

Canadian Charter of Rights in Filipino

Liberal MP Lui Temelkovski Unveils First Tagalog Translation of Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Ottawa – Lui Temelkovski, Member of Parliament for Oak Ridge-Markham and Chair of the Canada-Philippines Parliamentary Friendship Group was proud to host the unveiling ceremony of the first Tagalog version of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms today.

"This is a momentous occasion which underlines the immense contribution Filipino Canadians have made to our great country," said Mr. Temelkovski, who has worked hard with the Parliamentary committee to ensure the translation. "I am honoured to be here celebrating the first Tagalog translation of one of the most important documents in Canada's history."

The unveiling ceremony was attended by Philippine Ambassador to



At centre holding the first Tagalog (Filipino) version of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Hon. Jose Brillantes, Philippine Ambassador to Canada, shares the honor with Hon. Luis P. Temelkovski, MP of Oak Ridge Markham, Ontario, who hosted the unveiling ceremony, May 29.

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Samahang Makabayan proclaims FAMAS candidates



Claro Bermudez, flanked by Dick Dahiroc, past Famas president, and Beny Parial, president of Samahang Makabayan, being declared as the standard bearer of Samahang Makabayan for Famas president. The election is going to be held on August 12, 2007 at Mackenzie King Park.

Montreal, June 2, 2007 - It was an enthusiastic crowd that witnessed the proclamation of candidates of Samahang Makabayan for the forthcoming FAMAS elections to be held on Sunday, August 12, 2007. Dick Dahiroc presented all the candidates but reserved the

introduction of the presidential candidate to be done by Ed Vasquez, the master of ceremonies. In presenting the biographical profile of Claro Bermudez, he underscored not only his educational and professional qualifications but also his qualities as a leader.

Mr. Bermudez is a mechanical engineer. He is the general manager/technical director of Polywrap Products of Canada Ltd. in Montreal since 1988 to the present. From 1996 to 1997, he was the general manager of SIO Sack Factory in Nigeria. He was an assistant manufacturing manager of Andres Soriano Corp. from 1976 to 1986, and plant superintendent, Interasia Plastic Company from 1974 to 1976.

As far as community involvement is concerned, Mr. Bermudez has always been a leader. He was the past president of Alpha Phi Omega Philippine International Alumni Association of Montreal Inc. from 1998 to 2004, adviser, and founder of

See Page 4 FAMAS Candidates

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EDITORIAL

Defining and selecting an effective leader

The time has come again to select a new board of directors of the biggest community organization in Montreal. Are we ready to make a choice among the known contenders for the position of president and directors of FAMAS?

As early as November 2006, news about the FAMAS leadership contest have begun. As reported in the community newspapers, two men have emerged as contenders to the leadership of FAMAS, namely Alberto Floresca who is seeking re-election, and Claro Bermudez, who has been endorsed by another community organization, Samahang Makabayan. Knowing both candidates and their accomplishments, how does one decide how to choose one over the other? What will be a fair way of evaluating the platforms of these two candidates? How do we know if they will fulfill their promises? Who are the members of their teams? What can each one of them offer to the community? Needless to say, it is not an easy task to make a decision without knowing much about each candidate. Hence, it may serve as a start in the right direction to find out who they are and what they propose to do.

From the introductions made for each of the candidates during the proclamation of Claro Bermudez and his team, it would appear that he has selected people based on a prepared plan and purpose of trying to represent the population. He tried to select a representative from each age group - young and old, students and professionals, retired businessman, and people who are still in their prime and working actively in different organizations and businesses. He explained that his platform is about serving the community and uniting organizations to work together for the good of everyone. He said that he would take the first step and ask everyone to participate in making a change for the better and for the benefit of the community.

Since we have not heard the speech of Mr. Floresca, we cannot make a comparison of the two candidates fairly. Hence, it may seem more useful to theorize about the kind of leadership that we would like to see

in this forthcoming FAMAS elections on August 12, 2007.

Writers have constantly theorized on the meaning of leadership and the qualities of the person who can be called a true leader. They usually describe a leader as someone who has a vision and who has the ability to persuade his followers to participate in the fulfillment of that vision. To persuade people, a leader must therefore have the ability to communicate, and must have excellent inter-personal skills.

To motivate us all to think of leadership as an ideal that should be everyone's concern, the following excerpt from Professor Isaac Goodine's book entitled "Leaders Leading Leaders" is quoted:

"Being a leader does not necessarily mean being successful although the two often go together. Leadership does not mean wealth, great education or position. However, it does mean having the initiative, the willingness to serve and an idealism rooted in divine truth. Such a person is willing to accept the burden of taking on the leadership responsibility because his self-confidence comes from a deep and abiding faith in the Divine Creator and a genuine concern for his fellow men."

Taking the initiative in changing the world for the better is certainly characteristic of a good leader. As Professor Goodine writes: "To change the world, you must be an active part of it. The more you reach out from your little world into the big world, the more you will enrich your own life as well as the lives of others. But going into the world will require your taking the lead role at one time or another. ... This requires you - and others like you - to show initiative and leadership in strengthening the weaknesses of society instead of merely complaining about them. Of course, it will not be easy. But do more than wring your hands in despair over what is wrong with the world. "Better to light one candle than to curse the darkness."

Which one of the two men can come close to the ideal of true leadership? It is everyone's responsibility to find out.

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

A Proposal to evaluate nursing aid training programs fairly and realistically

Oftentimes, the question is about the number of hours of training that is required before one is hired as a nursing aid or P.A.B. (French name which means préposé aux bénéficiaires). Government schools give this training for 800 hours. But do these schools train people who have nursing degrees, or other university degrees? Do the students who are trained in the government-run schools have any working experience in patient care? In most cases, the students are high school graduates, and who may have no background at all in working as a caregiver and may have not been exposed to the field of patient care.

It seems misleading to compare the suitability of candidates by merely looking at the number of hours of training. It would be more useful and fair if a closer look is given to one's working experience and prior education before making any

judgement about the applicant's suitability to work as a nursing aide.

At Gilmore International College, students who take the nursing aid course are oftentimes with extensive working experience as caregivers. In addition to this, they hold degrees in health related fields such as nursing, physiotherapists, midwifery, medical lab technicians, pharmacists and some are teachers who are caring for the elderly or as nannies. They therefore have a lot of knowledge to start from.

In addition to this fact, our teachers are registered nurses who have worked in the Quebec healthcare institutions for many years and who are familiar with the professional standards of working in the field.

In view of the changing environment of healthcare, it is the

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Nursing Aid



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FILIPINO STAR**109th Independence Day celebrations in Manila****June 12, 2007**

President Arroyo, right, joins other officials, from right, Tourism Secretary Joseph Durano, Foreign Affairs secretary Alberto Romulo, Education secretary Jesii Lapuz, and military chief Hermogenes Esperon during flag raising ceremonies. In her speech, Arroyo called for unity among the newly elected officials following the May polls.



Filipino performers rejoice as confetti drops during the 109th Independence Day celebrations at Manila's Rizal Park.



Raymond BACHAND
MNA for Outremont
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Dear Fellow Citizens,

*My warmest greetings to the Filipino community
on the occasion of the 109th anniversary
of the Declaration of the Philippine Independence.*

*May this significant tradition be a time
of family and community solidarity.*

Québec 



On behalf of the staff of the
Scotiabank Branch on 4861 Van Horne,
we extend our greetings
and best wishes to all Filipino Canadians
on the occasion of their 109th Anniversary of
Philippine Independence Day
on June 12.

From Page 1 Charter of Rights

Canada, H.E. Jose Brillantes, Philippine Consul-General, Joseph Gerard B. Angeles, 2nd Secretary and Consul, Rhenita B. Rodriguez and labour representative Frank V. Luna.

"Filipino Canadians are a vibrant and important force in our society, adding to the rich cultural diversity of Canada," said Mr. Temelkovski. "We must join together to celebrate the Filipino Community's uniqueness and strength."

The event also helped launch Philippine Independence Day activities across Canada, celebrated yearly on June 12.

From Page 1 FAMAS Candidates

Samahang Makabayan since 1999. He is the Scout Master of Laging Handa Group 0592, Scouts Canada, since 2004. He was a director of FAMAS and served as treasurer during 1992-1994. He was the recipient of three consecutive presidential awards from FAMAS in 2000, 2003, and 2006 in recognition and appreciation of his valuable help in the endeavors of the Filipino community in Montreal. He received a Recognition Award for his exemplary leadership and dedication to community service and as a role model of Alpha Phi Omega in 1998. He also received a certificate of appreciation from Gilmore International College for his dedication to the first Filipino-Canadian Scout group in Canada, October 2006.

In his speech, presidential candidate Bermudez defined the kind of leader that he would like to be - a leader for all types of people, young or old, men and women, from all walks of life. He narrated a humorous story of a rabbi who was able to command not only his diligent congregation but also someone who was sleeping in the synagogue. He promised to take the first step to approach all the other associations in the community and convince them to work together for the benefit of everyone. He urged his audience to elect all the members of his team in order to achieve the objectives they have promised to do. His team's motto is unconditional service to the community, that is to say, they do not expect anything in return for whatever service they do.

Mr. Bermudez recruited the candidates of his team from a variety of backgrounds for he believes that everyone has a role to play. The following list will reveal what kind of

experience and education each candidate has.

1) Cris Bautista has a degree in nautical engineering from Cebu Institute of Technology. He is a martial arts instructor and personal trainer. His community involvement are as follows: Founder of Doce Pares Filipino Martial Arts in Montreal, member of Aklan, Kahirup, and Kalihukang Bisaya, and FAMAS. He is a trainer of Filipino Martial Arts in RCMP and Montreal Police, promoting Filipino culture at YMCA in Montreal.

2) Riza Esmeralda has a B.A. degree in political science from Concordia University, 2001, obtained a certificate in office systems technology from the Business Career Center in Montreal, 1995, received a secondary studies diploma from Sacred Heart School, in Manama, Bahrain in 1988, has an O'Level Diploma, University of London, England, 1988. She topped 24th in the Worldwide Annual United Nations Information Test, Manama, Bahrain, 1988. She works as an administrative assistant at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), United Nations Specialized Agency in Montreal.

Riza's community involvement are numerous - she is the Vice-President, Communications, Cultural Communities, Ville de Montreal, Union Montreal party, President, Philippine Folk Arts Society, Member, Intercultural Committee of the Borough of Cote des Neiges/Notre Dame de Grace, Member, Comité de vigie asiatique de la Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal, Community Resource Person, the Greater Montreal Community Development, Member, Multicultural commission of the Parti Liberal du Quebec, Volunteer Parent, Laging Handa, First Filipino-Canadian Scouts Group in Canada, and Community Liaison Agent for Le project philippin, a project sponsored by École du petit-chapeau and École des nations and Table de concertation de Cote des Neiges.

3) Manny Lagasca has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from the University of the East. He is now a retired businessman. His working experience included being the liaison officer and security coordinator of the Governor's office in Ilocos Norte, and entrepreneur, Pager at Manila Stock Exchange. His community involvement are as follows: former vice-president of Filipino-Canadian Friendship Society of Quebec, Member, Family Life Ministry of Filipino Catholic Mission, 3rd degree, Knights of Columbus.

4) Tess Manuel is a holder of a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of the Far East. She is works in banking and finance. She is a cashier at the Fiesta Filipino Bakery, had been administrator of KADIWA, Philippines, Cashier of Isitan Department Store. She is a director of FAMAS, 2005-2007, and serves as the Executive Board Accountant.

5) Frederick Ian Montilla studied accounting at McGill University in 2001. He finished his elementary and high school education at Calixa Lavallée High School.

Mr. Montilla is an accountant by profession. He is a financial advisor of Investor Group. He was a member of International Christian Fellowship Church, board member of CPE (Coin des petits Enfants), and Member of the Autorites des Marchés Financiers.

6) Jeffrey "Jeff" Narciso is a holder of a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, major in marketing. His present occupation is a

businessman. His work experience included being salesman, agent collector, and entrepreneur. His community involvement includes service to the Filipino Truckers Association, and youth development program.

7) Danilo Parial is a holder of a Bachelor of Science in elementary education from the University of Santo Tomas, Philippines. He retired as an elementary school teacher after 32 years of service in Quebec.

8) Shelley Quintos was born on April 18, 1982, in Montreal. She is 25 years old, a recent graduate from Concordia University in 2007, major in Economics, Minor in Business Studies. She obtained a DEC in commerce from Vannier College in 2002.

Shelley's work experience includes being a customer sales representative of the Bank of Montreal, Assistant Sports Camp Coordinator and Camp Counselor, Loisirs Sportifs Code-des-Neiges in Montreal.

Her community involvement

Statement by the Honourable Stéphane Dion, Leader of the Official Opposition, on Philippine Independence Day



Date: June 4, 2007

For Release: Immediate

On behalf of the Liberal Party of Canada and our Parliamentary caucus, I would like to extend my best wishes to all Filipino Canadians celebrating Philippine Independence Day.

June 12th is widely celebrated across the country in the form of parades and festivities, marking the 1898 sovereignty of the Philippine Islands.

This occasion is also a time to mark the achievements of Filipino Canadians and the contributions they have made to this great country. Their hard work, determination and contribution to the social, economic and cultural fabric of Canada serve as an important example for all Canadians. Filipino Canadians are a vibrant and important force in Canadian society, contributing greatly to the rich cultural diversity of Canada.

As you celebrate the 109th anniversary of the Philippine Independence Day with your friends and family, please accept my sincere wishes.



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are as follows: PBAM secretary at present, member of the Montreal Metropolitan Basketball Referee Association to the present, coached basketball to children aged 8 to 16 for PBAM, Quebec en Forme program, and Dorval-Jean XXIII Midget Girls, 2002-2006, volunteer of the United Sports Council in Montreal, PBAM and the Black Community of Montreal.

9) Flor Rillo's educational background includes the following information: a technical engineering graduate, electrical shipboard system, US Naval ship repair facility Technical Institute, Subic Bay, Olongapo City, 1968-1973. He listed his profession as master electrician.

Mr. Rillo worked as an electrician for Canadian National Railways for 21 years as well as for Meralco Corporation, Manila, Philippines. He was a top rate electrician for a Montreal ship repair facility from 1975 to 1980.

His community involvement are the following: FAMAS director (Business Manager) 2005-2007; business manager of Philippine Heritage and Cultural Society of Quebec and Nueva Ecija Association of Montreal and Suburbs, member of the Knights of Rizal, past worshipful member, Maison, Filcan Lodge.

10) Lourdes Blanco Rosales obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture, major in Agronomy, from the University of the Philippines, Los Banos, Laguna, 1984. She also took a nursing undergraduate course in continuing education at Dawson College from 1995 to 1997, studied a nursing aid course from July to October 1997 and received a certificate. She also obtained a certificate in Mutual Fund Course from Vanier College in Montreal.

Ms. Blanco listed her occupation as financial security advisor and agriculturist. She is also a commissioner of oaths in all judicial districts of Quebec as well as outside Quebec, and a beneficiary attendant, elderly care. She was a Community Development Assistant and Project Assistant, Science and Technology Coordinator, Bataan, Philippines from 1988 to 1990. She was a research assistant in the Department of Horticulture, University of the Philippines in 1984.

Her community involvement includes the following: FAMAS director from August 2005-2007, treasurer of Federation of Philippine-Canada Trade and Commerce from July 2005 to May 2006, and the present secretary of the Bataan Association of Montreal.

FAMAS elections are scheduled to be held on Sunday, August 12, 2007 but the place is not yet known. Traditionally, the elections are held at Mackenzie King Park. From the grapevine, it would appear that the present administration of FAMAS has intended to hold the elections in a gymnasium, however, many people were opposed to this idea. A petition therefore was signed by over 1500 people. Samahang Makabayan president Elvie Maximo sent a letter to the Borough Mayor Michael Applebaum three weeks ago citing the community's wish to hold the elections

at Mackenzie King Park. It is not yet known whether or not a favorable reply will be given by the Borough Mayor or who will finally decide on the site of the elections.

More information about the status of the FAMAS elections will be reported in the July issue of the North American Filipino Star, scheduled to be published on July 6 or 9, 2007. The deadline for submission of materials or advertising orders is set for June 30 in order to include them in this forthcoming issue which will be published earlier than usual.

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From Page 2 Nursing Aid

the goal of Gilmore International College to communicate with the different health care institutions and inform them of the type of students being trained. The staff and administration of the college also plan to submit an official recommendation on how the graduates should be evaluated and their experiences validated to become part of their portfolio. They will be given a reference to inform their prospective employers that they have a considerable amount of experience and skills which make them highly qualified to work as nursing aid or personal support workers.

The Director-General of

Gilmore International College will be getting in touch with the office in charge of integration courses for immigrants in the Philippines. She will also find other schools who are willing to collaborate in the development of curriculum designed to help integrate professional workers particularly in the field of healthcare.

After 18 years of providing educational services to newcomers and others who need updating of their skills, Gilmore International College is now ready to become part of the movement to develop our most treasured human resources properly and fairly. This will require a lot of cooperation from all sides - both from the government and from the employers as well as the staff of each training institution.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

McCord Museum and Sponsors Awarded for Outstanding Achievement

Montréal, June 12, 2007 — The McCord Museum was awarded the Canadian Museum Association's Outstanding Achievement Award in the category of Sponsorship. This prestigious prize acknowledges sponsors who have made notable contributions to, and demonstrated support for, museum work in Canada.

The award recognizes the innovative collaboration between the Museum and its partners, Alcan and Cascades, and the tremendous support involved in the production of Transactions, the first outdoor exhibition presented by the McCord along McGill College Avenue. Canadian Museum Association jury members were unanimous in their recognition of the project's creativity and the bold concept that allowed the exhibition to come to life. As a major partner, Alcan brought this ambitious project to fruition, and further enriched the city's cultural life.

The McCord Museum's impressive achievements in 2006 meant that it was also honoured with nominations for two distinguished awards: The Grand Prix du Conseil des arts de Montréal and the Grands Prix du tourisme québécois.

Annual outdoor exhibitions along McGill College Avenue Take advantage of the lovely weather and stroll down McGill College Avenue to visit Configurations, the McCord Museum's second annual free outdoor photographic exhibition that evocatively pairs 58

photographs to reveal the vitality and diversity of Montréal's social tapestry. Set in a series of stunning frames, the large-format photographs are mounted on custom-built aluminium panels that glow in the evening from solar-powered lights. Last year, over 650,000 visitors visited this exhibition — it is a visual treat that is not to be missed! Configurations runs from June 15 to October 15, 2007.

The McCord

The McCord is home to one of the finest historical collections in North America. It possesses some of Canada's most significant cultural treasures, including the most comprehensive collection of clothing made or worn in Canada; an extensive collection related to Aboriginal history and art; and the renowned Notman Photographic Archives.

Museum Hours & Admission

The McCord is open from Tuesday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekends, holiday weekends and on Mondays during the summer months. Entrance fees (including taxes) are \$12 general admission, \$9 for seniors, \$6 for students, \$4 for children between the ages of 6 and 12, and \$22 for families. Museum admission is free of charge to Friends of the McCord and children aged five and under. The museum offers free entry to all visitors the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

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Overseas Filipino women to join the call for national freedom and democracy in the Philippines

June 9, 2007 (Montreal, Canada)

Overseas Filipino women in Canada will join forces in Montreal on June 16 to 17, 2007 for the conference, "Link Arms, Raise fists! Kapit Bisig! Magkaisa kababaihan sa pagpalaya ng bayan!" The first conference of its kind in Canada, the 2 day event aims to unite women from all corners of the country to discuss their role in achieving genuine democracy and freedom in the Philippines.

"There is a need to forge our strength as overseas Filipino women and support the struggle of our sisters in the Philippines. The US-Arroyo regime has killed more than 830 leaders and members of progressive and militant organizations and continues to attack the basic democratic rights of the people. We want to contribute and participate in the national democratic struggle for liberation," states Joy Sioson, Kapit Bisig Conference Secretariat member.

Filipinos have been migrating to Canada since the 1960s and estimates surmise that the Filipino population in Canada nears 500,000 with 60% located in the eastern provinces; women make up the majority of the community at 65%. This

migration rose dramatically when the Labour Export Policy (LEP) was created by Marcos in the 1970s. The remittances of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) keep the ailing Philippine economy afloat, yet there is no support for them abroad. The example of the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP) speaks to the slave-like conditions that Filipino women are forced to endure as the Philippine government sells their people for foreign exchange and to quell growing social unrest.

The 2 day conference will host a full day of speakers, solidarity night, action planning, and conclude with a rally. Those interested in participating should contact the Kapit Bisig Conference Secretariat at (514) 678-3901 or by email at pwcofquebec@gmail.com.

Philippine Women Centre of Quebec— Under the supervision of the National Alliance of Philippine Women in Canada (NAPWC), we are an institution of research, education, advocacy, and capacity building by Filipino women for the Filipino community.

Tel: (514) 678-3901

A leader is a prophet (prophetess). He does his work for the future.

A leader is a friend of his followers. He answers his followers in a warm-hearted way.

Professor Wan-Kae Choi



Gilmore International College and the Academy of Letters

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Editor & Publisher,
North American Filipino Star
Group Commissioner, Scouts
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COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

Bigger than what you think

By Jerry Estrada
Philippine Correspondent

A Commitment to the Community

I have always been hesitant to write about cooperativism and persuade other people to help lift poor people out of extreme poverty since I have not yet proven my worth and do not have the so-called "track-record." However, my desire to write and share my views is high and I must admit that cooperativism is a discipline that is easier to learn than to implement, an area in which everyone feels competent to give advice on but finds difficult to do.

Luckily, I got a chance to work at the Centre for Cooperative Studies in Cagayan de Oro City, Mindanao chaired by Atty. Mordino R. Cua (Cooperatives Man of Asia 2004). We both work in organizing new coops, writing his books on coops, and traveling to attend cooperative meetings. I heard a lot about his 53 years coop experiences, his wisdom, vision and dreams for the poor people.

I first met him at Oro Savings and Sharing Cooperative (one of the credit unions he founded) board meeting in 2003, wherein I served as one of the officers and he was the Board Emeritus. His ideas on cooperativism are contagious, that is why you cannot blame me if I extol him sometimes in this column.

On April 20 - 22, 2005, Atty. Cua and I attended a Coop Educational Forum at Legenda Suites, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Zambales, wherein the cooperative leaders from the Philippines and in Asia gave due recognition to his unselfish dedication that contributed to the global evolution of Philippine Cooperatives and at the same time keeping the genuine cooperators love of volunteerism and self-reliance.

On the said forum, Atty. Cua had told the coop leaders that he was planning to re-focus his remaining efforts to help the agriculture sector since it seems nobody attends to its needs.

From Subic, we immediately organized an agricultural coop gears to help the rural barangays (villages) hoping it can give a system of economic action and business enterprise, characterized by the absence of "too much" profit motive. According to him, we should do it fast since we do not have enough time. He told me he is in this cause for life and it is time to become a real organization. He reminded me that 8 million people die around the

globe every year because they are too poor to stay alive.

Our initial trips to rural areas to conduct coop seminars reminded me that we really live in an unequal world. The inhabitants of a few urban areas live in luxury while the great majority in the rural regions writhe in wants. How I wish that underdeveloped countries become aware that a substantial part of its investment should be in coop education, training, and technology transfer because learning how to fish is more important for poor people to have rather than be given a platter of fish.

But who is the primarily responsible for changing this situation? To be sure, only the people themselves can ultimately solve the problem of development. However, the government and the developed areas also have an essential role in the creation of a new and just social economic order. During meetings in the "barrio" (village), we listened intently as the farmers recounted their disastrous experiences with "miracle technologies" that somehow always seemed to end up with the traders getting richer and the farmers falling deeper into debt.

We marveled at how wise and logical these unlettered farmers were in the strategies that they adopted to ensure survival. We listened carefully to the problems of the agricultural extension workers who earnestly strove to help the farmers but ultimately were defeated sometimes by the complexities of the government's bureaucratic systems.

Armed with the insights he had picked up from the barrios, Atty. Cua volunteered his services as consultant, as trainer, as analyst to the barrio people, who had the responsibility for formulating policy and for carrying out programs and projects aimed at making the farmers more productive and more prosperous. He told people that if they join together, they would have a chance to make poverty history.

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

While the biggest part of our workers now come from the services sector, it means true that about half of the population derive their livelihood directly or indirectly from the agriculture sector. Thus, it remains one of our foremost economic challenges that the bigger part of the Filipino poor are those living in the rural areas,

dependent on this key sector of our economy. It is often lamented that our neighbors, particularly the Thais and Indonesians, learned their agricultural technology from us, and yet have now overtaken us in pushing their farm sectors to greater productivity and modernization. Where have we gone wrong? Why are our farms so unproductive? What are the elements that have been keeping our farm sector backward, and our small farmers poor, all these years?

The economic scenario in most of the rural areas is terrible - a problem that ultimately can be traced to not getting their due share of the final value of their products. This happens when small farmers receive unduly low prices for their harvest from the exploitative trader who is the only merchant around and the farmers have no choice because the trader had lent them money beforehand. They cannot seek options by bringing their harvest directly to the market because of bad transport infrastructure. It also happens when the farmers, being a share tenant, must give up a portion of the improved harvest to the landlord, whose rent is based on a percentage of the harvest rather than a fixed amount of lease.

COSTS

Our initiatives to reverse the declining quality of rural pauperism, we have to admit, cannot be successfully waged without huge financial cost. If ever, we will have to create well-considered options in the form of a more balanced distribution of sustainable and viable wealth-generating vehicles where they matter: our depressed rural areas.

However, the choice of countryside economic pursuits must be architected for a long-term effectivity, with profits equally shared among farmers in order to create a stronger and long-lasting impact on poverty.

During elections, some politicians send off a check, hope it will help someone somewhere stay alive for another day. That is not the model for the current crusaders or the message for these extraordinary times. Generosity should be redefined. This got me

to thinking about the nature of giving, and what makes for temporary relief versus lasting change. In 2007, the world's poor needed no more condolences; they needed people to get interested, get mad and then get to work.

We have to ensure that people have the opportunity to make the most of their lives. The task is too big, too complicated. There is no one in charge, no consensus about what to do first and never enough money to do it.

PASSION TO HELP THE POOR

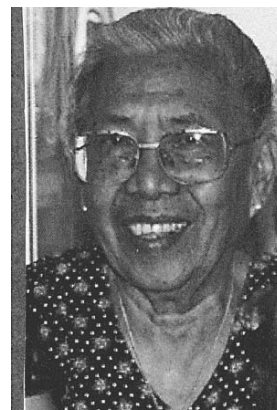
Atty. Cua has absolutely nothing to gain personally as a result of his work. In fact, he has opened himself to criticism because he has been willing to work with anyone to find help for these people who have taken his heart. This is not about pity. It's more about passion. Pity sees suffering and wants to ease the pain; passion sees injustice and wants to settle the score. Pity implores the powerful to pay attention; passion warns them about what will happen if they don't. The risk of pity is that it kills with kindness; the promise of passion is that it builds on the hope that the poor are fully capable of helping themselves if given the chance.

The cooperatives need to realize that in helping developing people pull themselves out of the mire of poverty, they are serving their own need for continued growth and prosperity, for they are creating rich and burgeoning markets by doing so.

In order to build trust, and in order to participate in and contribute to a broader sense of the community, coops have to go beyond the shareholder value or profit concept and take some risk if coops really want to help others, and not just providing products and services for financial gain.

Cooperative social responsibility, then, is a vital component to nation building. Without it, progress will become daunting (if not impossible) task. It is comforting to know that good cooperative citizens, going beyond the exigencies of simply earning a profit, are making lives better for others.

CARD OF THANKS



ADELAIDA BRITOS-ORTIZ
March 23, 1920-May 26, 2007

With peace and tranquility, Adelaida B. Ortiz died May 26, 2007, leaving to mourn are her children: Pat (Tomas), Evelyn, Lydia (Rolando), and Norma (Roy); her grandchildren and great grandchildren, Ernesto and Rommel and their families, nephews and nieces in the Philippines.

We wish to thank all those who offered condolence, masses prayers, flowers, and donations. We shall be forever grateful.

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From the Editors of E/The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: What is causing the dramatic decline in honeybee populations in the U.S. and elsewhere in recent years, and what is being done about it? -- James Harris, Akron, Ohio

Kids everywhere may revel in the fact that bees are no longer stinging them as frequently on playgrounds and in backyards, but the decline in honey bee populations in the U.S. and elsewhere signals a major environmental imbalance that could have far-reaching implications for our agricultural food supply.

Brought here from Europe in the 1600s, honeybees have become widespread across North America and are bred commercially for their abilities to pollinate crops—90 different farm-grown foods including many fruits and nuts depend on them—and produce honey. But in recent years populations across the continent have plummeted by as much as 70 percent, and biologists are still scratching their heads as to why and what to do about the problem which they have termed “colony collapse disorder” (CCD).

Many believe that our increasing use of chemical pesticides and herbicides, which bees ingest during their daily pollination rounds, are largely to blame. Commercial beehives are also subjected to direct chemical fumigation at regular intervals to ward off destructive mites. Another leading suspect is genetically modified crops, which may generate pollen with compromised nutritional value.

It may be that the build-up of both synthetic chemicals and genetically modified crop pollen has reached a “tipping point,” stressing bee populations to the point of collapse. Lending credence to this theory is that

organic bee colonies, where chemicals and genetically modified crops are avoided, are not experiencing the same kind of catastrophic collapses, according to the non-profit Organic Consumers Association.

Bee populations may also be vulnerable to other factors, such as the recent increase in atmospheric electromagnetic radiation as a result of growing numbers of cell phones and wireless communication towers. The increased radiation given off by such devices may interfere with bees’ ability to navigate. A small study at Germany’s Landau University found that bees would not return to their hives when mobile phones were placed nearby. Further research is currently underway in the U.S. to determine the extent of such radiation-related phenomena on bees and other insect populations.

Biologists also wonder if global warming may be exaggerating the growth rates of pathogens such as the mites, viruses and fungi that are known to take their toll on bee colonies. The unusual hot-and-cold winter weather fluctuations in recent years, also blamed on global warming, may also be wreaking havoc on bee populations accustomed to more consistent seasonal weather patterns.

A recent gathering of leading bee biologists yielded no consensus, but most agree that a combination of factors is likely to blame. “We’re going to see a lot of money poured into this problem,” says University of Maryland entomologist Galen Dively, one of the nation’s leading bee researchers. He reports that the federal government plans an allocation of \$80 million to fund research in connection with CCD. “What we’re looking for,” Dively says, “is some commonality which can lead us to a cause.”

CONTACTS: Organic Consumers Association Bees Info, www.organicconsumers.org/bees.cfm; Colony Collapse Disorder in Honey Bees, http://pestalet.ifas.ufl.edu/Colony_Collapse_Disorder.htm.

Dear EarthTalk: What is the “terminator seed” proposed for use in agriculture? Why is it so controversial?

-- Jill Dorion, Missoula, MT
Since the dawn of civilization farmers have saved the seeds sown by their crops and re-planted them to grow more crops. Such is the natural science of agriculture that has provided

food for thousands of years.

But a technology developed in 1998 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Delta & Pine Land Company, the U.S.’s largest producer of cotton seeds, genetically-engineers seeds to produce sterile offspring after the given crops yield their annual harvest. Though not yet commercially available, this would force farmers to purchase new seeds every year, ensuring greater sales for seed companies.

Called “terminator” techno-logy, the USDA and biotech companies like Monsanto (which now owns Delta & Pine) claim that it is not about profits but instead about preventing the escape of genetically modified plants into the wild, which could impact local plant diversity. The technology also protects companies from farmers trying to pirate their seeds. USDA molecular biologist Melvin Oliver, terminator’s primary inventor, says: “Our mission is to protect U.S. agriculture and to make us competitive in the face of foreign competition. Without this, there is no way of protecting the patented seed technology.”

Farm, food and environmental advocates alike say that, well, that’s exactly what does make it about profits. They fear the technology could put small farmers around the world out of business, as they cannot afford to buy new seeds every year. This could, in turn, spell widespread starvation for those who depend upon them for their sustenance. Indian author and human rights advocate Vandana Shiva, writing in her 2000 book, *Stolen Harvest*, calls terminator technology one of many “innovative ways to steal nature’s harvest, the harvest of the seed, and

the harvest of nutrition.”

Indeed, the technology could enable seed companies, which spend millions every year filing and protecting patents on individual seed strains, to enter new markets in developing countries, further extending their economic power and limiting the number of different agricultural strains being cultivated.

“Having a handful of biotechnology companies controlling the production and distribution of seeds makes farmers hostage to the economic exploitation by this industry,” says Gary Goldberg of the American Corn Growers Association. And speaking in support of legislation introduced in May 2007 to ban the testing and commercializing of terminator seed technology in Canada, Colleen Ross of Canada’s National Farmers Union said, “...genetic seed sterilization is dangerous and blatantly anti-farmer—suicide seeds threaten to intensify corporate control over Canadian agriculture and offer no benefits for farmers.”

In 2000, the United Nations (UN), under its Convention on Biodiversity, got into the terminator fray by declaring a global moratorium on the technology due to environmental as well as socio-economic concerns about its use. In March 2006 the UN upheld the moratorium, in the face of challenges by several countries—including Australia, Canada and New Zealand—pushing for commercialization.

CONTACTS: Convention on Biodiversity, www.biodiv.org/default.shtml; Stolen Harvest, press.org/2004/items/Stolen.
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500 g (1 lb) beef sirloin, thinly sliced
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 60 ml (¼ cup) cooking oil
 1 medium onion, sliced into rings
 60 ml (¼ cup) soy sauce
 125 ml (½ cup) water
 2-3 potatoes, peeled, cut into wedges and fried

>> Marinate beef in half of the calamansi juice for about 30 minutes.

>> Heat oil in a frying pan and sauté onion rings until lightly brown. Remove onions from frying pan and set aside.

>> Drain beef slices from marinade and reserve marinade. Sauté beef in the same frying pan 1 to 2 minutes, then turn to cook other side for 1 to 2 minutes.

>> Combine remaining calamansi juice, soy sauce and water. Stir into frying-pan

together with reserved marinade.

>> Return onion to pan and simmer about 1 to 2 minutes. Serve with fried potato wedges and rice.

Coconut Rice Cake



Ingredients

* 2 1/2 lb (5 1/2 cups) mochi rice
 * 1 can (12 oz) frozen coconut milk thawed
 * 1 package (1 lb.) dark brown sugar (2 1/3 cups packed)

Directions

Rinse rice and cook in rice cooker. In saucepan combine coconut milk and 1 1/4 cups of the brown sugar. Cook over medium heat stirring constantly until thickened. (Approx. 20 min.) Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Put cooked rice into a large bowl. Reserving 1/2 cup of coconut mixture, stir remainder and remaining brown sugar evenly into hot rice. Put into prepared pan. Top with reserved 1/2 cup of coconut milk mixture. Bake for 20 minutes then broil for 5 minutes to set topping. Cut into small pieces. Makes 45 servings.

Filipino nurses retake scandal-tainted exams

June 12, 2007

An estimated 11,000 Filipino nurses resat their examinations yesterday after a cheating scandal last year cast a shadow over their results, an official said.

Lawyers hired by the US Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) acted as observers at examination centres in Manila, Baguio, Cebu and Davao.

Labour Secretary Arturo Brion said the graduates were re-taking the examinations together with 66,000 others sitting for the first time.

"We hope that by doing this we will address the problem of the employability of the affected Filipino nurses in the United States," Brion said in a statement.

President Gloria Arroyo released 20m pesos (\$428,807) for the students to re-sit the exam after the US refused to issue visas to the 2006 graduates. Brion expressed confidence that the cheating that took place last time would not be repeated.

"This is a sort of cleansing process for all of us," he was quoted saying in the Business Mirror newspaper Monday. "Nobody wants to go back to

that 2006 experience."

Results of the exams will not be known for another three weeks. Two examiners were charged with corruption earlier this month for allegedly leaking answers to the two tests.

The US Commission had placed a temporary ban on granting work visas to the 2006 graduates pending a re-sitting of papers that dealt with medical surgery and psychiatric health care.

The scandal which followed placed a question mark over the 17,000 students who passed the exam in June 2006 and brought into question the quality of Filipino nurses, who are in huge demand overseas.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has estimated that 15,000 Filipino nurses leave the country annually to high paying medical jobs in the United States, the Middle East and Europe. WHO country representative Jean Marc Olive has said that in the next 15 years, the US alone will need about one million nurses and the Philippines is a key recruitment centre. Of the 42,000 nurses who sat the examination last year only 17,000 passed. ■

Kidnapped Filipino seaman freed in Nigeria

June 12, 2007

A Filipino seaman kidnapped along with a group of Westerners in Nigeria last month has been freed, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Tuesday.

The man, whose identity was withheld, was among 10 people seized by unnamed militants who boarded an offshore construction barge off Bayelsa state on May 25. Four Britons, three Americans, a South African and one Nigerian were also among those

abducted. The Filipino "was released on the evening of June 11, Nigerian time to local authorities and is now undergoing medical examinations," the department said in a statement.

It did not elaborate further.

The Philippine government banned Filipinos from traveling for work to Nigeria earlier this year after 25 workers were abducted in separate incidents. The ban did not apply to the estimated 4,500 Filipinos who were already working in Nigeria. ■

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Tinago Falls - As literally implied, it is hidden in a deep ravine, the falls cascading beautifully into a basin-like pool, calm, deep and icy cold. It has an elevation of approximately 420 ft.



Maria Cristina Falls Iligan's greatest heritage, it is the most resplendent among the city's 20 waterfalls.



'Dancers (top) and children (bottom) at the Lubi-lubi Festival, Linamon. Also called Hudyaka sa Lubi', it celebrates the city's charter day.

Iligan Fiesta, these week-long festivities are held in September in the capital

The province of Lanao is located on the Northern Mindanao district along the northwest coast of Iligan Bay. The lowland peninsula gives way to a realm of hilly terrene which ascends towards the mountains in the southeast and northeast portion. The rivers flows in deep interval as they cascade from the mountains going to the coast, constructing many waterfalls and the Maria Cristina Falls is the most well-known of all.

One of the famous dish in Iligan is the binaki, a grated young corn mixed with milk, then wrapped with fresh corn cob and steamed. Other muslim-influenced dishes are utak-utak and lotot.

Being the "Industrial Center of the South", the city of Iligan housed smaller industries like steel, tinplate, pulp and paper and flourmills. Agriculture, fishing and forestry are the province's primary source of livelihood. It is also a major producer of fruits and commercial crops like bananas, coconut, corn and rice.

Blessed with ample water resources, which are the province's tourist attractions, there are 22 waterfalls cascading the rivers of Lanao. The most famous of is the Maria Cristina Falls with a height of 320 ft that plunges into the Agus River. The

Tinago Falls is one of the most beautiful falls hidden within the deep ravine. And in the town of Munai, runs an intriguing Lidpa Subterranean River that flows through the top of the hill in the mountain.

The people of Lanao celebrates **Viva Sr. San Miguel** every last week of September. This is to honor Saint Michael the Archangel. They perform dances similar to the Sinulog celebration. Alongside this merrymaking, they also perform the Pana-ad and Yawa-yawa. Pana-ad refers to the pledges of the loyal devotees of San Miguel for the favors that were granted. And the Yawa-yawa is a miracle play performed in their native dialect, songs and dances.

Other popular spots include: **Mt. Agad-Agad** which served as a major lookout during the Japanese Occupation. **Sandayan Cave**, located in the deep forest of Rorongan. It is a three-chambered cavern with stalactite and stalagmites looking ominous to stangers.

You can visit Iligan City via Philippine Airlines which has a daily flight to Cagayan de Oro and from there several buses travel the Cagayan-Iligan route. By sea, William Lines and Gothong Lines sails from Manila to Iligan City. ■

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Dancers performing at the Lubi-Lubi Festival held in January



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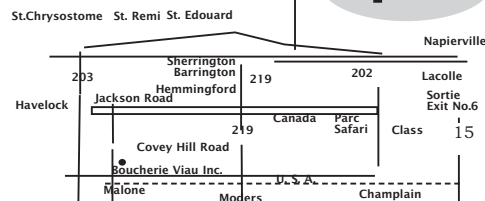
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Photo Gallery



Claro Bermudez, candidate for Famas president, shakes hands with the guests at the proclamation party, June 2, 2007.



Ed Vasquez, master of ceremonies at the proclamation party, introducing Claro Bermudez, candidate for FAMAS president.



Laging Handa Scouts participating in the parade of colors and singing of the National Anthem at the Samahang Makabayan proclamation party, June 2, 2007



Laging Handa Scouts walking away after having participated in the parade of colors.



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FILIPINO STAR SHOWBIZ

Ogie admits relationship with Regine



In an exclusive interview with YES! magazine, Ogie Alcasid has admitted that indeed, he and Asia's Songbird Regine Velasquez have a romantic relationship, culminating endless speculations about the real score between them. This is what the public has been waiting for, the announcement that Ogie promised to announce in June.

(Ogie's revelation about his love affair with Regine was announced on "Showbiz Central," GMA 7's showbiz-oriented talk show hosted by Pia Guanio, Raymond Gutierrez and John "Sweet" Lapus.)

In the same interview (featured in the June issue of YES! magazine which is now available in newsstands) Ogie also revealed that he and his wife Michelle van Elmerin are separated, true to what has been rumored since four years ago when the former Miss Australia and their daughters Liela and Sarah left for Australia to stay there for good.

Ogie said there was a lot of pain entailed in their decision to part ways (their daughter still don't know the real situation between their parents since Ogie always flies to Australia to be with them on special occasions) but did not elaborate as to the reasons. He and Michelle are great parents he said and they are good friends.

Ogie also said Michelle wanted to live in Australia and lead a private life "and I respect her privacy." But he claimed as "totally untrue" reports of an annulment case he was supposed to have filed in the past.

Ms. Aster Amoyo, one of the members of the showbiz jury last Sunday, said she followed the romance and eventual marriage of Ogie and Michelle (whose parents did not initially like Ogie) and she believed

that like in Ruffa and Yilmaz's case, the break-up of Ogie and Michelle's marriage also had something to do with cultural differences. It was also opined that Michelle left because she couldn't withstand showbiz intrigues, and did not want her and her children to become involved in intrigues that are innate in showbiz.

All three jury members opined that it's really hard to make a marriage work if the spouses are separated by distance, and of course by personal differences. But as to rumors saying Michelle already has another man in her life in Australia, Ogie did not want to confirm, out of respect for Michelle's need and wish for privacy.

Ogie so in love with Regine!

Ogie expressed so much love for Regine that he could even sacrifice his own career for her, he said. Reports of their love affair has persisted and refused to die even after their strong and continuing denials in the recent past, but now that he has come out in the open, "the truth has set Ogie free."

However, he denied rumors saying he and Regine are now living-in. As to the house that he was reported to be in the process of construction for their future use, Ogie said he isn't prepared to talk about that yet.

Ogie described Regine as humble, matulungin and one who has a very good heart.

Ogie and Regine's friends (Judy Ann Santos, Dennis Trillo, Rufa Mae Quinto, Janno Gibbs, Karyll et al) expressed their support and good wishes for the lovebirds. Their home studio of course will always be there for them and in fact, GMA Films now has a movie project for Ogie and Regine which will start shooting shortly. ■

Ruffa: Yes, I'm a battered wife



And finally, after weeks of hemming and hawing, Ruffa Gutierrez (soon-to-be-ex Mrs. Yilmaz Bektas) admitted on Saturday's Startalk what she has been hinting at and what everybody has been suspecting all along - that she's a victim of domestic violence.

"Yes," said Ruffa, her voice quivering as she answered in a phone patch her estranged husband Yilmaz Bektas' new accusations in his unending series of statements. "I'm a battered wife!"

According to Ruffa, the battery started two years ago when Yilmaz's personality was altered by the anti-depressant drugs he was taking after he underwent surgery on bullet wounds in his stomach inflicted by a crazed friend.

"The beating was mild in the beginning and got worse in recent months," confessed Ruffa. "I was a victim of torture."

The violence became so unbearable, said Ruffa, that she had to escape from their home in Istanbul which she shared with Yilmaz and their daughters Lorin and Venice for almost four years now.

"Yilmaz was a violent man," confirmed Ruffa who was earlier protective about her husband when asked if it was true that she was a battered wife. "Binubugbog niya ako. He would kick me and cut my hair and lock me up inside the cabinet. He tortured me for 15 hours! Last February, duguan ako when I escaped from home and sought the help of a friend. Everything was witnessed by the yayas of our children. When I came home, I had a black-eye and bruises in my arms and legs."

In the next breath, according to Ruffa, if something bad happened to her - like if somebody threatened to kill or harm her - she had nobody to blame but Yilmaz.

"That's why my mom (Annabelle Rama) doesn't want me and our daughters to go back to Istanbul," added Ruffa. "My mom knows the whole story."

Ruffa then answered other issues raised about and against her since the story of her and Yilmaz's separation was broken by The STAR early last

month, such as:

1.) That she married another man in Las Vegas before she and Yilmaz got married on March 25, 2003...

"I must have committed mistakes during my younger days like everybody else but I changed when I married Yilmaz. I became a good wife and a good mother to our children. Yilmaz knows everything about me; my life is an open book. I never hid anything from him."

2.) She married Yilmaz for money...

"Again and again, I want to say that I married Yilmaz for love and not for money. Look, I wasn't a woman on top of a camel that Yilmaz found in the desert. I was earning good money. I was working. I have a good, supportive family. I can support our daughters. For four months now, Yilmaz hasn't been supporting our children."

3) Yilmaz said he didn't have to file a divorce since Ruffa had been previously married...

"Well and good. He's trying to ruin me because he doesn't want me to be successful. He has been calling me up, every hour on the hour, making as many as 55 calls a day, but I refuse to answer the phone."

Saying she'd "rather die single than go back to Istanbul," Ruffa plans to join Gina de Venecia's crusade against battered women.

"I'm sure that Filipinas in the same situation will sympathize with me," said Ruffa, at the same time making an appeal. "I'm the victim here, I'm the Filipino in this fight, and I appeal to everybody to believe me and not Yilmaz." ■

Erik Santos not ready to marry Rufa Mae



Is it true that Rufa Mae Quinto can't wait for boyfriend-singer Eric Santos to propose? They have, after all, been sweethearts for more than a year.

In an interview, Eric said that while he loves Rufa Mae very much and would really want to marry her, he thinks he is not ready yet. "Besides, there's no need to hurry. Napag-usapan namin na sasamantalain namin ang magandang biyayang ibinigay sa amin ng aming careers," Eric explained.

When Rufa Mae marked her birthday recently, Eric surprised her with a birthday party. "Na-touch ako," stated Eric, "when she told me that that was one gesture which she'll never forget all her life." ■

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Reading you your rights

SHOPLIFTERS BEWARE!

Attorney Lito Domingo

As an attorney, I have met many clients facing charges for shoplifting. Whether it be for stealing a \$5.99 lipstick, a DVD player for \$299.00 or designer clothing worth \$1500.00, I have seen teenagers and adults risk their future over silly material possessions.

Clients usually say that it is not a big deal because these department stores owned by billion dollar corporations do not care about losing one small item in their sea of profits.

However, in Canada, shoplifting is costing the retail industry almost 3 million dollars a day. Big name retailers like Sears and Loblaws are tired of absorbing the costs related to shoplifting. So be warned, retailers are no longer giving breaks to shoplifters. Now they are cracking down on shoplifters with civil lawsuits not only criminal charges.

I have seen individuals at court facing criminal prosecution for having taken an item not even worth 10\$.

One would think that it is highly unlikely that the judicial system would go to such lengths to prosecute people for stealing something as small as lipstick with a value of \$5.99. Just think about the costs for having a judge, a crown prosecutor, court clerks, officers and a courtroom to prosecute such a person.

Once caught by the retailer, a shoplifter is arrested and finger printed. Then, he must appear in a courtroom before a judge to face the criminal charges filed against him.

If you are found guilty for shoplifting, you will have a CRIMINAL RECORD. As a consequence, you may encounter some difficulty when traveling to the United States. A criminal record can even have a devastating impact on an individual's employment or career path. Moreover, certain academic programs, jobs and professions are not available to those who possess criminal records.

In terms of criminal punishment, section 334 of the Criminal Code states that:

"Except where otherwise provided by law, every one who commits theft

(a) is guilty of an indictable offence and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten years, where the property stolen is a testamentary instrument or the value of what is stolen exceeds five thousand dollars; or

(b) is guilty

(i) of an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years, or
(ii) of an offence punishable on summary conviction,

where the value of what is stolen does not exceed five thousand dollars."

In plain English it means that, as a

shoplifter, you may face a finding of guilt and perhaps a conviction, fine, probation or even imprisonment.

Today, as if criminal punishment was not enough, retailers are going even further to deter shoplifters and recover some of their financial losses by hitting them with civil lawsuits for damages.

For shoplifters, this means that after having been arrested, punished with a fine (\$300 for example) and given a criminal record, retailers are demanding that they pay another \$300-\$600 or more as civil compensation for the costs of their security as well as the time and energy spent to deal with the theft. These civil lawsuits are filed even if the merchandise was recovered immediately at the store.

So think twice because your sudden impulse to take a \$5.99 item without paying will end up costing thousands of dollars in criminal punishment and civil lawsuits not to mention the costs for retaining a lawyer to deal with both.

In life, we sometimes make momentary errors in judgment. According to the Elizabeth Fry Society, a group that offers counseling for shoplifters, first time shoplifters often steal at a low moment in their life because of personal problems related to emotional or financial stress.

If you had happened to make this mistake, remember that a criminal record can have a devastating impact on your life. Therefore, you should consider retaining the services of a lawyer to see the different solutions that can be provided before accepting the fate of a criminal record and a civil lawsuit.

*You may contact Attorney Domingo of DG Attorneys at (514) 823-8464

Pangasinan language is alive and kicking

With its speakers decreasing by the day, many consider the Pangasinan language a dying language. But a local historian is struggling to keep the language alive by compiling native words and publishing these in a dictionary.

Emiliano "Mel" Jovellanos, 70, has published the fourth edition of the Pangasinan-English, English-Pangasinan language dictionary. The compilation has 20,000 entries, four times the number of words when he published the first edition in 2002.

Jovellanos said he feels bad when he hears people say the Pangasinan language is dying.

"It's alive, and this dictionary is a proof that it is," he said. He also cited a study of the provincial government that showed that 51 percent of Pangasinenses speak the language, as opposed to 47 percent who speak Ilocano and the rest, dialects like Bolinao.

Jovellanos' labor of love to preserve Pangasinan words started more than 20 years ago while working as chief of staff of former Information Minister Gregorio Cendaña in 1985.

He informed Cendaña, a Pangasinense, of his dream to publish the dictionary and Cendaña readily supported the plan.

Jovellanos started researching and collecting native words, poring through available materials written in Pangasinan like the Bible, prayer books, novenas, novels of Juan Villamil and Maria Magsanoc, and copies of Tunong, a pre-World War II paper that emphasized literary works in Pangasinan.

He combed the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., and spent hours in the Filipiniana section of the National Library, the archives of the University of Santo Tomas and the Dominican Library in Manaoag town.

"I was always ready with a pen and a notebook, jotting every new word I met," Jovellanos said.

After filling up about a dozen notebooks with Pangasinan words, the painstaking work of arranging them alphabetically followed.

"I did everything by long hand," he said. The publication of the dictionary, however, was stalled as his responsibilities as the municipal

administrator of Pozorrubio town, and later as councilor, had to be prioritized.

Finally, the dictionary's first edition came out in 2002. The book became a "hit" of sorts, especially with local officials who made it a part of their towns' "official gifts" to visitors. Local officials also bring copies whenever they go abroad as pasalubong (gifts) to Pangasinenses there.

He said the dictionary's fifth edition would be printed in the United States this November when the Benigno Aldana National High School holds a reunion for its alumni living in the US and Canada.

"They clamor for a copy but the dictionary is heavy and the freight is expensive, so we decided to just print it there," he said.

The dictionary has 15 pages of easy lessons in spoken Pangasinan, like greetings, signs and public notices, days and time, numbers and questions, and general expressions.

There are also poems in Pangasinan, including a version of National Hero Jose Rizal's "Mi Ultimo Adios."

Jovellanos said his father, Jose Jovellanos, the municipal president (mayor) of Dagupan from 1919 to 1925, translated the poem to Pangasinan on his deathbed in 1946.

He said poets and novelists in Pangasinan write expressively because the language is "beautiful and rich in vocabulary."

In the dictionary's introduction, he cited two examples of how rich the language is: "The English word for ambition is expressed in Pangasinan in so many words: piaet, ogagep, tamitam, gunaet, posapos, pilalek, pigipig, pirawat and tindek. If in English one is crazy, in Pangasinan one is 13 times more crazy: atapis, atiwel, ambagel, ambagtit, kulang-kulang, atorik, angkampis, atiris, lokloko, akustil, bobolanen, sulok-sulok, and alintaweng."

The dictionary's publication has opened more doors to Jovellanos. He was named president of the Jose Tamayo Foundation, after its founder, Antonio Tamayo, owner of the University of Perpetual Help, learned of his work to preserve the language. The foundation aims to preserve the Pangasinan culture and arts, among other things. ■

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The Poet's Corner

Esther Rivera Limsiaco Stansfield

Dreams by Moonlight

By: *Esther Rivera Limsiaco Stansfield*

Moonlight, thy beauty do delight,
As evening stars open the night.
The evening breeze, perking up preside
Over forests, hills and streams, you glide.

The land, its forms-
Transformed by your flickering light,
Appear like majestic phantoms of the night.

They tremble, excitement in their voices,
These young and gallant knights,
As the shining, luminous rays of light
Colour their dreams this magical night.

Their ladies fair, bejewelled by glowing light,
Answer sweetly and softly,
Their ardent songs of love and life.

Bewitched, hearts caught in joyous delight,
They flew away far in the night.

But, alas, as dawn revealed their forms
in broad daylight,
Dreams fade...
Like phantoms of the night.

Japanese man sets off by kayak from Philippines to Taiwan

June 3, 2007

A 31-year-old Japanese man embarked Sunday on a sea kayak adventure from the northern tip of the main Philippine island Luzon to Hualien in eastern Taiwan, hoping to be the first man to paddle across the 700 kilometers of sea within a month. Traveling in a 5.5-meter kayak, Satoru Yahata of Okinawa Prefecture set off from Pagudpud in Ilocos Norte Province, about 560 kilometers north of Manila.

Last year, Yahata paddled his kayak across almost 300 km of sea from Hualien to Ishigaki Island in Okinawa Prefecture. He also navigated 500 km of seas between Iriomote and Okinawa islands, both in Okinawa

Prefecture, in 2005 and crossed the waters between Australia and Indonesia in 2002. "I want cross the seas on my own like people did in the past," he said. "I can go to any part of the world where there are bodies of water with my kayak." ■



Satoru Yahata hopes to make it Taiwan in 1 month's time

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Philippine Opposition Wins 6 of 10 Senate Seats in Mid-Term Election

June 6, 2007

Philippine opposition lawmakers are poised to retain control of the Senate in mid-term elections. The election commission has formally declared winners in 10 of the 12 senate races, with opposition politicians taking six seats, independents two, and supporters of President Gloria Arroyo another two. Douglas Bakshian reports from Manila.

After three weeks of counting the ballots by hand in this nation of 85 million, the winners were announced in Manila. Two remaining Senate seats will be announced later, after the final results are completed from the southern Philippines, where both the opposition and the administration said there was vote rigging in the May 14 balloting.

The opposition is on its way to retaining the majority in the 24-member Senate, only half the seats were up this time. In the House, allies of President Gloria Arroyo say they won in most of the 220 districts. Final official results are awaited.

This means President Arroyo will be protected from another impeachment attempt. The opposition has twice tried to impeach her on charges of corruption and cheating in the 2004 presidential election, but her supporters in the House defeated the moves. President Arroyo denies the allegations.

One of the new senators, Alan Peter Cayetano, a leading opposition figure, told ABS-CBN television the priority of the new Senate is clear.

"First things first," said Cayetano. "What is most important to our country is to stop the abuse, stop the corruption. The World Bank said for every one peso that the government collects, 40 cents goes to corruption."

Other prominent opposition figures that won Senate seats include Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Panfilo Lacson, Benigno Aquino and Manuel Villar. Administration candidates Joker Arroyo and Edgardo Angara won along with independents Francis Pangilinan and Gregorio Honason.



Opposition candidate Loren Legarda won the most votes

Honason, a colorful former army colonel, is out on bail while battling charges of involvement in several coup plots. The Senate is considered the training ground for future presidents so elections there are closely watched. Analysts say the opposition is looking ahead to the 2010 presidential race, when President Arroyo's term expires. ■

No more Senate win proclamations for now

June 12, 2007

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) will not proclaim the winners of the 11th and 12th slots in the Senate race until the remaining votes from the provinces of Surigao del Norte and Maguindanao have been canvassed.

It also raised the possibility that the Genuine Opposition's (GO) Antonio Trillanes IV could still be dislodged from the 11th position by fellow GO senatorial candidate Aquilino Pimentel 3rd or Team Unity's Miguel Zubiri, who are on the 12th and 13th places in the latest counts.

Comelec Chairman Benjamin

Abalos Sr. on Tuesday hinted that the proclamation of the two remaining senators could go beyond the June 30 deadline.

June 30, the last day in office of the 12 senators whose terms have ended or have lost in their reelection bid, is also the start of the term of office of newly elected or reelected government officials. "I don't want to give a specific date now. I can only do that when everything is through. [Until such time that it has become] mathematically impossible [for the No.13 to overtake the one in No.12 or 11] we cannot proclaim anybody," Abalos told reporters. Commissioner Nicodemo

Ferrer, chairman of Task Force Maguindanao, said that there are still over 700,000 votes to be counted from Maguindanao and Lanao del Norte, which is why it would be premature for Comelec to proclaim the occupants of the 11th and 12th positions.

Trillanes and Pimentel are currently on the 11th and 12th positions with 11,093,526 and 10,809,229 votes, respectively. Not far behind them is Zubiri with 10,697,825 votes.

"Maguindanao is very essential together with the results of Lanao del Norte. That is why we cannot proclaim," Ferrer pointed out. He added that it is still mathematically possible for either Zubiri or Pimentel to overtake Trillanes. ■

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La carte RP est valide pour une durée de cinq ans. **Vérifiez la date d'expiration et présentez votre demande pour une nouvelle carte au moins deux mois avant votre voyage.**

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COOPERATIVE NEWS

By Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

The financial troubles of the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative have not yet been completely resolved. In fact, it has remained in critical shape because the sales have not yet improved. Many members have not yet been buying and it would take more effort to attract them to come at least once a week to help in making a faster turnover of inventory. The purchase of over \$30 000 of merchandise during the months of March and April has not yet resulted in a positive bank balance. The \$25 000 credit limit is always being used since February 2007. In March 2007, the withdrawals for purchases of merchandise and payment of expenses totaled \$25 533.40 while deposits only totaled \$10 233.99. It was only in April 2007 when CDEC gave \$20 000 advance payment when the bank showed a positive balance but only for a few days as we were obliged to open a separate account and put the \$12000 aside for the salary of the store manager to be hired. During this month, the withdrawals totaled \$13 629.30 and the deposits totaled \$32 481.33. However, in May 2007, the withdrawals were in the amount of \$25 790.35 while deposits only totaled \$7 734.19. For the first two weeks of June, the withdrawals totaled \$6 996.59 and the deposits totaled \$5,872.51 but there are still outstanding cheques not yet cashed. Another purchase order has to be made and paid for in cash before new stock is delivered this week.

The average monthly sales have not yet improved as much as it should be in order to put the Coop's bank balance in the positive state instead of the usual minus \$17,000-\$18,000. Because of the cash payment terms of all purchases, it is difficult to accumulate enough cash to have a positive bank balance. Moreover, there is not enough cash available to buy more inventory. The overdraft is always being utilized, hence additional expenses are being incurred. Calculating the fixed overhead of \$2 400 for rent, business taxes, and utilities expense, the Coop needs to have at least \$32 000 monthly sales in order to break even and start making a profit. Right now, the sales is quite low, approximately less than \$10 000 a month as evidenced by the monthly deposits mentioned

previously.

We are urging all members to patronize the Coop in order to build up a better sales record. We need to turn merchandise inventory into cash but if only a few members buy their groceries, it is going to take longer to transform inventory into cash. We also need a better cash flow and this can only happen if there will be more members who will fully pay their \$100 qualifying shares as well as invest in more preferred shares.

The financial records of the Coop are still being worked on. It is not yet known how long it will take to finish it but there is a better idea of the status of the records in the coming week. A final report maybe available in the July issue of this paper. CDEC will pay for the accounting service up to \$6 000. They already advanced \$3 000 of this amount. The second payment of \$8 000 will be released when the accounting work is finished, allowing only \$5 000 for the purchase of stock. The final payment of \$12 000 will only be released to pay for the next half of the year's salary of the store manager who is not yet even hired. Ms. Rhoda Tremocha who is being considered for this position has not yet arrived from the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the volunteers and board members of the Coop are devoting a lot of time and effort to the improvement of the Coop. Nole Detorio, one of the founders, is working on a project to install an internet café in order to encourage members to visit the Coop. The feasibility study and budget will be submitted to the next meeting of the board scheduled on Sunday, June 17.

We would like to recruit members to volunteer some time to render service to the Coop, such as canvassing prices, checking stock, buying vegetables and manning the store beyond the regular hours of the paid cashier. If the Coop can stay open longer, perhaps, the sales will also improve. It is suggested to have at least two or more people man the store especially during the late hours of operation from 8 to 10 p.m. The regular cashier is on duty from 1 to 8 p.m when Ben Bade, the president, usually opens the store in the morning at 10 a.m. on Wednesday to Friday. On Monday and Tuesday, the regular cashier works longer hours from 10

a.m. to 8 p.m. while Ms. Rhoda Tremocha is away on vacation.

If more people learn about the objectives and nature of cooperatives, perhaps they will be encouraged to join. Therefore, we have decided to hold more information sessions and training for members and prospective members. They are planned to be held monthly at the Coop. The first one is scheduled on Sunday, July 1, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. Please call 514-485-7861 to reserve your place.

What are other measures to be adopted in order to improve the financial situation of the Cooperative? One of the suggestions we will be pursuing is the issuance of interest bearing preferred shares. Those members who already paid their \$100 qualifying shares will be asked if they would be willing to invest in preferred shares, starting from \$500 to \$1000 at 8% interest per annum. Instead of saving their money in a regular bank account which earn only a low interest rate, they will not only earn more money but they will also help the Coop in improving its cash flow situation. During the next meeting, the board will pass a resolution to make this share offering official.

REMINDER

FREE

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Frequently asked questions on VirginCoconut Oil

What is virging coconut oil?

Virgin coconut oil is the naturally processed, chemically-free and additive-free product from fresh coconut meat or its derivative (coconut milk and coconut milk residue) which has not undergone any chemical processing after extraction.

It is the purest form of coconut oil, water while in color contains natural Vitamin E and with very low free fatty acid content and peroxide value. It has a mild to intense fresh coconut scent depending on the type of process used for production.

What is the difference between Vono and Copra derived cooking oil?

Copra derived coconut oil has to undergo chemical refining, bleaching and deodorization processes to make it suitable for human consumption. It is yellow or pale yellow in color and does not contain Vitamin E since this is removed when the oil is subjected to high temperature and the various chemical process.

Why is coconut oil also called a Nutraceutical substance?

Aside from the instant energy that it provides to the human body, it also has some medicinal properties. It was found out that the medium chain (Ca - C2) fats in coconut oil is similar to the fats in mother's milk that gives babies immunity from diseases and have similar effects,

See page 22 Virgin Coconut Oil

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Isaac T. Goodine

Global Perspectives



A Canadian Immigration Integration Project (CIIP)

A Canadian Immigration Integration Project (CIIP) has been launched as a new initiative to improve the methods of integrating immigrants into the workforce. Project offices have been opened recently in China, India and the Philippines as a joint undertaking by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) as the executing agency with funding from Human Resources Canada and in close partnership with Immigration Canada.

This ground-breaking overseas initiative was launched in 2006 in the three countries as a pilot project to provide information, advice and referrals for further assistance offered to skilled workers in the final stages of immigrating to Canada. The focus is on men and women in process of immigrating specifically to fill gaps in the Canadian workforce in areas requiring skill-sets that are not readily available in Canada. About 20 occupations have been identified where there are shortages that can not be filled in the short term from within Canada.

The main purpose of these new project offices based in Guangzhou, New Delhi and Manila is to provide guidance which enables clients to prepare an individual integration plan outlining a series of preparatory steps to enhance their employability. The CIIP functions include counseling to help clients in implementing their personal plans by identifying appropriate sources of continuing assistance in Canada and the ACCC promotes access to such programs and services in Canada. Initially, the task is to provide information on availability of institutional programs such as language and skills testing and upgrading, credential assessment and recognition, settlement assistance, licensing and accreditation, and employment-related services. In the start-up phase of the project a wide range of Canadian stakeholders participated in consultations to help design this innovative project. Participants in the consultations included stakeholders from educational institutions, immigrant-serving organizations, regulatory bodies, sector councils, credential and

language assessment bodies, and employer representatives, as well as all levels of government.

The consultative process began in 2005 against growing concern about a steady decline in productivity of an ageing Canadian workforce with the generation called "baby-boomers" tending toward retiring earlier and living longer than their parents. At the same time the system of education and training has moved away from competency-based to qualification-based programs designed more to serve the service sector, where wealth is traded, than the productive sector, where wealth is created. Canadian students are not being prepared in large numbers to enter the workforce in the wealth creating sectors and "ageism" has replaced both racism and sexism as discrimination in the workplace in Canada, meaning that youthful and senior people encounter prejudice in the workplace on the basis of their age alone. Currently, on average Canadians work for 31 years, and contribute directly to the economy, but they spend more time in education and in retirement than ever before and depend on society, or someone else to support them both in an extended youth and prolonged old age. In the decades following the second World War, Canada depended on immigration to support industrialization. About 2.4 million people were "recruited" by the Department of Immigration and Employment, largely those with employable skills, and when that source dried up, in the early 1960s, due to reconstruction of the war torn countries, Canada reformed the whole approach to human resource development through a Technical Education and Vocational Training Act that focused direct investment of over 1.17 billion dollars establishing new institutions offering competency based education and training that made Canadians the most productive people in the world on a per capita basis and made Canada one of the Group of Seven (most wealthy countries). However, much has changed. Of the 36 member countries of the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation in Development) Canada now ranks 17 or 18 in productivity and

is slipping—a far cry from number one a couple of decades ago. Of course we have had immigration in the meantime—14,600 from the Philippines alone last year, but integration of immigrants from all sources has been slow—on average taking seven years to become fully integrated; and this after at least three years waiting for the pre-departure clearances in the case of the Philippines. Qualifications are routinely "downgraded" and bridging courses sometimes difficult to obtain. For example the unemployment rate for immigrants in Montreal reached about 20 percent in a period when the unemployment rate for Canadian-born workers was about 6 percent. This situation led the Quebec government to take concrete steps in 2005 and 2006 to speed up the integration of immigrants with legislation on credential recognition and the government has sponsored cross-cultural training conducted by the Montreal Board of Trade.

There is a large Filipino-Canadian community in Montreal, and one of their number, Mrs. Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi, who immigrated several years ago, is the Chief Editor and Publisher of the North American Filipino Star as well as the Founder and Director of Gilmore College. As such she has 17 years experience in helping immigrants from several countries to integrate into the workplace and add colour to the social fabric of their new home in the Montreal area. It makes sense for her to become a participating stakeholder and use her cross-cultural experience including French and English Language training to support this important pilot project through the CIIP Office in Manila and in follow-up services in Montreal.

Estrada to play crucial role in selection of next Senate president

June 9, 2007

Detained former President Joseph Estrada, as the titular head of the opposition, will play a vital role in the selection of the next Senate president, his former spokesman and lawyer said yesterday.

"Of course former President Estrada will play a crucial role in the selection of the new Senate president," congressman-elect Rufus Rodriguez told reporters during the weekly Balitaan sa Rembrandt Hotel forum in Quezon City.

He said the process of selecting the next Senate president is already underway. He did not elaborate, but opposition senators are in close contact with Estrada, who is detained at his resthouse in Tanay, Rizal.

Rodriguez, who was immigration commissioner during the Estrada administration, won the congressional race in Cagayan de Oro City.

He also declined to name the possible contenders for the top Senate

post, but reports indicate that Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. wants to remain head of the chamber.

However, according to a source within the opposition, Villar will have a problem holding on to his post because it was a result of a term-sharing agreement brokered by Malacañang with Villar's predecessor, former Senate president Franklin Drilon.

"For delicadeza, Villar, who won under the banner of the Genuine Opposition, must give up his post and leave (it up to) the new set of senators to decide who will be their president," the source said.

The source said Villar's Senate position carries the stigma of Malacañang's control and influence over the Senate.

He said that if Villar joins the race for the Senate presidency, then it will be opposition senator against opposition senator, a reverse of the case in the House of Representatives, where pro-administration congressmen are fighting to become Speaker.

The list of possible contenders for the top Senate post includes Villar, Senate Minority leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., independent Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Rodriguez said Estrada has played a crucial role in the selection, endorsement, campaign and eventual victory of the GO senatorial candidates.

He also said Estrada was responsible for uniting the opposition coalition's parties — the United Opposition, Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino, Pimentel's PDP-Laban and the Liberal Party faction headed by Drilon.

"Former President Estrada will continue to play his role as the titular head of the opposition," Rodriguez said.

Meanwhile, re-electionist Senators Joker Arroyo and Edgardo Angara, the only Team Unity candidates who have so far made it into the Magic 12 of the Senate race, are making way for the new majority composed of opposition senators in the 14th Congress.

"I ran in the minority so I am a minority. That is all there is to it," Arroyo said. "It is not a question of change. That's the tradition, that's the rule. The 'minority' will form the (new) majority and they will choose who would be Senate president."

Arroyo added: "We should recognize the fact that the majority calls the shots here."

He said the Senate presidency will be decided upon by opposition senators — who comprise the majority when the 14th Congress opens — including senators-elect Loren Legarda, Francis Escudero, Alan Peter Cayetano, Benigno Aquino III and former Magdalo leader Antonio Trillanes IV.

They will join the opposition bloc composed of Pimentel, re-electionist Panfilo Lacson, Jamby Madrigal, Rodolfo Biazon and Manuel Roxas II.

Sen. Pia Cayetano said she is

Continued on Page 21 Estrada

Teachers bear the brunt of election violence

June 7, 2007

Nellie Banaag and her crew had just finished counting the votes cast hours earlier and were about to bring the ballot boxes to Taysan Town Hall when the men arrived. The men, masked and armed, fired their guns, poured gasoline on the boxes and set them ablaze.

Banaag and another woman, Leticia Ramos, ran to the toilet to hide.

But the flames quickly spread and burned down the building in Taysan, a town in Batangas Province, south of Manila. Banaag and Ramos burned to death inside the toilet. A dozen other people were injured, and one of them eventually died in the hospital.

Banaag, 42, was a teacher who supervised voting in a school May 14 during elections that were as cumbersome and chaotic as they were violent. According to the Philippine police, more than 130 people were killed in violence related to the elections.

Although Banaag was the only teacher to have died in those attacks, several of her colleagues nationwide were abducted and harassed during the voting and the days afterward.

The other two fatalities were poll watchers hired by political parties to guard against improprieties. Days after the incident, two police officers allegedly working for a Taysan politician were implicated in the attack.

Banaag's death outraged Filipinos and again highlighted the plight facing teachers during elections. Public school teachers are the backbone of the nation's electoral process: they run and supervise the voting precincts and manually count the ballots, which they transport to town halls and city halls for tabulation.

According to the Department of Education, about 450,000 of the nearly 500,000 public school teachers nationwide served in the elections May 14, when Filipinos elected their senators, members of Congress, governors, mayors and councilors.

The results showed the opposition holding its majority in the Senate, while allies of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo won most of the districts in the House of Representatives.

Because of the violence that teachers face, many of them no longer want to serve during elections.

"I've had enough; I want to look for another job, even if it's manual labor," one of four teachers abducted in the southern province of Maguindanao said at a news conference in Manila last week. They were kidnapped, the teachers said, so they could not report to election duty, thus ensuring a failure of elections in their voting precincts. The teacher refused to divulge his name or have his picture taken for fear of his life and his family's safety.

Not taking part may not be not that simple, however: Filipino teachers are required by law to serve during elections. The Alliance of Concerned Teachers, the largest organization of education workers in the Philippines, said it would revive its campaign to have this law amended.

But despite the risks, said Antonio Tinio, chairman of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, teachers performed their task, even developing a sense of moral responsibility for doing it.

Banaag's family had warned her not to report for election duty because of the increasingly violent campaigning.

"We told her several times not to report for duty," Edlyn Buenafe, Banaag's sister, told The Philippine Daily Inquirer. "But she would just answer that it was her responsibility as a teacher to work in the elections."

Teachers are paid 3,000 Philippine pesos, or about \$65, for an extra week of what has become hazardous work, in which they are subjected to all forms of violence, harassment and intimidation, often from losing candidates or those out to cheat.

Voters who could not find their names on the voting list, which happens all the time because of the antiquated system used by the Commission on Elections, almost always turn their ire on these teachers.

"It is a role they are bound by law - and by their own integrity - to play," Tinio said. The teachers were required to serve poll duty mainly because of the lack of manpower. But perhaps more important than that, teachers are held in high esteem in the Philippines and are considered the most honest and credible members of the civil service.

In one case, on the night before the recent election, armed men forced teachers to fill out ballots in favor of administration candidates in Maguindanao. In Abra Province in the north, two teachers were wounded when they were attacked while transporting ballots after the voting.

Tinio said that no election in the country had ever taken place without teachers' being harassed or assaulted. In the 1995 elections, Filomena Tatlonghari, a teacher in Batangas Province, where Banaag died, was shot and killed by men who snatched the ballot boxes she was protecting. And in several instances in the past, teachers were sued on the ground that they had helped candidates cheat.

"All throughout the country, the harassment against teachers were fairly common; they were very vulnerable," Tinio said. "People vent their frustrations on them and they are targeted for intimidation, especially in the local level, where elections are particularly violent and where cheating is more rampant."

Tinio said most of the perpetrators of crimes against teachers were not prosecuted, mainly because the attackers were not identified or witnesses were afraid to come forward. Many Filipino politicians, particularly in the provinces, are known to maintain private armies and to resort to violence to settle disputes.

Apart from making sure that the elections proceed as smoothly as possible, several Filipino teachers have

also exposed themselves to danger by coming out and exposing election fraud, as in the case of the teacher from Maguindanao who revealed to Lente, a group of lawyers who monitored the elections, that teachers were forced by armed men to fill out election documents in favor of administration candidates.

"Despite the hardships and the risks, our teachers trooped to the polling places and did their job well," Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said. "This shows both professionalism and patriotism at its finest. We should all be proud of them."

Some have elevated Banaag and her colleagues to the status of heroes.

Conrado de Quiros, a popular columnist, wrote that while soldiers "only defend this country's body, teachers protect this country's soul."

"We tacitly acknowledge the overweening importance of teachers when we make them poll watchers," he wrote. "We say that there is no other group or class or species in this country we can trust to have the loftiness of spirit and purity of heart to keep elections clean." ■

U.S. gives \$10M reward to informants

June 7, 2007

The U.S. handed over its largest reward in the campaign to wipe out al-Qaida-linked militants in the southern Philippines, giving \$10 million on Thursday to Filipino informants in the killing of two top terror suspects.

Four masked informants collected on promised \$5 million rewards against Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadafy Janjalani, who was slain in a September clash on southern Jolo island, and his presumed successor, Abu Sulaiman, who was killed on Jolo in January.

More than 7,000 Filipino soldiers — backed by U.S. military surveillance, training and other noncombatant assistance — have been waging an offensive on Jolo since August.

"Information provided by the brave Filipino citizens recognized today was instrumental in assisting the Armed Forces of the Philippines to track down and locate these two terrorist leaders," the U.S. Embassy said.

The four men, their faces covered to protect their identities, received the money in five black plastic suitcases at the Jolo provincial capitol complex from embassy officials.

Philippine marine Brig. Gen. Juancho Sabban said three of the

informants, including two former Abu Sayyaf members, shared the \$5 million reward for providing information that led to the clash that killed Janjalani and led to the discovery of his decomposing body. DNA tests confirmed the December discovery in the jungles of Jolo.

The fourth informant got the \$5 million bounty on Sulaiman for giving information that resulted in the gunbattle that killed him. In January, U.S.-trained Philippine army special forces gunned down Abu Sulaiman, a veteran Abu Sayyaf guerrilla.

Janjalani and Sulaiman were accused of plotting the kidnapping of American and Filipino tourists from a resort on the southeastern island of Palawan in 2001, during which one of the Americans was beheaded, and a 2004 ferry blast that killed 116 people in Manila.

A manhunt continues for other Abu Sayyaf commanders and two top Indonesian militants who are wanted for their alleged roles in the 2002 nightclub bombings that killed 202 people on Indonesia's Bali island.

Washington has offered rewards for the capture of Dulmatin and Umar Patek, key operatives of the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah network, whose operatives are believed to be training Filipino insurgents in bomb-making. There is a \$10 million reward for Dulmatin, who goes by one name, and \$1 million for Patek. ■

From Page 20

Estrada

inclined to join the new majority while Pangilinan, although he ran as an independent, is also classified as an opposition legislator by calling for President Arroyo's resignation a few years ago.

"The (Senate presidency) will have to be determined by the majority coalition, whatever configuration it would be. They have to decide that. If they are divided, they have to coalesce with the minority," Arroyo said.

Angara said that with the opposition dominating the Senate, the new minority will presumably be composed of himself, Arroyo, Enrile, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Richard Gordon, Lito Lapid and Bong Revilla — and that they will have to learn to deal with the new majority.

The fates of GO candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III and Juan Miguel "Migz" Zubiri remain uncertain. Both are hoping to get the 12th slot.

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) proclaimed on Wednesday 10 winning senators composed of six GO candidates, two TU bets and two independent candidates. ■

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From Page 19 Coconut Virgin Oil

What is the most important component of coconut oil and why?

Lactic fatty acid (Co) because since 1994 increasing the number of literature are appearing regarding the anti-viral anti-microbial, antifungal and antiprotazoal properties of Medium Chain fatty acids (Ca, Co, C12) with lactic acid (Co) and its monoglyceride form monolaurin being mentioned as the most potent against lipid coated microorganisms which are not normally cured by ordinary antibiotics. Among the vegetable oils traded in the world, coconut oil is the richest source of MCFA (64%) and lauric acid (48-53%).

Is the lauric fatty acid in vivo reduced if is processed using high temperature?

No. the lauric fatty acid content of any coconut oil is highly dependent on the variety of coconut and not on the process used. In a study done by the PCA Zamboanga Research Center, it was found out that hybrid coconuts contain higher lauric fatty acids compared to local tall varieties. What do the experts say regarding coconut oil derived lauric fatty acid and its monoglyceride form monolaurin?

According to Professor Jan Kabama, Department of Pharmacology, Michigan State University, who pioneered research on monolaurin.

* Monolaurin as a dietary supplement has shown very good results as anti-biotic and anti-viral agent particularly in its potency against lipid coated enveloped viruses.

* It does not cause resistance organism to appear and was also shown that it can reduce the resistance of germs to antibiotics.

* When coconut oil is consumed, the body makes the disease fighting monolaurin.

According to Dr. Mary Eng, a noted nutritional biochemist, formerly with the University of Maryland now with the Nutrition Development, Eng

Associates.

* Recently published research has shown that natural coconut fat in the diet leads to normalization of body lipids, protects against alcohol damage



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to the liver and improves the immune system's anti-inflammatory response.

* The antimicrobial fatty acids and their derivatives are essentially non-toxic to man and they are produced in vivo by humans when they ingest those commonly available foods that contain adequate levels of medium chain fatty acids like coconut oil.

* The medicinal properties of lauric acid and monolaurin have been recognized by small number of researchers for nearly four decades and has reached in more than 20 research papers and several US patents.



Claro Bermudez (seated in front, 3rd from left) and his team pose for souvenir during the proclamation party on June 2, 2007



Supporters of Samahang Makabayan pose with the candidates during the proclamation party held at the CRC Building on 6767 Cote des Neiges, Montreal, June 2, 2007

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5. FREDERICK IAN MONTILLA	10. LOURDES BLANCO ROSALES

Soto stops Bobby Pacquiao in seventh

June 10, 2007

Humberto Soto stopped Bobby Pacquiao, of the Philippines, in the seventh round of their super featherweight fight Saturday at

Madison Square Garden.

Soto hit Pacquiao with a left hook to the body that caused the younger brother of boxing superstar Manny Pacquiao to drop to one knee in the



Bobby Pacquiao, of the Philippines, braces for a punch from Humberto Soto, of Mexico, during the fifth round of boxing action Saturday, June 9, 2007 at Madison Square Garden in New York. Pacquiao lost the fight with a 7th round TKO.

corner of the ring. The fight was officially stopped at 1:48 of the seventh.

Soto threw a straight right hand moments earlier that hurt Pacquiao and buckled his knees.

Manny Pacquiao was at ringside to watch Bobby's (27-13-3, 12 KO) performance.

Soto (42-5-2, 26 KO) three 297 punches to Pacquiao's 204. Boxing fans at ringside wondered if Manny might consider fighting fight Soto soon to try and avenge his brother's defeat. ■

Arroyo leads Independence Day celebration

June 12, 2007

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo led Tuesday government employees, police and the military in the 109th Independence Day celebration at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.

Arroyo also led the flag-raising and wreath-laying ceremonies at Luneta Park before proceeding to Quirino Grandstand where she delivered a speech.

In Caloocan, Supreme Court Justice Reynato Puno also led the wreath-laying ceremony at the Bonifacio Shrine.

In Cavite, Vice President Noli de Castro led the wreath-laying ceremony at the tomb of former President Emilio Aguinaldo.

Arroyo in her speech reiterated her call for national reconciliation and urged both her allies and critics to set aside politics and move on to prioritize the interest of the Filipino people.

"Kung nakipaglaban noon ang ating mga bayani upang matamo ang kalayaan, nararapat lamang na ipagpatuloy natin ang naunang layunin upang mapalaya ang sambayanan mula sa kahirapan (If our heroes fought to gain our independence, then it is but fitting that we continue their legacy to free our nation from poverty)," she said.

Arroyo said her administration would focus in improving the economy – pro growth, pro-trade and pro-investment – in order to free the Filipinos from poverty. Meanwhile, the family of former President Aguinaldo criticized Arroyo for moving the holiday from June 12 to June 11. ■



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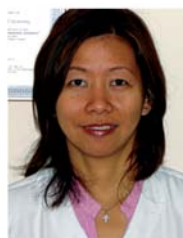
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