activities, is open to young people ages 5 to 18, with or without physical limitations. Activities are held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday. The cost for the week is \$100 and includes extended care.

Intercultural Library, 6767 Côte-des-Neiges, Telephone: 868-4716. A one-hour workshop for ages 8-13 is held every afternoon at 2 p.m. Tuesday, March 7 - Introduction to the Internet, Wednesday, March 8 - Science time! Science experiments to see how chemistry is part of everyday life, Wednesday, March 8 - 3 p.m. - Jewellery making workshop, Thursday, March 9 - Creating a group ABC Friday, March 10 - Treasure hunt. To reserve, call 868-4721 or come in person. The library is closed Monday.

Sampaguita - The Philippine National Flower

Sampaguita, otherwise known as Jasmine sambac ("Maid of Orleans" variety) is our national flower. It is a symbol of purity, simplicity, humility and strength. Its blossom is celebrated in Philippine legends, stories and songs. In the Philippines, the sampaguita also



has a number of names: sambac, sampagung, campopot, lumabi, kulatai, pongso, malur and manul.

In 1934, the American Governor-General Frank Murphy, moved by sentiment, named it a national symbol. "Sentiment has dictated the selection of national flowers either symbolical of certain national or sentiments, or reminiscent of some important historical or traditional events," Murphy explained in Proclamation Number 652. "France has her fleur-de-lis and Japan her cherry blossom," he said. "In the same way the Philippines should have

her national flower."

Sampaguita, a Spanish term, comes from the Pilipino words "sumpa kita," which means "I promise you." It is a pledge of mutual love. In early days, a young couple exchanged sampaguita necklaces much like a bride and groom exchange wedding rings nowadays. To this day, garlands of sampaguita are offered to dignitaries and special guests. Jasmine arrived in the Philippines in pre-recorded times, most likely as an item of barter or gift on board trade boats plying the South China Sea. In the Philippines a type of Jasmine called sampaga was described as early as 1698 when Ignacio Mercado, an Augustinian monk, first wrote about its medicinal use in the Declaracion de las virtudes de los arboles y plantas que estan en este libro. In translation, Mercado said that the leaves of the sampaga (which has bigger flowers than sampaguita) made a wonderful syrup to comfort the heart. The vapour was a good cure for asthma.

To learn more about our national flower, visit: www.turoturo.com or www.toptropicals.com or visit the Intercultural Library at 6767 Côte-des-Neiges and browse through their collection of Philippine books.

Gloria slams ABS-CBN for Ultra stampede

Wednesday, February 15, 2006
PRESIDENT Arroyo on Tuesday blamed ABS-CBN for the deadly stampede in Ultra in Pasig City and criticized the network for faulting the people who wanted to take part in its prize-laden TV show.

The President delivered her tirade from the studio of dzRH, a radio station

of a rival of ABS-CBN.

She said she was saddened by the reality that instead of taking the responsibility for the stampede that killed more than 70 people and injured about 300, ABS-CBN is pinning the blame on the tragedy's victims.

The President was reacting to news reports and interviews on ABS-CBN that the network had nothing to do with the stampede and that it was the fans of the noontime program Wowowee who were to blame.

She faulted the ABS-CBN management for stoking the victims' hope for instant fortune. The program offered hundreds of thousands of pesos in cash prizes.

The President reiterated her administration's commitment that justice would be served.

"We have to show to everyone that no one is above the law and justice is equal to all and does not recognize rich from poor," she said.

In reply to the President's criticism, ABS-CBN said in a statement: "We are saddened that President Arroyo has prejudged the results of the government investigation into the Ultra stampede."

"Gabby Lopez has already claimed moral responsibility, and ABS-CBN moved immediately to address the needs of the victims and their families. We continue to do so, focusing now on medium- and long-term assistance," the network said.

Rumors that the Lopez-owned network appears to be taking a critical line against the administration surfaced after the network scrapped Vice President Noli de Castro's long-running program Magandang Gabi Bayan. At the height of the calls last year for the President to resign, de Castro had refused to withdraw his support for

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TOURISM

Batanes: The Natures Playground

The province is home to the famous Ivatans who are nationally acclaimed as the "True Insulares". The Ivatans are of Malay stock, tracing their roots to early immigrants from Formosa, Taiwan as well as Spaniards who came to the island in the 16th century. Being an insular people, the Ivatans have kept the purity of their gene pool through time.

The island-province of Batanes was created by a series of volcanic activities and other geologic forces millions of years ago.

Batanes lies at the northernmost tip of the Philippines, where the Pacific Ocean merges with the South China Sea. It is composed of three major islands, namely: Batan which contains the capital town of Basco, Sabtang, and Itbayat. Close by are seven islets



Sabtang farmer

including Amianan, which is the closest to Formosa. Thus, Batanes has been identified as the country's potential gateway to East China.

Geography

"The island-province is strewn on a 4,500 square kilometer expanse of territorial waters, the Luzon Strait and Balintang Channel, where the Pacific Ocean merges with the South China Sea, a sealane between the Philippines and the southern parts of Japan, China, Hongkong, and Taiwan. It is bounded on the north by the Bashi Channel, on the east by the Pacific Ocean, on the west by the South China Sea, and on the south by the Balintang Channel. It is characterized by gently rolling hills, cliffs, and black and white sand beaches.

Batanes is about 860 kilometers (approx. 525 miles) from Manila. Basco, the capital town, is about 280 kilometers north of Aparri and about 190 kilometers south of Taiwan.

Political Subdivision

Batanes has six municipalities, 29 barangays, and one congressional district. The six municipalities are Ivana, Uyugan, Mahatao, Basco (the capital), and the island municipalities of Sabtang and Itbayat.

Climate

The Batanes weather is rather pleasant. Compared to the rest of the country, Batanes is blessed with a cooler, balmy climate. It enjoys practically four seasons, the best one being summer which is from March to June. Average monthly rainfall is 450 mm.

Population

The 2002 census of population for Batanes registered a population total of 16,467 distributed over a land area of 230 square kilometers.

Language / Dialect

The mother tongue of Batanes is Ivatan, spoken by 93.94 percent of all households. The Ilocano dialect is also spoken while Filipino and English are generally spoken and understood.

Major Industries

The province has a total agricultural land area of 5,438 hectares and has a wide area open for agricultural expansion.



An Ivatan woman



Sabtang vernacular house



Houses lined up along narrow pathways



San Carlos Church in Batanes



Sunset in Basco



Arkong Bato



Basco rocky beach

MEDICAL TOURISM

RP ready for medical tourism: DoT chief

HEALTHCARE with leisure. This is how the Department of Tourism (DoT) describes its new program, aimed at positioning the country as a competitive health vacation destination in Asia, targeting both the wellness/spa and medical tourist markets.

Newly appointed Tourism Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan has announced that under the Philippine Health Tourism Program (PHTP), DOT and its partner agencies such as the Department of Health- Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care (DoH-PITAHC) and the Department of Energy (DoE) will jointly offer cost-effective medical treatments combined with special itineraries that will showcase some of the best tourist attractions the country has to offer, according to a press statement.

Pagdanganan explained that the new program will be offered to tourists whose main purpose for visiting the Philippines is to undergo "minimally invasive medical procedures and treatments." Specially-designed tours integrated to the medical programs by accredited hospitals and healthcare establishments will then be offered to suit the needs of these identified market segment. The tourism chief said that the Philippines is one of the few countries in Southeast Asia and in Asia to offer such specialized tour offerings, with only Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and India as competitors.

Pagdanganan revealed that the DoT, DoH-PITAHC and DoE have already come up with rules and regulations for the accreditation of health establishments, wellness centers and hospitals in the country, using DoT standards for hotels as the benchmark. Currently, only St. Luke's Medical Center has met these standards.

"But the horizon for health tourism in the country looks very good as the applications for accreditation of other hospitals such as the Asian Hospital in Alabang, Capitol Medical Center in Quezon City and Medical City in Mandaluyong City are already underway," the tourism chief said in the press statement.

Likewise, through the efforts of the DoT, the government's firm support in developing the potentials of medical tourism is manifested in the 2004 Investment Priorities Plan, qualifying its development for certain investment incentives such as reduced tariffs on the importation of hospital equipment.

The tourism chief said that currently, health holidays are significantly growing outside Europe and in other parts of the world. "If the growth of health resorts in Asia, including the Philippines, is anything to go by, there would seem to be a huge potential to develop health tourism as a great come-on since health and wellness using traditional healing methods, such as massage, healing and herbs is very much part of the Asian culture," the tourism chief stressed.

The country's bid was also reinforced during the state visit of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Bahrain last December when she signed a memorandum of understanding for tourism cooperation wherein the Bahraini government expressed interest in sending medical tourists to the Philippines.

This will also be facilitated with the air services agreement forged between

the Philippines and Bahrain. Both documents were signed during the Bahrain visit last December where Tourism Undersecretary for Planning and Product Development Evelyn Pantig was a member of the Philippine delegation.

Pagdanganan said that the tour programs are already being finalized for integration with the medical packages while local and international sales missions and promotions are already being lined up to draw attention to the program. A medical tourism forum and modules for the implementation of a "Mabuhay Host Training Program" for healthcare frontliners of accredited hospitals are already underway to strengthen the country's readiness as a health vacation destination

Nature Adventure for Summer in the Philippines

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Entry of migratory birds feared in Mindanao

GENERAL SANTOS CITY: The Department of Agriculture has warned residents in Central Mindanao on the entry of Indonesian migratory birds suspected as carriers of bird-flu disease.

"We urge the public to immediately report any presence of chicken, ducks and other migratory birds suspected to have been infected with the disease," Regional Executive Director Abusama M. Alid said.



He said that employees from the department's regional avian-flu influenza task force have been dispatched to monitor the entry of migratory birds in Laguasan Marsh in Maguindanao and North Cotabato.

The Philippine Coast Guard has also stepped up its monitoring activity around the coastal towns of Sarangani to prevent the entry of birds from Indonesia. In May last year, Coast Guard men seized 350 assorted birds believed smuggled from Indonesia at See

See Page 15

Birds



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La Commission spéciale sur la Loi électorale de l'Assemblée nationale du Québec consulte les citoyens sur la réforme de notre système électoral.

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The Filipino Solidarity Cooperative (Divisoria Cubao) Board of Directors and Committees held a meeting last January 22, 2006 at Gilmore College. (See brief article on page 2)



Claro Bermudez, Head Scout Leader & Registrar, Laging Handa Scout Group congratulates new member Peter Kevin Araneta after his investiture while assistant Scout leader Nida V. Buataran looks on. (February 11, 2006)



Isaac T. Goodine, BSc., B.Ed. C.Eng.
International Author of "Leaders Leading Leaders,"
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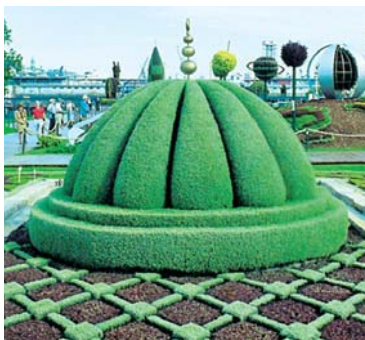
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Ingredients:

1/4 cup vegetable oil
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1 large onion, sliced
1 pound pork, sliced small and thin
2 cups sweet potatoes, cubed 1/2 inch
2 cups red potatoes, cubed 1/2 inch
2 cups green beans, cubed 1/2 inch
2 cups carrots, cubed 1/2 inch
3 cups cabbage, shredded
1/2 to 1 cup chicken broth
salt and pepper to taste
Philippine Lumpia wrappers (thin egg roll wrappers)

Cooking Method:

Using a 6 to 8 quart saucepan, saute

garlic in oil. Add onions and sliced pork. Cover and cook until meat is tender. Season with salt and pepper. Add sweet and red potatoes, cooking until slightly tender. Add green beans, carrots and cabbage. Mix well. If needed, add broth. Continue cooking with occasional stirring until vegetables are tender. Remove from heat. Drain in a colander and cool.

Separate wrappers from each other. Keep covered with a damp cloth. Place 2 to 3 heaping tablespoons of cooked mixture on a wrapper. Fold once horizontally. Next, fold in both ends and roll. Wet edges with water to seal. Deep-fat fry. Serve hot or keep warm by placing on a hot tray, uncovered. Makes 30 to 36 egg rolls.

Serve with a dipping sauce of vinegar, salt, pepper, and crushed garlic. May be frozen before frying. Lay egg rolls in a single layer on a cookie sheet, allowing space between each. Freeze. When frozen, pack together in a plastic bag.



Cooking spring rolls

Laing Gabi Pinangat (Taro Leaf Wraps)

Ingredients (Serves 4-6)

1 pound or 8-10 medium-sized leaves of gabi, include stems if possible
2 pounds shredded gabi leaves, include chopped stems (dried packages are available from Oriental stores)
2 (13.5 ounce) cans coconut milk
3/4 cup your choice of diced pork, shelled, chopped fresh shrimp or salmon
1/4 cup tinapa or smoked fish, optional
2 tablespoons bagoong (salted fish, preserved krills or small shrimps) or 1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon ginger root, fresh and finely chopped (or powdered ginger)
1 tablespoon minced garlic clove (fresh is preferred over powder)
1 small hot pepper (red or green), chopped into pieces, or crushed or powdered or 1 teaspoon powdered black,



red or cayenne pepper.

Cooking Method:

Slightly thicken 1 can coconut milk in an open pan for 2 minutes. Add your choice of diced pork, shrimp or salmon pieces; gabi stems and leaves; bagoong; all of the spices; and tinapa into the mixture. Cook over slow heat for about 8 minutes, stirring constantly until thickened. Set



aside.

Spread gabi leaves on a platter. Put about 2 tablespoons of the mixture into each leaf. Pour 1 teaspoon of the coconut curd (from other can, uncooked) on top of mixture before wrapping. Fold the leaf on 4 sides and tie with its own stem if available and reinforce with a small string or thick thread around 4 sides ending with a bow on top for easier handling or individual serving. (This also prevents accidental opening of the wrap while cooking) Cook the wraps in the remaining coconut milk in a covered saucepan for about 8-10 minutes over low heat, until most of the liquid evaporates, leaving just enough moisture on the wraps. Serve hot with rice.

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From Page 1 Pacquiao

motorcade left the Malacanang presidential palace, where he was received by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Confetti rained down as it inched its way through Manila's old financial center, while admirers waving small Philippine flags by the roadside chanted his name. A banner on another truck read, "The victory of Pacquiao is the victory of the Filipino."

Pacquiao, who flew back to Manila from Los Angeles with his wife Friday, was met at the airport by his two sons and mother. He was mobbed at the airport by fans who sought his autograph and posed for pictures with him.

"Now, my happiness is complete," he said, referring to the family reunion after months of separation while he trained in the United States.

At the presidential palace, Arroyo - beaming with pride - called in the palace kitchen staff and posed for a photograph with the Filipino boxing sensation, who has been called the "people's champ" by the local media.

The presidential cooks offered special pastries shaped like boxing gloves stuffed with chicken and wild mushrooms for the champion.

His victory over the more fancied Morales came as a much needed morale booster for his nation following months of political conflict that saw mounting calls for Arroyo to resign over allegations that she cheated to win the 2004 election.

Feuding political factions briefly put aside their differences as Filipinos

rejoiced over Pacquiao's triumph.

Speaking on the Malacanang palace grounds Friday, Pacquiao called on his countrymen to unite "with or without a (boxing) fight."

Pacquiao, 27, is extremely popular in the Philippines. Before his fight, he released a music CD that included the song, "This fight is for you," which is being played by radio stations nationwide.

He has also starred in two Filipino action movies and has endorsed a number of local products, from socks to a herbal food supplement.

At the victory celebration organized by officials at Manila's seaside boulevard, Pacquiao and Arroyo sang his hit song on a stage with Filipino gold medalists from the recent Southeast Asian Games held in the Philippines.

Pacquiao told reporters earlier he was ready to take on Morales again or the Mexican's countryman, Marco Antonio Barrera, who he stopped in the 11th round in their encounter in November 2003.

"I am the thorn in the throat of the Mexican boxers," Pacquiao said. "Right now I can fight anyone ... in the same weight level."

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From Page 11 Birds

Sumbang Point, Gian.

The catch, which included colorful Indonesian parrots, was said to be worth P1 million. The birds were burned on suspicion they were infected with the bird-flu virus.

Contaminated birds spread flu virus through their saliva, nasal secretions and feces. Vulnerable birds are easily infected when they directly got in touch with the contaminated fluids.

Lt. Comdr. Oscar C. Endona, the local Coast Guard commander, said

smugglers have been using Sarangani (formerly Balut Island) as the dropping point for birds from Indonesia.

He said the smugglers, using powerful motorboats, would segregate the birds upon arrival in Sarangani Island before they are sent to Gen. Santos City and other neighboring cities and provinces in Central Mindanao.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban, during his visit to Sarangani last week, said officials are taking concerted efforts to keep the country free from the virus.

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Community News

Philippine Centre Foundation ready to publish directory

The Philippine Centre Foundation of Greater Montreal is pleased to acknowledge the following contributors to the Philippine Center Building Project. Total contribution received for period July to December 2004 is \$7,310.00.

Mary Damianakis, Ugo & Mrs. Deangelis, Marie-Luise Ernstsohn, Peter Ernstsohn, Deogracias & Mrs. Esguerra, Filipino-Canadian Association of the West Island, John & Liz Martinez, Romeo Rodriguez and Manuela De Guzman, Francis Scarpaleggia, Normand & Catherine Talbot, Paterno Zacarias and anonymous contributor.

Subscribe to the Philippine Directory - a new concept that provides durable visibility to: Members of the Philippine community of Greater Montreal; businesses offering services and products; services provided by the Provincial, Federal and Municipal governments; Social, education and health services, etc.

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Nominations are now open for the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas for 2006.

Philippine Ambassador to Canada Jose S. Brillantes said the Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas are bestowed on distinguished Filipino individuals and organizations overseas by the President of the Philippines in a ceremony during the observance of the "Month of Overseas Filipinos" at the Malacanang Palace in Manila. A biennial event, the ceremonies will take place in December of this year, 2006.

This distinguished honor is awarded to Filipino individuals and organizations abroad who have

overseas for their work and achievements. "It is also a way of showing the rest of the world that the Philippines is proud of the virtues and qualities of its own citizenry," Ambassador Brillantes added.

Since its establishment in December 1991, the Presidential Award has been bestowed upon 235 Filipinos and private organizations in thirty-six (36) countries. The awards are open to Filipino individuals, associations (both formal and informal), communities overseas, as well as foreign private individuals and organizations abroad.

There are four categories of awards to be conferred on Filipinos and private organizations overseas, namely, the Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (LINKAPIL) Award, the Banaag Award, the Kaanib ng Bayan Award and the Pamana ng Pilipino Award.

Nominations may be submitted to the Philippine Embassy, 130 Albert St., Suite 606, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5G4, and must be received by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas on or before May 15, 2006. For more information or a nomination form, please contact the Philippine Embassy at tel. no. (613) 233-1121; fax no. (613) 233-4165; e-mail: embassyofphilippines@rogers.com.

Ambassador Brillantes assumes chairmanship of UN committee

Ambassador Jose S. Brillantes has assumed as Chairman of the ASEAN-Ottawa Committee (AOC), following turnover ceremonies on 18 January during the 195th AOC Meeting. The AOC is composed of the Head of Missions of ASEAN Embassies and High Commissions accredited to Ottawa. By reason of Ambassador Brillantes' chairmanship, Minister and Consul General Joseph Gerard B. Angeles also automatically assumed the chairmanship of the AOC Working Group, composed of deputies and officers of the ASEAN missions. Minister Angeles is assisted in the Working Group by Third Secretary and Vice Consul Rhenita B. Rodriguez.

Outgoing AOC Chairman Magdalene Chee Siong Teo, High Commissioner for Brunei Darussalam, turned over the AOC gavel and sound block to Ambassador Brillantes, in the presence of other AOC Heads of Mission and members of the AOC Working Group.

The first major AOC activity under the Philippine chairmanship will be the Working Visit of ASEAN Heads of Mission to the Canadian West Coast, particularly in the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta, slated in March 2006. The visit will include calls on the Premiers and Lieutenant-Governors of British Columbia and Alberta, the provincial ministers of investment and trade, and the local chambers of commerce to promote ASEAN as a trade partner and investment destination.

Another major project during the Philippine chairmanship is the forging of the 2005-2006 Canada-ASEAN Joint Cooperation Work Plan.

The Philippine chairmanship will also focus on promoting ASEAN awareness. In line with this objective, AOC is planning to host an ASEAN Food

Fair sometime during spring or summer, an ASEAN Forum sometime in summer or fall, an ASEAN Day Reception sometime towards the end of September, accompanied by a newspaper supplement, and ASEAN sports throughout the year to promote camaraderie among mission members and their families.

I will distribute LITA's information to all Filipinos who have responded to our

Call for financial help for Filipina

SOLICITATION FOR FINANCIAL HELP. We are expecting \$2,000 to \$10,000 donation from the Filipino Canadian Community. At this stage of LAILA, she needs FINANCIAL HELP more than anything else. Respondent to our call for help are directed to issue cheque issued to FEDERATION FILIPINO CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF QUEBEC Inc.

4369 Circle Road, Pierrefonds, Quebec, H9H 2G8 (TEL NO. 514 696 7008)

Please note down on your cheque "FOR LAILA ILUMBRE FUND"

A receipt will be mailed back to the DONOR

Whatever collection we make up to end of FEBRUARY 2006, we will cash and give it to LAILA. All Donors will be furnished with a simple ACCOUNTING and copy of ACCEPTANCE, signed by LAILA. The PRESS will be invited during this TURNOVER.

Laila's situation by Lita Sideco sideco@sympatico.ca>

I know about Laila's situation. I had a long visit with her on Sunday afternoon. Her progress is remarkable and she has a very determined positive desire to continue helping her health team in her progressive rehabilitation. She seems to be well-liked and admired for her active participation in her care. She informed me that her TV is being paid for by the nurses on the ward. Her doctor promised to continue being her MD even when she is transferred out to a Foster Home, which her social worker is in the process of arranging. She does not want to go back to the Philippines in her present condition. She hopes to recover and go back to work. She claims that her employer are very considerate and good people and are law-abiding, so had to terminate her contract at 21 months due to her illness. They continue to communicate and in fact her apt. was paid for by them till Dec. 05. before terminating her lease.. She has a good friend, and a kind janitor at the building who stored her belongings.

I was impressed by the personality of this woman in her 30s, who has an BEducation (has not worked as a teacher at home), who told me of the many Filipinos who came to visit but many have not been around lately and no one is in a position to take her in . She

mentioned that one or two were present during last Friday's meeting with the social worker and the Consul Olalia from Toronto. As far as her hospital bills go, it will probably keep on mounting. She will need more active and dynamic physiotherapy; she should really go to a Reahab. Center for that, not a Foster home. I told her to call me and for Dr. Chang (her internist and staunch ally) to write a summary and referral to Eddie when the timing is right and Ed will assess her rehab. needs. She will be taught a home programme and can be seen periodically at our clinic (Clinique de Physiatrie Cote des Neiges)

Thank you for sending this note. I was told about Laila by the Phil. Embassy via a Fax of the Ambassador's letter to Immigration Canada requesting an extension of her visa due to her unfortunate illness. The Embassy also sent a copy of a letter sent to another member of parliament seeking his intervention in the matter. I sent a copy of both to the office if the Mt. Royal MP, Mr. Irwin Cotler and spoke to his administrative assistant Diane di Sablon on Jan. 27th. Laila had a contract till Feb. 1st or 2nd and she is in fact not covered by Medicare and incurring a daily room rate of \$2,000.00. She was afflicted by a neurological condition which caused her to be paralyzed from head to toe during the acute stage. She is receiving adequate care at the JGH but will require intensive rehabilitation which is costly. The Westmount MP, Mme. Lucienne Robilliard has been furnished copies of the same letters, Laila's recent employer being from Westmount.

In the meantime, Annie Miaral has been briefing the office of the MP Raymonde Folco who was our support and guiding light during the 80s when the Domestic Care programme was changed and became the much improved version, the Live-In Care-giver Programme. She will be of great help in this matter. Annie is keeping her posted .

It seems that Filipinos are really helpful and supportive based on Felix' letter. Each of us do what we can. Best case scenario: she is accorded an extension of her 21 mos. to 24 mos, at which and her employer be allowed to extend her contract giving her time to apply as an immigrant. She has a good prognosis with adequate REHAB. and determination.

THE BOTTOM LINE IS "A FILIPINA NEEDS YOUR FINANCIAL HELP MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE" LET US HELP HER.

Felix Salazar

JGH Mini-Med School unlocks health mysteries

JGH and Pfizer Canada host public education series

Montreal, February 6, 2006 - What are the latest emerging infections that affect our society today? Where do they come from? What can we do to protect ourselves?

Why is screening the Number One way to prevent colorectal cancer? What is a colonoscopy?

Is prostate cancer an inevitable part of aging, or can men do something to prevent it?

Impress your friends and family with your knowledge about these hot medical topics and more, by taking part in the innovative, educational and entertaining JGH Mini-Med School! The popular public education series returns to the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) this spring, and the JGH and Pfizer Canada are inviting Montrealers to don their lab coats to hear straight talk in non-technical language from some of the JGH's most dynamic physicians and researchers.

Registration is still underway for the spring series, which will take place at the JGH every Tuesday evening from April 4 to 25 (French sessions) and May 2 to June 6 (English sessions). Space is limited, and seats are filling up fast, so register today at www.jgh.ca or by calling 514-340-8222, local 3337.

The fee is \$80 for adults and \$50 for students (under 25 with student ID) and seniors (60 and over) for all six English sessions. For the four-week French series, the cost is \$55 for adults and \$35 for students (under age 25 with student ID) and seniors (age 60 and over). Register online to take advantage of a \$5 discount!

The 2006 series promises to be as enlightening and entertaining as ever, as participants will hear little-known facts on all-new topics from the JGH's medical professionals.

Speakers for the English series include:

Dr. Andre Dascal (Infectious Diseases and Microbiology): "Emerging Infections: Natural Mutations and Test-tube Creations"

Dr. Walter Gotlieb (Gynecologic Oncology): "Preventing the Cancer that Whispers"

Dr. Nancy Morin (Colorectal Surgery): "Working Where the Sun Don't Shine: Colorectal Screening and Prevention Tips"

Dr. Martin Black (Surgery): "Cutting Remarks from a Head and Neck Surgeon"

Dr. Jacques Corcos (Urology): "Keep the Plumbing Humming: A Lecture on Urology"

Dr. Samer Abi Nader (Dentistry): "To Implant or not to Implant-That is the Question"

The French series will feature:

Dr. Andre Dascal (Infectious Diseases and Microbiology): "Infections émergentes : mutations naturelles et créations en laboratoire"

Dr. Nancy Morin (Colorectal Surgery): "Travailler dans l'ombre : le dépistage du cancer colorectal et comment le prévenir"

Dr. Jacques Corcos (Urology): "De la tuyauterie qui fonctionne bien : une conférence en urologie"

Dr. Jean-François Morin (Cardiac Surgery): "Évolution de la chirurgie cardiaque de maxi à mini"

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own home! It also makes a great gift!

Each Mini-Med series is available for \$45 (personal) or \$90 (institutional). A special rate of \$25 is available for 2006 JGH Mini-Med School registrants. For more information, visit www.jgh.ca and click on JGH Mini-Med School. About the JGH

Since 1934, the Sir Mortimer B. Davis - Jewish General Hospital, a McGill University teaching hospital, has provided "Care for All," serving patients from diverse religious, linguistic and cultural backgrounds in Montreal, throughout Quebec and beyond. As one of the province's largest acute-care hospitals, the JGH has achieved a reputation for excellence in key medical specialties by continually expanding and upgrading its facilities for clinical treatment and teaching, as well as research at the Lady Davis Institute for Medical Research. For more, please visit www.jgh.ca.

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Director

Public Affairs & Communications

Jewish General Hospital

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**Calling all FNAQ
MEMBERS to vote on
March 31, 2006 at FAMAS.**

Beware of Text Scam Philippine Embassy Warns Filipinos in Canada

The Philippine Embassy is warning to be wary of text messages that promise large cash winnings from purported raffle draws in the Philippines, a scheme that has victimized some Filipinos in Canada.

Ambassador Jose S. Brillantes advised Filipihijos in Canada to be careful in providing personal information to senders of text messages promising large amounts of money to avoid being victimized by these fraudsters.

The text messages usually contain details such as "Congratulations! The last four digits of your Subscriber Identify Module (SIM) card has won P500,000 from new PAGCOR/CB Philippine Foundation." It then asks the recipient to call a "Director Jeg V. Chua: for instruction on how to claim the prize. Upon calling this "Director Chua", the recipient of the text message would be asked to send personal information before the supposed prize could be claimed.

Ambassador Brillantes is urging the public to contact the Embassy in case they receive such text messages so that these fraudulent schemes could be immediately reported to authorities in Manila.

The Filipino Nurses Association of Quebec, Inc.

is holding an election on
Friday, March 31, 2006, 0830-1830
hrs., Philippine Community Center,
4708 Van Horne Ave., Montreal, QC



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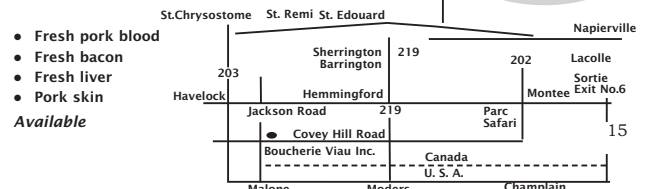
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Lea Faces a Whole New World

Five months pregnant, Lea Salonga can't wait to embrace a whole new world -- motherhood. When the



stork visits in May, she says "everything takes a back seat." Motherhood, she believes, is the greatest role that a woman can face. "I'm prepared to take a nice, long break to spend time with my baby," Lea says. "It could be six months, one year, two years. . . If I never have to sing again, or do another concert again, it will be all worth it for me." Lea plans to deliver her baby in the Philippines "because all the tita and other relatives are there. But we'll travel back and forth because the other set of grandparents are in the United States."

And So Does the Soul Diva

Unlike some of our celebrities who could not face up to their romantic

entanglements, Jaya boldly announced on national television that she's two months pregnant. "That way, I preempted any ugly rumor about my pregnancy," says the Soul Diva. "My boyfriend and I really planned to get married and have the baby afterwards," explains Jaya. "Well, it happened, so..." The guy is Gary Gotidoc, a divorcee like Jaya, with a 10-year-old son who, according to Jaya's mom, comedienne Elizabeth Ramsey "looks like Jaya." Jaya and her ex-husband, Andrew Buffington, whom she married in the US in 1998, didn't have a child. She met Gary through a mutual friend around



two years ago when she did a concert with Freestyle in Los Angeles, where Gary is based. "Gary and I were already discussing marriage when I got pregnant. No, it didn't happen by accident," Jaya assures. "We will push through with our plan to get married not long after I deliver."

Echo of the Heart

So it wasn't a publicity gimmick after all? We're referring to gossip that Jericho Rosales and his Panday leading lady, Heart Evangelista, were making beautiful music together. Heart has openly admitted to the media that she and Echo are "exclusively dating," meaning each of them is not seeing anyone else. Of late, there have been rumors that Heart is pregnant. The

chinita star vehemently denies the report. Still, some showbiz insiders insist that there's nothing to the rumored romance. Heart, they say, is still attached to her non-showbiz boyfriend. Whatever it is, the Heart-Echo affair came a bit too late for the recently concluded Panday telenovela,



where the couple starred. It would surely have fired up the viewers' interest in the ABS-CBN show, which failed to upstage Sugo of the rival network GMA-7 in the ratings game.

Echo of the Heart

More Walk of Famers Named

The country's version of Hollywood's Walk of Fame recently had its second batch of celebrities in its roll of honor. Unveiled last December in Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City, the project of veteran TV host German

Moreno introduced the second batch of Walk of Famers in a red-carpet affair on Jan. 28. The honorees included Delia Razon, Lolita Rodriguez, Charito Solis, Oscar Moreno, Boots Anson-Roa, Pilita Corrales, Efrén Reyes Sr., Tony Santos Sr., Rosa Rosal, Barbara Perez, Anita Linda, Jose Mari (Gonzalez), Fred Montilla, Jose Padilla Jr., Eddie Rodriguez, Armando Goyena, Lilia Dizon, Mario Montenegro, Christopher de Leon and Hilda Koronel. Kuya Germs promises there will be more batches coming up.

His Excellency, Willie

Days before the Ultra Stampede tragedy, TV host Willie Revillame has been designated Celebrity Envoy for Tourism, in connection with the "Grand Pinoy Homecoming Program" of the Department of Tourism. This is the first time that a Filipino celebrity was appointed Celebrity Envoy by the DoT. Willie's honorary appointment surely raised a lot of eyebrows considering his "notoriety" and controversial TV career (terminated twice by ABS-CBN, suspended thrice) for foul language and obscene gestures. Tourism Secretary Ace Durano explained that Willie was chosen because he has been helping promote the country through his daily game show "Wowowee" on AB-CBN. Durano said Willie has been doing a big share in prodding Filipinos abroad, especially the young ones, to come home and experience the beauty of the country. Willie promised to do justice to his new job. "My role now is not only to help but to convince children of Fil-Am parents to come home to visit their mother country."

Paalam na, Bayan

THOSE could have been Vice President Noli "Kabayan" de Castro's last words after his long-running show

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on ABS-CBN was axed by the Lopez-owned network. "Magandang Gabi, Bayan" (MGB) had its last show last December 31, ending a run of close to 18 years that made "Kabayan" a household name and catapulted him to the Senate and later to the No. 2 post of the land. The weekly show had been co-



IT'S ABOUT TIME: Filipino-American Pia Clemente can't help it at the press showing; just so thrilling that her movie "Our Time Is Up" starring Kevin Pollack has been nominated for the Oscars.

Filipinos working abroad send home more money

MONEY sent home by overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) last year rose much higher than official forecast, as more people left the Philippines to seek higher-paying jobs abroad.

OFW remittances coursed through commercial banks last year reached \$10.7 billion, 25 percent higher than in 2004, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said on Wednesday.

The central bank had projected 2005 remittances to hit \$10.3 billion, a growth of 20 percent from \$8.5 billion the year before.

In December alone remittances grew 10.7 percent to hit \$962 million.

Bulk of the remittances came from the United States, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Japan, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates and Singapore.

"The sustained rise in the level of remittances for 2005 was largely due to the increase in the number of Filipinos working abroad," BSP Deputy Governor Armando Suratos said.

Preliminary data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration showed that the number of newly hired and rehired OFWs grew 5.2 percent in 2005 to 981,677.

By type, the number of land-based Filipino workers rose 4.2 percent to 733,970, while that of sea-based workers grew 8.2 percent to 247,707.

Continuing demand for OFWs is due in part to government and private sector efforts to promote and identify employment opportunities for Filipino workers and to pursue capability-enhancing programs such as predeparture training, computer

literacy and seafarers training in strict compliance with international maritime standards.

Also pushing Filipinos to seek jobs abroad is the local economy's failure to generate enough high-paying jobs, as the Philippines still has the highest jobless rate among Asian peers.

"The deployment of highly skilled, thus, higher paid Filipino workers such as engineers, teachers, nurses and medical workers also contributed to the high level of remittances in 2005," Suratos said.

Deployment of OFWs is expected to continue for many years due to continued demand for Filipino health care workers in developed countries with aging populations as well as sustained economic growth in the host countries.

Suratos also pointed out that financial institutions are trying to reach out to a wider range of Filipinos working overseas by aggressively pursuing marketing activities, opening more remittance centers, establishing tie-ups abroad, and introducing enhanced means of remittance transfer.

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Augusto Santos earlier bewailed that bulk of OFW remittances sit idly in bank deposits because of a lack of investment opportunities elsewhere.

While he acknowledged that bigger bank savings could mean increased investments and consumption in the future, Santos doubts whether investment opportunities for OFWs would be available in the long term.

"So the challenge now is how to create productive activities for these OFW remittances," he added. "Spending more on basic services should provide that."

Marcos' daughter wants compromise deal on ill-gotten wealth

LATE President Ferdinand Marcos' eldest daughter said Wednesday a compromise deal may be the best way to resolve more than 400 cases involving her family's alleged ill-gotten wealth.

The cases are still pending in courts as Filipinos prepare to mark the 20th anniversary of the "People Power" revolt that drove Marcos and his family into exile in Hawaii on February 25, 1986.

"Given the long time that we spent and the huge amounts of money that have been expended, perhaps a more pragmatic solution is in order even if neither my family nor the government,

nor many sectors of society will be happy about the outcome," House Representative Imee Marcos told The Associated Press.

"In the end, the resolution will not be legal perhaps, but since the cases are political, the resolution will have to involve a level of political will that remains absent," she said.

Marcos said her mother's American lawyer, James Lynn, was in Manila earlier this month to try to put together a global settlement of Marcos cases in the Philippines, the US, Switzerland and Singapore.

"He's always trying but it never seems to work out," she said. "All of us are quite tired now, and I don't think it's good for the family nor for the country to carry on with these court proceedings that seem to go nowhere."

But she said she sees no hope of a deal with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's government, given that she and her brother -- Governor Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of northern Ilocos Norte province -- are members of the opposition, and Arroyo's father, former President Diosdado Macapagal, lost his re-election bid to Marcos in 1965.

During his 20-year rule, Ferdinand Marcos allegedly amassed ill-gotten wealth estimated at 5 billion dollars to 10 billion dollars in 1986, when he was whisked to exile in Hawaii. He died there three years later.



Imee Marcos

The government has recovered only a fraction of the Marcos' alleged wealth.

A journey of a thousand miles, must begin with a single step.
Lao Tzu

anchored by the De Castro's daughter, Katherine, with Erwin Tulfo and Henry Omega Diaz, since De Castro left the program at the start of the 2004 election campaign. The Philippine Daily Inquirer reported that the Lopez family "wanted to use" De Castro's program "to attack the administration," but that the Vice President refused. Inquirer, quoting an unnamed source, said the Lopezes had declared "war" on President Arroyo, whom they supposedly viewed to be hostile to their business interests. Maria Ressa, head of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.'s news and current affairs, said the report was inaccurate and insulting. She said negotiations went on for months before the show was pulled off the air. She also said that the network decided to retire the show because it was identified with De Castro and that it would be just "a shadow of its former self" without the Vice President. According to De Castro, he had ceased to be connected with MGB since 2004, when he assumed office as Vice President. But he still hosts a program at the Lopez-owned radio station dzMM, for which he is not compensated.

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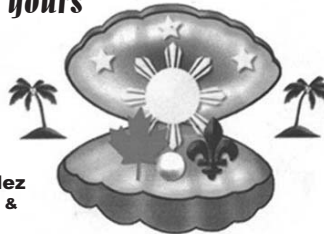
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"Love is a many splendored thing"

Since February 14 is St. Valentine's Day and February is known as the month of lovers, I think it is interesting to talk about love and

Seeing that he was a man of learning, the jailer asked whether his daughter, Julia, could be brought to Valentinus for lessons, Julia, who had been blind



affection. According to the Webster dictionary, love is a deep devotion or affection for another person or persons - love for one's children, love for God, love for someone special. It is customary to send a Valentine card or

by birth. She was a pretty young girl with a quick mind. Valentinus read stories of Rome's history to her. He described the world of nature to her. He taught her arithmetic and told her about God. She saw the world through



"Adios Mariquita Linda" After the serenade the gentlemen, bid the ladies goodbye. From left; John Guinto, Geoffrey Villarsa (hidden), Romeo Pelareja, Freddie Espinosa, the guitarist and Manny Fausto.

gift, often anonymously, as a mark of love and affection.

What does Valentine's Day mean to you? Most people remember their Valentine as their first date, the first time they fall in love, or their love at first sight, the first whisper perhaps.

Let me share with you a Valentine's card that I received from a classmate during my college days. We are still very good friends although we are continents apart. Coincidentally, for days I had been searching for a Valentines story and this card just came in handy. Here's a reprint from the greeting card.--The Story of Valentine's Day

The story began in the third century with an oppressive Roman emperor and a humble Christian martyr. The emperor was Claudius II. The Christian was Valentinus Valentinus.

Claudius II ordered all Romans to worship twelve gods, and he made it a crime punishable by death to associate with Christians. But Valentinus was dedicated to the ideal of Christ, and not even the threat of death could keep him from practicing his beliefs. He was arrested and imprisoned..

During the last weeks of Valentinus' life a remarkable thing happened.

his eyes, trusted his wisdom, and found comfort in his quiet strength.

"Valentinus, does God really hear our prayers?" Julia said one day. "Yes, my child, He hears each one." he replied. "Do you know what I pray for every morning and every night? I pray that I might see. I want so much to see everything you've told me about!"

"God does what is best for us if we will only believe in him." Valentinus said. "Oh Valentinus. I do believe," Julia said intensely "I do," She knelt and grasp his hand.

They sat quietly together, each praying. Suddenly there was a brilliant light in the cell. Radiant, Julia screamed. "Valentinus, I can see! I can see!" "Praise be to God!" Valentinus exclaimed, and he knelt in prayer.

On the eve of his death Valentinus wrote a last note to Julia, urging her to stay close to God, and signed it. "From your Valentine."

His sentence was carried out the next day, February 14, 270 A.D., near a gate that was latter named Porta Valentinus in his memory. He was buried at what is now the Church of Praxedes in Rome. It is said that Julia herself planted a pink-blossomed almond tree near his grave.

Today, the almond tree remains a symbol of abiding love and friendship. On each February 14, St Valentine's Day, messages of affection, love and devotion are exchanged around the world.

I just received a beautiful Valentine's card from my Apo (grandson). With the printed Valentine greetings from the card was his handwritten note -"Dear Lola, isn't it wonderful to fall in love, to feel love, to be in love, and to be loved?. Lola, I am very happy, I met the woman of my dreams, we shall be getting married very soon."

"Congratulations and Happy Valentines to both of you. Yes dear, love is a many splendored thing." Your Lola.

Associated with love and courtship is the old Filipino custom, the "harana" which has remained until the present time. Throughout the different changes of the century, Filipinos, rich or poor, always remember with nostalgia - the serenade or "harana." To the romantic Filipino, there is no better way of expressing his love than to serenade on a moonlight night, wafted with the fragrance of the sampaguita or dama de noche (lady of the night) flowers.

The young Filipino suitor of yesteryears does not resort to writing letters on linen paper, or sending a Valentine's card; he simply gets his guitar and with a group of young men, preferably a close friend or relative, goes

If the young lady favored the serenade, she would reciprocate by lighting a lamp, opening the window or sitting it out on the balcony, accompanied by a sister, or a lady friend. At times she is also accompanied by her mother, which makes it really very uncomfortable to these young lovers.

The shy but amorous Filipina, gives forth an attentive ear, shyly gazing down to the plaintive strains which the enamored lover sings as an expression of his affection. And if she responds to his fantasies, she would perhaps toss a flower or a scented handkerchief to him. He picks up the flower, kisses and presses it on his chest. Happily and content in one night of romantic venture, he bids his lady love goodbye, hoping for more romantic evenings to follow.

Sometimes in some provinces, a suitor hires the town orchestra to play the sweetest of Filipino love songs, "kundiman", beneath the window. If he does not have a good voice, he would address her with romantic and loving verses.

The "kundiman" has come to be known as the love song of the Filipinos. A Filipino composer describes the kundiman as a song, set to words, a song in which a lover declares his love to a lady and his admiration for her, and throughout the song, he expresses his utmost abnegation to her wishes.



Serenade (Harana) from the "Pearl of the Orient Seas" a stage presentation, in celebration of the city of Montreal's 350th birthday anniversary, August 22, 1992. Sponsored by the Federation of the Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec. Ladies seated on a make believe stage balcony. L-R Geraldine Lamaire, Karen Villaruel and Gina Villaraza.

to serenade his ladylove. In the darkness of the night, in spite of brave inclement weather or distance, crossing villages and towns on foot to reach his beloved lady's house, he stands beneath the window or balcony, his companions first tune their guitars with lovely



music, then he steps forward, and sings to express his love. In his songs he would pour out all his sentiments and longings of his heart and hastily dedicates a torrent of love songs called "kundiman" to her. Here's a short sample of a "kundiman" - "O ilaw, sa gabing malamig, wagis mo'y bituin sa langit . . . Buksan ang bintana, at ako'y dungawin ng mapag-tanto mo ang tunay kong pag-daing."

The "kundiman" had its origin among the Tagalogs of Luzon, and is truly an expression of their extremely sentimental nature. It reached its peak during the second and third decade of the American period.

The "kundiman" has been accepted as one of the chief representatives of Philippine music, not only because of the intense feeling that it conveys, but also because of the high degree of musical artistry to which the country's composers elevated it. Its success can be gleaned from the very talented Filipino music composers, namely, Dr. Francisco Santiago, Nicanor Abelardo, Antonio Molina, Bonifacio Abdon, Epifanio de los Santos Cristobal, to name a few great names in history.

There are some tales and theories regarding the origin of the "kundiman". According to an old story, this is how the song got its name. One bright moonlight night, during the Spanish regime, a group of romantic young men from Pandacan got together to serenade a young woman, whose house was very close to the church convent. They started their serenade with one of the most popular kundiman of the time. It was a beautiful song with a very

enchanting and simple melody, but the verses were somewhat monotonous due to the constant repetition of the three words "kung hindi man," The verses were as follows:

"Kung hindi man dapat sa iyong karikitan; Ang aking pag-ibig na sa iyo'y ini-aalay; Kung hindi man ako dapat kaawaan; Isinasamo kong manungaw ka lamang."

In English, this would sound like this.

"Although I do not deserve your ideal beauty; this love of mine I offer thee; Although I may not be worthy of your compassion; I beseech thee to look out of thy window."

A priest nearby was awakened by the young men's voices and hearing the words "kung hindi man" over and over again, he asked his servants to make them stop singing their "kundiman, kundiman." Because of his inability to say the three Tagalog words clearly, the priest thus gave the song its popular name. Unfortunately, however, the good father was never been identified.

Another theory regarding the origin of the "kundiman" - the word itself was first applied to the verses and, later on to the music itself. The author, Epifanio de los Santos Cristobal, has it that the word kundiman came from short verses recited by Caveteños which ran this way: "Hele-hele nang kundagan, Hele-hele nang kundiman." This was in reference to the shy Filipina who pretends not to betray her emotions when a suitor expresses his love for her, although she cares for him, for fear that her love affair would only provoke her parents into scolding her.

The other theory says that "kundiman" is a contraction of three Tagalog words, kung hindi man, (though you may not) something of an expression of humility on the part of the suitor.

The traditional Filipino courting songs are still the favorites of most music lovers, among them, Kung hindi man (1920), Kung Ako'y Umibig, Bituing Marikit, Nasaan Ka Irog, (1923), Pakiusap, Mutya ng Pasig (1926), Himutok, Ikaw Rin, Magbalik Ka Hirang, O, Ilaw, Adios Mariquita Linda etc. These immortal kundimans have now become part of the country's musical legacy.

Today, the kundimans of the country's music composers will always



remain as classic love songs. As one Filipino historian wrote: "Indeed, the kundiman has grown from its very simple beginning .. a highly emotional erotic love song that originated among the grassroots...into a highly developed piece of art... of high artistic import and universal appeal, and living, vibrant proof of the country's musical artistry and craftsmanship."



Buying a new camcorder

For months, you have been contemplating to buy a camcorder. One that has all the features you want, i.e. black and intimidating; better than your neighbors' camera. You must have waited long enough and save enough money and now you're going to buy one on credit or cash! Wouldn't it be great to have a new camcorder? Of course it would be. The good news is that regardless of your experience level or the depth of your pockets, there's a camcorder out there that suits your requirements. In fact, the cameras made today easily outshine those from just three or four years ago, so if you've held off from buying until the price went down or the quality got better, now's the perfect time to invest in a new camcorder.

A trip to your local electronics Best Buy, Future Shop, Centre HiFi or Sources can be a little intimidating for the first-time buyer. There are so many options, features and formats. Which items are important and which are just frills? How powerful should the zoom lens be? Is there a difference in quality between Digital8 and Mini DV? Should you trust the salesperson with the pocket protector or the one with long hair and a nose ring? Don't panic. Choosing a camcorder is easy when you understand what you need and compare that to what you're willing to pay.

The Casual Shooter

First-time buyers often fall into the category of casual shooter. The casual shooter is looking for something to record family events, such as birthdays, holidays, vacations and special occasions. These shooters have little interest in making money with their purchase. They just want to point and shoot. There are dozens of models available that suit these requirements perfectly.

When you go shopping, you'll be bombarded with dozens of technological terminologies. For instance, there are five different tape formats - 8mm, Hi8, Digital8, Mini DV and VHS-C and HD. The first three formats use 8mm tape to record different types of video. From a functional standpoint, they amount to good, better & best. Buy the best one you can afford.

Mini DV (DV25) is the dominant format for consumer camcorders and for good reason. It is so far my best choice. The analog formats produce better images today than in the past and VHS-C is still an alternative. Another advantage is that VHS-C tapes pop into an adapter for easy viewing on your VHS VCR. Unfortunately, if you want to make a copy for Kuya Eddie, you'll still have to cable the camera to a VCR.

Most entry-level camcorders don't have manual controls for audio, focus or white-balance, so consider any extra features a bonus. Still, point-and-shooters, by definition, don't want to monkey with these sorts of things, so fire away.

The Serious Hobbyist

All that entry-level stuff sounds fine, but serious hobbyists want more (and some manual controls) in their new camcorder. As with our previous category, there are many camera models that fit the bill nicely. First, if you're really serious, a digital camcorder is a must. Not just for the improved video and sound quality, but for some other important reasons. It's likely you'll want to edit your videos. If that's the case, a FireWire interface is highly recommended. FireWire is intimately linked with the Mini DV format and can be found on all Mini DV camcorders. Whether you use a Mac or a Windows-based computer, FireWire transfers audio and video data out of - and back into - your camcorder. Another important reason to go digital - especially Mini DV - is compatibility. With Mini DV as your format of choice, you'll produce videos that can be played on a variety of equipment, including some professional broadcast equipment.

Most cameras have a large sticker that proudly displays the words like "700x Zoom" or some such nonsense. This number refers to the digital zoom magnification and is as meaningless as any techno you'll ever read. The only zoom rating you need to know is the optical zoom range. This range refers to the actual zoom length of the lenses in the camera and is important in determining how far away you can be from a subject and still fill the screen. In this case, a larger ratio is better, but the largest you'll likely encounter is 20x (20:1).

As a serious hobbyist, you also need an external microphone jack and a headphone jack. This allows you to use better, more directional microphones in your videos, and monitor the sound with headphones. Nothing screams amateur louder than audio from an on-camera microphone.

The Entry-Level Professional

Maybe you're a creative type. You've had simple camcorders in the past, but you've outgrown their capabilities. As an entry-level professional, you'll certainly edit and sell a few of your videos and perhaps even enter a project or two in a contest.

This is a very interesting category because the lines start to blur between semi-pro and professional equipment. The single most important element of this unique range is the use of 3-chip image sensors. Most camcorders use one CCD to collect and digitize the image that comes through the lens. A 3-chip camera uses separate CCDs, one each for the red, green and blue portions of the image. Each chip is optimized for its special range of color and collects, digitizes and processes only that part of the image. This dramatically improves the sharpness, color and realism of the recorded image. For instance, an entry-level 3-chip camera could easily cost \$2,000 more than a similar single-chip version. The

additional expense is well worth the investment if you intend to create professional quality videos.

Another key feature you might look for is XLR audio inputs. The reason for this is simple: professional microphones use XLR audio connections. In addition to the 3-chip upgrade and XLR inputs, look for manual control of all the creative aspects of video - focus, white balance, exposure, shutter speed and audio levels. While not every camera will contain all options, consider the type of videos you shoot and make sure the camcorder you buy has the most important features for your productions.

The Serious Professional

While entry-level pros might make some money shooting video, there are some lucky folks who make their living shooting high-end video. This may include wedding videography, corporate training, commercials, infomercials or even independent filmmaking.

Serious work requires a serious camera. Although prices can exceed \$6,000, there are a handful of options under that mark that produce high-end broadcast quality. In addition to all the features required by the entry-level professional, a serious camera includes several other options. At this level, look for interchangeable lenses so you can leverage your current collection of glass. Manual control of all lens, white-balance and exposure settings is mandatory - some cameras even offer storage of all your favorite settings for quick recall. Another requirement: balanced audio connections (XLR) along with phantom power for condenser microphones and advanced metering of audio levels complimented with a beefy headphone amplifier.

None of these requirements come cheap, but the resulting quality of audio and video are unmatched short of HDTV. Remember, the last two Star Wars movies were shot exclusively on video, not film and not many folks have complained about image quality.

If you're upgrading or are considering a future upgrade, don't forget the accessories. Blowing your budget on the most expensive camcorder you can buy is a mistake. Check out the next step up from the manufacturer of your current camera. You may be able to reuse batteries, chargers, filters and other accessories, reducing the effective cost of upgrading. Especially for the shooter moving from casual occasional shooting into videography as a hobby, think about getting a tripod and lights before you search for the magic camera that will win Sundance Film Festival.

We've covered quite a range of prices, quality and features in just a short time. Hopefully, you have a better understanding of where you fit on the scale and can make an informed decision when it's time to buy your next camcorder. Oh another tip to buyers is that when a camera goes on sale with a drastically reduced prices, a new model is about to be released.

Happy shopping.

Al Abdon

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A Letter from a Daughter to her Parents:

Stephanie just left Montreal to go back to CFB Petawawa where she was posted in the Artillery Unit as an administration specialist. She usually comes over to Montreal not only to visit us but she misses the hectic lifestyle and night life which does not exist in the northern hills of Ontario. She was to resume her normal duties when an order came.

It is an order to work with the DART unit as part of Canada's contribution to Pakistan's earth quake disaster. Two days later Stephanie was on board on a military flight to Zagreb, then Saudi Arabia and a final flight to Pakistan.

Two weeks later we received a letter



from Stephanie. It said,
Dear Mom, Dad & Jay,

I hope things are going well! Don't worry, I'm doing fine here in the mountains of Pakistan. Everything here is so different from home. First, it's a Muslim country so they have to pray 5 times a day. The first prayer starts

around 5AM in the morning. We hear it everyday and it wakes me up everyday! Also October was the month of Ramadan in which they fast for a month...no food or water from 5AM-5PM...I like to see Jay try to do that!!! Also there is one prayer in which they have to wash their hands, feet and face while chanting. It is definitely interesting in that aspect. The weather is 23-25 C during the day and 4-5 C at nighttime.

Their ways of life in with the locals are quite different. Garbage are thrown off the side of the mountain and everywhere you step on is either dirt or dusty large rock. Oh here's a gross story...I went to our burn pit (a large hole in the ground in which we burn our garbage or the locals would dig through it) and we found a cow's guts all over the side of the pits. It was nasty. Anyways, apparently the locals who live next to us said that their cow was sick due to the burn pit so they killed the cow and threw the guts over to our side of the fence! It's wild!

At the field hospital we receive 125 patients per day. There are constant injuries from the locals. Just the other day, a medic had to cut a piece of bone that was protruding out of his finger so they had to use a tooth extractor. A lot of sad injuries! I miss you all and I love you all very much,

Love
Steppy

Stephanie is now back in CFB Petawawa to resume her normal duties. After that tour, her perspective in life towards the locals in Pakistan changed. She wish she could do more to help them and just hope Canada will continue to be active in humanitarian aids.

Al Abdon



Stephanie with the Canadian troop on a hill in Pakistan where this photo was taken.

PLDT, Microsoft tandem will deliver hosted software services

SOFTWARE giant Microsoft and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), the country's largest phone company, struck a deal this week that will soon change the way Microsoft distributes its software to Philippine customers.

Antonio Javier Jr., Microsoft Philippines managing director, told INQ7.net that this partnership signals Microsoft's push for a pay-per-use model for distributing its software to enterprise clients.

"This will be a hosted service," added Javier, hinting at more collaboration between the two giants this year. "PLDT is going to go big in 2006 and Microsoft will play a big role in this," the Microsoft Philippines executive said.

Continuing problems of software

piracy in the corporate sector remain a headache for the software company, which has to compete with alternative software like those hawked by open source advocates. Microsoft is looking for alternative distribution models for its software products, Javier said in a statement.

"We've realized that in order to reach a broader set of the market, we have to look into a more innovative business model, a model where both business users and consumers can get to enjoy the benefits of our products on a pay-per-use basis. It's a model that is pretty new to our company but it has already been mastered by telecommunication companies, particularly PLDT, which is undoubtedly the leading provider in this part of the world."

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