

Bouchard-Taylor Commission hearings reveal positive attitude



Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, Co-Chairs of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences

Montreal, November 25, 2007 Canadian attitudes toward immigrants remain over-whelmingly positive, and when viewed in international perspective are truly exceptional. Canada has the highest immigration rate in the world, but when asked if this country accepts too many immigrants, most of us say no. And when Canadians are asked to name in their own words the biggest problem facing the country, diversity issues don't even make the list.

Canadians are by far the most likely of any G8 country to say immigrants are good for the country, and that immigrants help the economy grow rather than take "jobs from other Canadians." In naming things that make them proud to be Canadian,

more Canadians say multiculturalism than hockey or bilingualism.

On the other hand, the Commission heard Quebec's age-old language debate which dominated the second day of the Bouchard-Taylor hearings on religious accommodation.

The commission, which launched its hearings in Gatineau, heard from dozens of people who stressed the primacy of French in Quebec's value system.

But some expressed concern about the public debate over reasonable accommodation and the risk it brings of pitting old stock French-speaking Quebecers against everyone else, including anglophones.

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Commission

Cavite Province

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FCMM's Queen of Angels achieved biggest fund raising result

By Jose Aracena



The Filipino Catholic Mission church on Saint Laurence Boulevard

The 2007 Search for the FCMM King and Queen of Angels, a special fund-raising project of the Filipino Catholic Mission of Montreal ended successfully last Saturday, October 27, 2007 in a gathering that also served as the community's 'Pre-Halloween Party'.

Parishioners, visitors, and friends filled up the basement of the St. Thomas Church and enjoyed a night of fun, food, and dancing while awaiting the final results of the counting done by a Board of Canvassers. At the end of the night, amidst great anticipation and excitement, the announcement came: A total of \$103, 337. 68 was raised by the family, friends and supporters of the thirteen (13) candidates who sold ballots since the project's launching last January. It was the most successful campaign ever for the FCMM Church – surpassing the \$ 96,000.00 total of the 2005 King and Queen of Angels!

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EDITORIAL

Are we not interested to express our concerns?

We have had so many inquiry commissions in the past but none created as much interest and attention as the Bouchard Taylor Commission. It has been the topic of discussion in most talk shows, newspapers and their editorials but in the Philippine community, we do not seem to have heard of any organization of Filipino-Canadians having presented a brief while there have been other Asian groups who did. Perhaps, the community has not yet realized how important it is to be heard and to communicate its concerns and needs. Or perhaps, majority of us feel quite happy and do not feel any need to ask for any reasonable accommodation at all. Whatever the reason for not being involved with the Bouchard Taylor Commission, it is not yet too late to start thinking of how we can be heard and be counted among those who expressed interesting viewpoints that indicated the need to develop policies which will make immigrants integrate successfully into Quebec society. Needless to say, it is important to keep ourselves informed of the issues and the possible implications of government policies that will be developed from the recommendations to be made in the Commission's report that will be submitted in March 2008. Besides, it is not yet too late to write down our thoughts about the issue and to share them with the Commission. What is needed is for some community leaders to get together and reflect on what Filipino Canadians and their families coming to Quebec need in order to have a smooth transition from one environment to another. Do our young people have access to better jobs? Have our professionals like nurses, architects, engineers, dentists, teachers, been treated fairly by the professional orders? How can we improve the conditions of the Live-in Caregiver program? What other issues should we address in order to solve some of our social problems? What resources can we use in helping prevent youth crimes, drug addiction, and other problems stemming from culture shock? It is common knowledge that after a long separation

of mothers from their children, reunification is not easy when they arrive in Canada.

It is interesting to note that in the course of the Bouchard Taylor hearings, some comments pointed out to the positive attitudes that people have of immigrants. But this positive attitude does not translate into better jobs for them as they are generally underemployed due to a variety of reasons, first and foremost being the long delay in having their professional training recognized by the different orders. Horror stories of foreign doctors driving taxis, or engineers working in factories at minimum wage are very common. Although there are no known statistics, the fact remains that there is a lot to be desired in improving the lot of an immigrant as it takes more than seven years before being gainfully employed.

The mandate that Mr. Jean Charest gave the Commission included formulating "recommendations to the government to ensure that accommodation practices conform to the values of Quebec society as a pluralistic, democratic, egalitarian society." This leads to the next question: Who should carry the burden of adjusting to whom, and how?

Charles Taylor concluded after hearings over the past month that the first step in integration is employment. From the different groups who presented their complaints, the common problem is the refusal of the professional orders to be flexible when it comes to the recognition of foreign diplomas. Mr. Gérard Boucher of the University of Quebec pointed out that it is the professional order that should answer most of the questions but remains silent and did not make any appearance in front of the Commission.

If there is any ethnic group that is greatly affected by the inequities of the system of accreditation, it is our community. Perhaps, we can start getting more interested in being politically involved. We must be heard by those who have the power to make things better for us.

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

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President Arroyo quashes rebellion

Dissident military officers leave court during trial for a failed coup and barricade themselves in a Manila hotel

November 30, 2007

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo quickly quashed the latest threat to her rule Thursday, dispatching troops and SWAT teams when dissident military officers commandeered a five-star hotel after walking out of their coup trial.

Soon after the seven-hour confrontation ended with the dissidents surrendering, the government announced a midnight-to-5 a.m. curfew for the Manila area, with checkpoints set up and the military and police on red alert. The officers had demanded that Arroyo resign, accusing her of corruption.

Puno said he hoped the curfew would be enforced for only one night.

National police Chief Avelino Razon said 101 people were arrested at the hotel, and that more were being sought. He said several documents were found there "that support the theory that this is a well-planned activity."

"There are other components ... and we are pursuing the other groups that might try to continue to implement their plans," Razon said.

At least two people were injured in the assault on the hotel.

Escorted by military police, who apparently did not prevent them from

which troops commandeered a shopping center and hotel and demanded Arroyo's ouster.

them. But as the day wore on and hotel guests were evacuated, few



Captured coup suspects sit in handcuffs at the lobby of the Peninsula Hotel at the financial district of Makati City following their surrender Nov. 29, 2007. Several media covering the standoff also were arrested.

The 27 officers on trial were among 300 soldiers who took over the upscale Oakwood hotel and a nearby shopping center in Makati in July 2003, rigging the area with bombs. They denounced the government and military corruption but were accused of trying to stage a coup. They surrendered after the daylong uprising.

On Thursday, the coup defendants made phone calls and sent text messages urging crowds to support

people turned out for the latest effort to oust Arroyo, who has survived at least three coup plots and three impeachment efforts during nearly seven tumultuous years in power.

Arroyo took over the presidency when predecessor Joseph Estrada was ousted in January 2001, and opponents have criticized the legitimacy of her rule ever since. She also has been fighting allegations that she rigged the 2004 elections that gave her a six-year term.



Philippine police commandos prepare to take position near the Peninsula Hotel at the financial district of Makati city east of Manila, Philippines, where military officers under trial for a failed coup attempt are holed up Thursday Nov. 29, 2007. Several military officers defied a deadline to surrender after storming out of their coup trial Thursday, taking over the upscale hotel and demanding that President Arroyo resign.

Security forces used an armored personnel carrier to smash through the roped-shut front doors of the Peninsula hotel and fired volleys of warning shots. Clouds of tear gas rose from the lobby.

"Again and again, we have shown to the world the stability of the institutions of our democracy and the strength of this government," Arroyo said on national television. "Wrong and misguided deeds of the few do not speak for the people or the army and police."

"The full force of the law will be meted out without any concession. Additional charges are being prepared to hold accountable those who committed new crimes," she added.

The military men and their civilian sympathizers -- including former Vice President Teofisto Guingona -- were later led in groups to police buses. It was not immediately clear whether they were being arrested or taken in for questioning. Several journalists also were detained.

"For the safety of everyone, we're going out ... because we cannot live with our conscience if some of you get hurt in the crossfire," Antonio Trillanes, a leader of the dissident officers, told reporters.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo

leaving the court, the defendants marched to the hotel, pushed away guards at the entrance and set up a command center in a second-floor function room. Armed guards were set up on stairways from the lobby.

The first shots erupted about 75 minutes after a deadline passed for the men to surrender. One dissident soldier, distinguishable by a red armband, crouched inside the hotel lobby, his finger near the trigger of an M-16 rifle.

After agreeing to surrender, Trillanes said he believed other officers in the military were fed up with government corruption and won't stay quiet.

"I am convinced that most of them sympathize with our cause," he said. "That's enough for us now. Eventually it will be their turn to live up to their mandate as protectors of the people."

Arroyo's spokesman, Ignacio Bunye, said the president has no concerns about the loyalty of the military as a whole.

"We're in touch with the different commands, and all of them expressed their support for the chain of command," Bunye said.

The trial for Trillanes and his co-defendants is over a 2003 insurrection in



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From Page 1

Commission

"If you look at the profile of the English-speaking community, its long-term survival is fragile," said Jean-Marc Mangin, head of international development agency CUSO. "They've brought a lot to Quebec, and we have to make sure that it's able to prosper and grow."

Others presented a polar opposite point of view, arguing that immigrants settling in Quebec often choose to speak more English than French. "I don't see any threat to the English community or the English language in Quebec," said Jean-Paul Perreault, a member of language-rights group Impératif français.

"What I see is the opposite," he told the commission on Tuesday.

The phenomenon breeds linguistic insecurity among francophones, Perreault said, which in turn fuels tension between old-stock Quebecers and ethnic groups.

"There are three English universities in Quebec. If you open your television, you can get three English stations for every one French station in Quebec. This is not the language that is at threat," he added. Clear rules needed by public servants

A group of mid-level federal public servants brought a different message to the hearings — the need for clear rules outlining the extent of cultural and religious accommodation.

"We believe that general rules must be adopted to avoid numerous exceptions, and piecemeal and arbitrary decisions," said Yohanna Loucheur, the group's spokeswoman.

"If the values being asked for contradict those that Quebec wants to give itself, then those demands must be refused."

Loucheur used the example of free association between men and women as a social value that must be upheld.

Others tried to define reasonable accommodation.

"A reasonable accommodation is when we do something different to permit someone who is different to eat along at his table," said community worker Gille Lagacé.

Sociologist Yao Assogba told the commission there is too much media attention paid to demands by Muslims or Jews, when Quebec Protestants have actually asked for more in the past.

"Jews and Muslims are asking for less but those demands are in the media," said Assogba, who teaches at the University of Quebec in Outaouais.

"Considering the history of Quebec and the current context, I think it should be secular, where demonstrations of religion should be prohibited in the public place," he said.

The commission, headed by philosopher Charles Taylor and sociologist Gérard Bouchard, will travel to 17 provincial locations over the next three months to hear about religious and cultural accommodation.

Quebec Premier Jean Charest formed the commission in early 2007 after a protracted public debate on how immigrants integrate into the province.

Bouchard-Taylor Commission - The public consultation on accommodation practices offers Quebecers several participation methods

MONTRÉAL, Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, Co-Chairs of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences (CCAPRC), announced this morning the approach adopted with respect to the public consultation to be held in 17 Québec cities this fall.

Individuals, groups, organizations and institutions in Québec will be able to express in several ways their ideas and opinions on secularism, interethnic relations, collective integration or any other topic closely related to accommodation practices.

"We have chosen options that facilitate participation by individuals and groups, whether in writing or orally," Mr. Bouchard noted. "It is important for all participants to be able to express themselves before the Commission in more or less official settings in order to create a spirit of and forum for dialogue."

The Co-Chairs also announced the establishment of a 15-member Advisory Committee.(1)

"Some of the advisers have already contributed to the Commission's preparatory deliberations and their expertise in such diverse fields as law and religious sciences will be very useful to us during the public consultation," noted Mr. Taylor. "The advisers have varied training and are of different origins and will support us by offering advice on broad issues and specialized or specific questions in the realm of accommodation."

Methods of participation

- Individuals and organizations may submit a brief at a public hearing in each region of Québec that the Commission visits. They may also submit a brief to the Commission through its Website or by regular mail without presenting it at a public hearing.

- Individuals wishing to speak briefly to share their experience or relevant opinions will have an opportunity to testify at a public hearing.

- The public is also invited to participate in a regional citizens' forum, an informal meeting moderated by the Co-Chairs to be held in each of the 17 cities visited.

- An interactive section has been designed for Quebecers who wish to express their opinions on accommodation by answering each week a question displayed in the "Your opinion" section of the Website (www.accommodements.qc.ca).

- The Institut du nouveau monde (INM) has been asked by the Commission to organize four forums on themes of province-wide interest. The first province-wide forum, open to all Quebecers, will be held in Montréal on Friday, August 24 in conjunction with the INM summer school. Interested individuals must register with the INM online (www.inm.qc.ca) or by calling 1-877-934-5999, ext. 263.

Activities in Montréal

Numerous activities are planned on Montréal Island: four province-wide forums, two regional citizens' forums and five days of public hearings. The first regional citizens' forum in Montreal will be held in French on Tuesday, November 27, 2007, and the second one, in English, on Thursday, November 29, 2007. Hearings and forums will also be held in Longueuil and Laval.

Registration and documentation

Dates and registration procedures have been adopted with regard to the participation methods proposed. All of the necessary tools (the consultation document, the participation guide, the timetable of activities, and the registration form) can be consulted online. Information on the consultation can also be obtained by telephone.

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From Page 1

FCMM

Everyone hugged and greeted each other as members of one big family. The spirit of competition had taken a back seat. What prevailed was the spirit of unity as everyone basked in the joy and pride of being able to do something great for the Filipino Church.

The special project, held biennially since 1999, is a call to help the Filipino Mission augment its funds intended for the acquisition of its own Church and now, for its maintenance. With the money raised from the past major fund-raising, the FCMM was able to beef up its reserves and was considered last year (2006) as capable of having a Church of its own. And so the Montreal Diocese facilitated the arrangements for the FCMM's acquisition of its own Church in October, 2006, advancing the whole amount of \$300,000.00 to the Fabrique of St. Thomas The Apostle in the purchase of the St. Laurent property last year.

The Filipino Mission paid one-half of the amount then and has incurred an outstanding balance of \$150,000.00 plus 5% interest payable to the Archdiocese of Montreal in quarterly amounts of \$25,000.00 starting 2008.

On the launching of this year's King and Queen of Angels, Fr. Francisco Alvarez, pme, Pastor of the FCMM said in his message, "The 2007 King and Queen of Angels was envisioned to address the demands of maintaining a Church of our own, including and most especially, the liquidation of our account with the Diocese at the soonest possible time to avoid the accruing interest and be able to embark on other projects for the 20th Anniversary of the FCMM in 2009."

With the amount brought in by this year's King and Queen of Angels project and with the continued help of the community, this desire of the FCMM Pastor will soon be realized.

The Filipino Catholic Mission of Montreal would like to thank the thirteen participants, their parents, friends, benefactors and everyone who supported the 2007 Search for the FCMM King and Queen of Angels. Maraming Salamat Po !

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Authorities hunt for more suspects in rebellion

November 30, 2007

Philippine authorities launched a manhunt on Friday for more suspects accused of helping stage a dramatic but short-lived rebellion against the government which was put down by the military.

The small band of primarily armed forces officers, who seized a luxury hotel on Thursday to demand the resignation of President Gloria Arroyo, were bundled off by police after a lightning raid, but officials said others were involved.

Despite this, a beaming President Arroyo appeared on government television late on Friday to say that "the rule of law has triumphed".

"The Philippine people have shown our civil institutions are strong," Arroyo said, branding the mutineers as "desperate men who were blind to the will of their fellow Filipinos".

"We will charge them to the full extent of the law"

"We will charge them to the full extent of the law," Arroyo said, without elaborating.

Police chief Avelino Razon said documents found among debris in the Peninsula Hotel, which SWAT teams stormed in a hail of gunfire and tear gas to end the stand-off, indicated "four groups" took part in the mutiny.

He declined to give details but told reporters at least three renegade officers seen taking over the hotel had managed to get away despite the security cordon and a subsequent overnight curfew in Manila.

"One left a wig at the hotel premises," Razon told reporters.

Officials said up to 20 other people who were not part of the hotel siege were under investigation, including politicians and businessmen said to have financed the rebellion.

More than a thousand leftist activists staged a rally near the presidential palace

"Some of them are businessmen but I do not want to be hasty by naming names," National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales was quoted as saying in the local press.

"We are investigating the possible involvement of certain politicians," said armed forces chief of staff General Hermogenes Esperon, who also declined to name them.

Police said that 14 soldiers and as many as 36 civilians had been detained for their role in the mutiny including Roman Catholic bishop Julio Labayan, who was later released to the custody of his fellow bishops.

Arroyo has faced repeated coup attempts since taking power in 2001, and many of the people involved in Thursday's mutiny had come directly from a court hearing into their involvement in a 2003 coup attempt.

Razon said some were the "usual suspects" from previous attempts to bring down the government in the Philippines, where the military, big business and the Catholic church all hold powerful sway over national political life.

The armed forces can make or break a president, and the leaders of

Thursday's uprising - Navy Lieutenant Antonio Trillanes and Brigadier General Danilo Lim - had appealed to the rest of the military to join them.

However, their appeal met little response and authorities later used an armoured personnel carrier to force their way into the hotel lobby, prompting the mutineers to surrender.

Arroyo said the swift quashing of the mutiny showed that "Filipinos will not accept the violation of the rule of law... and those who sow disorder".

Despite the rebellion's failure to attract large numbers of supporters onto the streets, it appeared to have been well-organised.

Police did not stop the rebels on

their way to the hotel, witnesses said, and a detailed website appeared as the uprising was launched that included harsh criticisms of the state of the nation under Arroyo.

Among those found with the rebels were former Philippine vice president and vocal Arroyo critic Teofisto Guingona as well as Bishop Labayan.

Foreign and local press organisations criticised the police for taking dozens of journalists into detention after they refused to leave the scene of the attempted mutiny despite the impending raid.

Although the journalists were released before dawn, the organisations charged that this was a violation of freedom of the press and was clearly

intended to intimidate them and prevent them from airing the views of government critics.

Arroyo said the government did not wish to impede the freedom of the press and that she had ordered the detained journalists released immediately after they had gone through processing by police.

More than a thousand leftist activists staged a rally near the presidential palace on Friday, declaring their support for the mutineers as they waved red banners and placards saying "Gloria, out now."

Police said there were no incidents during the rally. ■



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POLITICAL NEWS

NDP LAUNCHES "FAIRNESS FOR WOMEN" CAMPAIGN

Nov. 27/07 - OTTAWA - Today, the NPD's Women's Caucus launched its Fairness for Women Campaign, aimed at getting women back on the political agenda and increasing women's participation in Parliament.

Margaret Mitchell, former NDP MP for Vancouver East and an activist in the fight to end violence against women, joined the Women's Caucus.

"Only 20 per cent of MPs are women," said NDP Status of Women Critic, Irene Mathysen (London-Fanshawe). "That puts Canada 49th in the world in terms of female representation - trailing countries like Rwanda, Sweden and Costa Rica. That's not right. Women deserve an equal voice in Canadian politics."

The NDP Women's Caucus will be traveling to cities across the country to meet with groups and to encourage women to get involved in politics. The Fairness for Women campaign tackles six areas: fairness for women at work, a better work-family balance, an end to violence against women, making sure women are heard in public and in politics, fairness for marginalized women, and equality for women around the globe.

"It's time that women's voices resonated as loudly as men's in the corridors of power. It's not right that in the 21st century only one in five lawmakers is a woman," said NDP Leader Jack Layton. "I'm so proud of the fact that our caucus is made up of 40% women, and we are committed at making sure that women's voices are heard."

CONSERVATIVES SHORT- CHANGING FOUR MILLION SENIORS: NDP

Nov.30/07 TORONTO - NDP Leader Jack Layton and NDP Seniors and Pensions Critic Chris Charlton (Hamilton Mountain) will meet with representatives from retired police, firefighters and workers on Saturday to call on Harper's Conservatives to give seniors the full payment of the income supports to which they are entitled. Layton and Charlton will also be joined by Bill Gleberzon, President of Canadian Association for the 50 plus (CARP).

"Canadian seniors have worked hard all their lives, they've played by the rules, and they have a right to expect that the government isn't going to play keep-away with their benefit payments," said Layton. "A mistake was made. The government must take full responsibility and return to seniors what is rightfully theirs."

Last August, it was revealed that inflation numbers had been underrated by half a percentage point between 2001 and 2006. Consequently, Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement recipients have been underpaid by a compounded half of a percentage point a year.

"The amount of unpaid benefits could total over a billion dollars," said Charlton. "The Minister of Human Resources and Development has admitted the error, but he refuses to do anything about it. That's unacceptable."

Rupinder Kaur, Media Officer
NDP Caucus Services

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The Filipino Catholic Mission of Montreal
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ADVENT and CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE 2007/2008

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CONCERT by Ms. Joey Albert
Salle Brébeuf (College Jean de Brébeuf)
5575 Rue Descelles, Montreal, Quebec
December 15 (SATURDAY)
6:00 p.m. - 1st Day SIMBANGGABI
December 16 (3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT)
• (PENITENTIAL SERVICE before both MASSES)
11:30 a.m. - Mass
* No 5:00 p.m. Mass
7:30 p.m. - 2ND Day SIMBANGGABI
December 17 (MONDAY)
7:30 p.m. - 3rd Day SIMBANGGABI
December 18 (TUESDAY)
7:30 p.m. - 4th Day SIMBANGGABI
December 19 (WEDNESDAY)
* No 6: 00 p.m. Mass
7:30 p.m. - 5TH Day SIMBANGGABI
December 20 (THURSDAY)
7:30 p.m. - 6th Day SIMBANGGABI
December 21 (FRIDAY)
* No 6: 00 p.m. Mass

7:30 p.m. - 7th Day SIMBANGGABI
December 22 (SATURDAY)
7:30 p.m. - 8th Day SIMBANGGABI
December 23 (4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT)
11:30 a.m. - Mass
* No 5:00 p.m. Mass
7:30 p.m. - 9th Day SIMBANGGABI
December 24 (MONDAY)
• 8:00 p.m. - MASS OF THE LORD'S NATIVITY
December 25 (TUESDAY)
• 12:00 noon - CHRISTMAS DAY MASS
*No 5:00 p.m. Mass
December 30 (SUNDAY)
- FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY
11:30 a.m. - Mass
1:30 p.m. - FCMM COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY
*No 5: 00 p.m. Mass
December 31 (MONDAY)
• 7:00 p.m. - Exposition of The Blessed Sacrament and New Year's Eve Thanksgiving Mass
January 1, 2008 (TUESDAY)
- Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
• 12:00 noon - NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS
*No 5:00 p.m. Mass
January 6 (SUNDAY)
- Solemnity of the Lord's EPIPHANY
11:30 a.m. - Mass
5:00 p.m. - Mass
January 13 (SUNDAY)
• FEAST OF THE LORD'S BAPTISM
11:30 a.m. - Mass
5:00 p.m. - Mass
January 20 (SUNDAY)
• FEAST OF THE STO. NIÑO
11:30 a.m. - Mass
2:00 p.m. - SINULOG '08
No 5:00 p.m. - Mass



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Zenaida F. Kharroubi
B.A. English, M.A. Ed. Studies
Diploma in Education, TESL
Founder & Director-General
Gilmore College
Editor & Publisher,
North American Filipino Star
Group Commissioner, Scouts
Canada, Quebec Council

Joey Albert to Perform in Montreal

Contact Person : Jonard Aquino
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cell. Phone No. : 514-743-3572

Email address :
jonard.aquino@gmail.com

November 11, 2007—The Filipino Catholic Mission of Montreal in collaboration with Premiere Management Group proudly announces the upcoming show of one of the Philippines' most beloved songstress, Miss Joey Albert, slated on December 14, 2007, 7:30 PM at the Salle Brebeuf.

It is expected to be a night filled with inspirational and romantic music as Ms. Albert has been known for from the 80's up until now. Prepare to be regaled once again by lady who brought us such hit songs as "Tell Me," "I Remember The Boy," "A Million Miles Away," "Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin," "Lisa Pa Lamang" and many more heartwarming songs almost every Filipino have considered a favorite at least once in their lives.

Joey, as she is fondly known to family, friends and fans alike, has been based in Vancouver, Canada since the mid-90's where aside from being a full-time mother, she is also working as a preschool teacher. But music being her first love has brought her back to the performing stage. She has continuously wowed countless Filipino communities in North America, where she is also the official ambassadress for the Gawad Kalinga project of the Couples for Christ. A few years ago, Joey was diagnosed with cancer but battled her way back to normal life. She has attributed all her blessings to God's good grace. In August of this year Joey went back to the Philippines for a series of concerts with renowned composer and former boyfriend, Louie Ocampo. She also appeared in different local shows such as Wowowee, Sis and ASAP promoting their concert which earned rave reviews as Filipinos who've longed for her brand of music packed the venues and relived her timeless classics.

In a recent interview conducted by Diane Franco with Joey, she commented, "Joey's friendly and down-to-earth charm disarm many to this day, and yet, she is, arguably, still the pop queen to beat. She has earned more industry awards — 10 in all — than industry gossip in a career that produced a dozen albums."

And baby-boomers who grew up in OPM's early, glorious days in the '70s and '80s are well aware that Joey was one of the first artists that stage fully-packed concerts in big venues like the ULTRA and the Meralco Theater. People did, and still do, sing along to her songs, even during her more recent shows. In fact, younger artists have scored hits by remaking some of Joey's old songs."


Fr. Frank Alvarez, the revered Parish Priest of the Filipino Mission

says, "Joey has willingly and generously accepted the invitation to come to Montreal and to perform for the benefit and support of the Filipino Catholic Mission. The community has just recently acquired a church of their own, and just like any other parish, this one and only Filipino parish in the entire country also needs to master

whatever possible and decent financial resources in order to be able to continue expanding its pastoral and spiritual services as well as maintaining its parish facilities. And Joey wants to share in this concern by sharing her God-given musical talents and gifts for this purpose through her coming concert."

**We need all of you to support our initiative of unity and cooperation. Join us on December 8, at Studio 26
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(anglais) 11:30 am / 5:00 pm
(filipino) every last Sunday of the month

Messages on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the North American Filipino Star & 18th anniversary of Gilmore International College, December 8, 2007

Message du premier ministre



Le Collège Gilmore a atteint l'âge de la majorité. Depuis 18 ans maintenant, il accueille les jeunes de la communauté philippine et leur offre un endroit où grandir, créer des liens, s'épanouir, apprendre et réussir. Un endroit qui les prépare à un avenir à leur hauteur et qui leur ouvre des portes sur le monde. Et en même temps que le Collège Gilmore, le journal North American Filipino Star célèbre ses 25 ans d'existence au cœur de l'actualité et s'inscrit désormais comme un outil d'information précieux pour tous les gens de cette grande communauté.

Au Collège Gilmore et au journal North American Filipino Star, je dis félicitations pour leur anniversaire. À tous celles et ceux qui en font le succès et l'excellence, je dis bravo.

Jean Charest
Jean Charest

Gilmore College has reached adulthood. For 18 years now, it has opened its arms to young people from the Philippine community and has offered them a place where they can grow, forge ties, thrive, learn and succeed. A place that prepares them for a future worthy of them and that provides vistas on the world. Alongside Gilmore College's anniversary is the North American Filipino Star's 25 years at the news desk as an invaluable information tool for every member of this great community.

Congratulations to Gilmore College and the North American Filipino Star newspaper, and bravo to those who account for the success and excellence of both.

Québec



À l'occasion du 18^e anniversaire du Collège International Gilmore, j'offre mes meilleurs vœux aux administrateurs, aux professeurs et à l'ensemble du personnel de cet établissement ainsi qu'aux élèves et à leurs parents. Chacun et chacun de vous à sa manière contribue à la réussite de ce Collège. C'est en fin de compte Montréal qui bénéficiera de vos efforts et de votre travail.

Je souhaite beaucoup de succès aux nouveaux diplômés, dans leurs études comme dans la vie.

On this 18th anniversary of Gilmore International College, I would like to offer my best wishes to the administrators, instructors and all employees of this institution, as well as to its students and their parents. Each and every one of you is contributing in your own way to the college's achievements. Ultimately, it is Montréal that will benefit from your work and from your efforts.

I would like to wish great success to new graduates in their studies, as well as for the future.

Gérald Tremblay

Gérald Tremblay
Maire de Montréal
Mayor of Montréal

Montréal

The whole community is invited to participate in the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the North American Filipino Star and the 18th anniversary of Gilmore International College on

Saturday, December 8, 2007

8:00 P.M.

Studio 26 Mtl

855 Decarie Boulevard (near Cote Vertu Metro)

featuring the QP8 Band for your dancing pleasure

Proceeds to be donated to the Filipino Solidarity Cooperative

Tickets - Tel.: 514-485-7861, 514-733-8915

Marcel Tremblay

Marcel Tremblay
Membre du comité exécutif
Responsable des services aux
citoyens et citoyennes, de la
jeunesse et des relations
interculturelles



Message de Marcel Tremblay
Collège international Gilmore
& Filipino Star

À l'occasion du 25^e anniversaire de North American Filipino Star,
ainsi qu'à l'occasion du 18^e anniversaire du Collège international Gilmore,
je vous adresse mes meilleurs vœux de succès !

Montréal

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MESSAGE

I am pleased to have this opportunity to extend my personal greetings on the occasion of this fundraising dance party during the celebrations of the 25th Anniversary of the North American Filipino Star and the 18th Anniversary of the Gilmore International College here in Montréal.

Today's celebration honors the solidarity, industry and generosity for which Filipinos are renowned. These are the qualities that cause your members to place others ahead of themselves. Your efforts and contributions to the community warm the heart and make us proud to be called Filipino.

It was this sense, all those years ago, which set you along this path. Your activities help strengthen the bonds both within this community and through our society at large. I am happy to note that your organizations serve as unifying forces for our *kababayan* in this corner of the world. In the years ahead, may your endeavors, lend new meaning to the words penned by Honoré de Balzac, renowned 19th century French novelist and playwright, that "Power is not revealed by striking hard or often, but by striking true."

As we look back upon this gathering, let us remember the old-fashioned words that dare us to care. Let us remember the best of our traditions adapted to a different time and clime. Let us remember the ties that bind so we may build upon our successes and keep faith in our shared future.

Maligayang pagbati muli sa inyong pagdiriwang, at nawa'y patuloy na magtagumpay ang lahat ng inyong mga gawain.

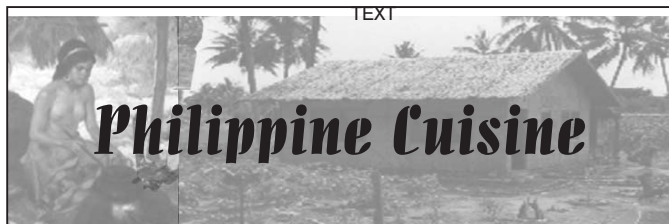

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TEXT

Chicken Adobo in Coconut Milk



Ingredients:

- 1 Kilo dressed chicken cut into parts
- ¼ reaspoon salt
- ½ cup soysauce
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1 ½ head head garlic chopped
- 3 pcs. chili pepper
- 1 cup coconut milk (first squeeze)
- 2 tablespoons oil
- ½ teaspoon peppercorn

How to cook:

- 1.) In a deep frying pan or wok, brown chicken in oil.
- 2.) Add salt, soysauce, peppercorn, garlic and vinegar.
- 3.) Cook uncovered and bring to boil
- 4.) When its almost dry just add ½ cup of water
- 5.) Cover and simmer until chicken becomes tender.

- 6.) Pour coconut milk and chili pepper.
 - 7.) Simmer until the sauce thickens.
- Serve hot. (enjoy these philippine recipes)

Squid Adobo

Ingredients:

- 1 Kilo squid
- ½ cup water
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1 teaspoon peppercorn
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1 head garlic chopped
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 3 pcs. tomatoes diced
- ½ tablespoon sugar
- 3 tablespoons oil

How to cook:

- 1.) Wash the squid don't let the black tint burst as it will give bitter taste.
- 2.) In a deep pan, add water, squid, vinegar, pepper and salt bring to boil until squid is cooked.
- 3.) Take out the squid, set aside.
- 4.) Strain the sauce, set aside.
- 5.) Saute' garlic, onion and tomatoes.
- 6.) Add the squid and pour the rest of the sauce.
- 7.) Add sugar and allow the sause to soak through the squids. Serve hot.

Readers are invited to send in their favorite recipes. Please send it at least one week before the publication date, i.e., 7th and 14th of each month.

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The North American Filipino Star Photo Gallery



Paskong Pinoy winner, Alvin Ocampo, proudly displays his parol. He is flanked by Tina Periquet, prize donor, Lourdes Fabia, coordinator of the parol workshop, and the Mrs. Ocampo, the boy's mother. This is a yearly project of the Philippine Folk Art Society of Quebec.



Ernelito Lebario, new member of the Laging Handa Scout Group, smiles for the camera as he holds some of the colorful lanterns made during the parol workshop held on Nov. 18, 2007 at the Intercultural Library building



Myrna Sarmiento, president, and Sonny Valdez, vice-president, pose with the rest of the executive board of the Novo Ecijanos Association during their induction at St. Kevin's Church social hall recently, officiated by Dr. Ed Sideco, one of their advisers.



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International College 18th Anniversary



Students in the nursing aide course (PAB or PSW program) pose with their teacher, Ms. Clarice Mackay. Photo taken recently at Gilmore International College.



Russian students receiving their English certificates. from Zenaïda Kharroubi, director-general

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16th Anniversary Celebration, October 2005 with His Excellency, Philippine Ambassador Jose Brillantes



Gilmore International College's headquarters in the penthouse of this building close to the Snowdon metro

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A Place With A Glorious Past



The province of Cavite abounds with great objects, and subjects, of culture and history. It is the birthplace of a good number of Filipino heroes and it has an interesting range of sites associated with the Philippine Revolution of 1896. Found in the province is the residence of the first president of the republic, **Emilio Aguinaldo**, which is also the site where the Philippine Republic was proclaimed on June 12, 1898.

Located 34 km south of Manila, Cavite teems with natural resources and fantastic landscapes. It is home to **Tagaytay City**, the Philippines' second summer capital, next to Baguio City. The accessing highway offers a breathtaking sight of the world-famous **Taal** formation, a crater within an island

among these popular first class resorts complete with modern facilities.

Cavite stands proudly as a place with a glorious past. Its warm and friendly people, whose ancestors fought for a noble cause, manifest industry and patience in various skills and professions, openly receptive to the entry and exchange of culture and technology that are of value to this wondrous province.

The majority of the 2 million strong population speak Tagalog while those in Cavite City and in some areas speak Chabacano. English is considered as the second language and is widely used as medium of communication in business and higher education. Other indigenous languages are Waray, Bicolano, Cebuano, Ilokano, Pangasinense, and Hiligaynon. Chinese and Spanish are also spoken by some local residents.

Tourist Attractions

Cavite's highest elevation is **Tagaytay City**, a heavenly place overlooking Taal Volcano, with its' cool climate and peaceful atmosphere. Most people who visit Tagaytay go to **Picnic Groove** for picnics and sightseeing.



La Pieta, located in Tagaytay City



Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Monument

within a lake. Coconut groves dot the ridges of Tagaytay and classy accommodations give the visiting tourists the pleasures of relaxation, and at the same time, wide opportunities to enjoy the magnificent view of Taal.

Puerto Azul and **Caylabne Bay** in Ternate, and **Island Cove** in Kawit are



Pico De Loro

The overlook at **Taal Vista Lodge** offers a spectacular view of the volcano (about 15 km distant) and lake. Boat rides around the volcano island are also available for those who wish to go volcano trekking.

Popular festivals include the **Maytinis Festival** celebrated every 24th of December in Kawit and **Pahimis Festival** in Amadeo which is a thanksgiving celebration taking place



Maytinis Festival celebrated every 24th of December in Kawit featuring the re-enactment of Joseph and Mary's search for a place to stay the night Christ was born in Bethlehem



Pahimis is a thanksgiving celebration for bountiful coffee harvest in Amadeo Cavite. During the parade, colorful costumes with coffee cherries are worn as people dance in the street.



View of Taal Volcano from the beautiful & popular Tagaytay Picnic Grove.

in late February.

Corregidor Island, also called "The Rock", is another popular tourist attraction. It features the remains of the gallant last stand made by Filipino-American troops against the superior invasive forces of the Japanese Imperial Army, an event which came to be written in history. It is the largest of the five islands guarding the entrance to Manila Bay.

Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Shrine The town of Kawit played an important role in Philippine political history. The proclamation of the Republic of the Philippines was made in this town on the balcony of the home of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo. Now a national shrine, it was in this house where the Philippine flag was first unfurled. Emilio Aguinaldo became the first president of

the Philippine Republic.

La Pieta - At the back of Pink Sisters Church in Tagaytay City is this large statue, a depiction of the famous "La Pieta." It is arguably one of the most famous rendition of Mary and Jesus. It is especially significant during Lent when the Philippines begins to observe the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Pink Sisters' Church is famous for its piously prayerful nuns who are in pink traditional nun's clothing. They ceaselessly pray for the petitions that the faithful submit to them via small window on the side of the Church.

Pico de Loro offers a magnificent 360 view from the summit. Facing the sea on the north-eastern side of the Manila Bay area., you can actually see ships passing by. ■



Taal Volcano , nestled in Taal Lake, viewed from the ridge of Tagaytay City



View of Taal Volcano from Leslie's Restaurant, a good place to dine and appreciate the stunning beauty of the surrounding landscape.



This is in Island Cove Resort, Kawit, Cavite. The nipa huts are built over the lake (river) connecting to Manila Bay. The resort is open all year round for any event.

Nation Feature

From tricycle driver to chief mate

November 21, 2007

By Jeric G. Contreras

Before reaching the peak of his career as a seafarer, this hard-working man from Hagonoy, Bulacan fondly remembers the good old days, when he used his older brother's dilapidated tricycle for meager earnings to finance his studies.

Today, Arturo "Turo" Cabral, 44, works as the chief mate of MV Saga Voyager, a general cargo carrier based in Hong Kong. He heads the deck department tasked to monitor and evaluate seafarers' performance and productivity in the rank-and-file category. He now manages 22 seamen, 19 Filipinos and three Britons.

"I really never imagined that someday I would be one of the ship's high ranking officials," Cabral told the Inquirer. "I

remarkable career as a seaman - from the lowest level, doing all the wiping, washing and cleaning of the tanker's dirtiest parts, including the ship's toilets.

His British boss noticed his extraordinary efforts after a couple of years and promoted him an able seaman on his second ship, MV Melba. By 1996, Turo took time out to study and aim for a higher career as a ship official. He passed the PRC licensure exam as a third mate, ranking fifth. He then rendered service as a third mate in MV Bar Orient, a bulk carrier ship.

Family man

In 1998, just two years later, he passed another licensure exam as a second mate and immediately went to work on the MV Douglas. Just six years later, he



Arturo Cabral in 1990 - He supports his parents, wife and kids, siblings, nephews and nieces, even his in-laws.

had experienced all the best and worst of being a seafarer before I reached this status. It took a lot of sacrifices and hardships before I reaped the fruits of hard work."

After earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Transportation from the Philippine Maritime Institute-Manila in 1984, Turo waited more years before he was hired as a utility worker in a manning agency.

"When I received my college diploma, I had to endure what most of the aspiring seamen went through," he said. "I didn't find a job immediately. I literally submitted copies of my curriculum vitae to almost all the shipping agencies in Manila. I had to endure the pain of applying without any big boss or sponsor to back me up and rush my application. I exhausted all means just to be hired."

How his career started

While he was hoping for the good news to happen, Cabral continued working as a tricycle driver to support the daily needs of his parents and siblings. His break began in 1989 when Task Agencies Inc. in Ermita, Manila hired him as a utility worker for five months.

"I was very happy when I was employed as a utility worker," Cabral said. "The agency was also sending capable seamen abroad. So when I learned about it, I had to impress my manager. After five months of sacrifices, they noticed my performance and they sent me to MT Pacific Jude where I first worked as an ordinary seaman or a mess man."

It was the start of Turo's

passed a third exam and became a chief mate.

This was when Turo began earning and sending big bucks to his wife and six daughters back home. Supporting his immediate family, he also finances the needs of his parents, siblings, nephews, nieces and even his in-laws. He keeps his feet on the ground, enjoying both life's pleasures and caprices.

"I am not a selfish individual," he said. "I am totally aware how hard it is to live these days. Even though I have six daughters and a wife to support, it has not crossed my mind not to support my relatives and loved ones. I am just giving back and sharing my blessings with them."

Turo is presently enjoying a vacation in the country. Being with family makes him feel complete. He narrates how he longs for the hugs and kisses of his loved ones on board ship sailing around the world.

"If you're going to think of it, earning money makes seamen feel good. But at the end of the day, when you're resting and you're about to sleep, missing your loved ones makes seamen feel bleak," he lamented.

Turo has already bought houses and lots for his daughters. He also decided to limit his working contract on board, which expires every six months.

"Before, I was dreaming of earning money for my family. I tried my best to find a job that would support them. Now that I have saved something for their future, I am finding ways and opportunities to spend quality time with them. I am now fulfilled. I have achieved my goals in life," he said. ■

FILIPINO STAR SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Jennylyn Mercado: The storm is over



Jennylyn Mercado will always remember 2007 as a colorful year of firsts. For the first time, she thought of quitting showbiz, caught as she was right smack in the middle of the storm that blew over the heads of Angel Locsin and manager Becky Aguila.

"Yes," Jennylyn reveals, now that the smoke has cleared, "I wanted to quit showbiz and just continue my studies. I was in fourth year high school when I entered showbiz."

So she prayed a lot, kept mum about the issue and let things resolve themselves. They did. Now, the dark clouds are gone and the sun is shining again on her. Jennylyn has decided to stay put in GMA 7, and she can't be any happier. The StarStruck winner hardly has time to sleep a wink. She stars in the primetime series *La Vendetta* and in the indie film *Nars*. Another indie film, *Manila West Side*, will be released next year along with her third album for GMA Records.

Next week, Jennylyn will have a new show, whose title and nature she still refuses to disclose. Then, she gets paired with Sen. Bong Revilla for the first time in the Metro Filmfest entry *Resiklo*.

"That's why I turned down the offer to star in Joaquin Bordado with Robin Padilla," explains Jennylyn. "My schedule is too tight. The other reason is too personal."

No, she insists. Failing to land the leading lady role in Bordado is not the reason for the rejection. Jennylyn adds she would still turn down the offer, even if it were a leading lady role. She and her manager have already decided and there's no turning back. No amount of cajoling will make Jennylyn say what her personal reason for turning down the role is. So we'll have to leave it at that.

Jennylyn is also keeping her cards to herself where the issue of renewing her contract with GMA Artist Center is

concerned. The contract, which expires Jan. 31, 2008, includes a clause that extends Jennylyn's stay with the Kapuso Network until 2008 and 2009.

But again, Jennylyn is mum about what hers — and her manager's decision will be early next year. She and Becky will have to discuss things first, says Jennylyn.

Now, the P64-M question: Would she move to ABS-CBN if Becky asks her to?

Jennylyn's answer is quick: "Malaking diskusyon 'yan. But one thing's sure, I will let GMA 7 in on everything that's happening. I don't want what happened before (referring to Angel's surprise move to transfer to ABS) to happen again."

By laying her cards on the table, Jennylyn wants to avoid committing the sin of omission Angel did before her. And it's well Jennylyn does that. She has learned that people don't look kindly on stars who fail to look back where they came from.

Jennylyn knows that what she owes what she has — including three branches of her Jen's Boutique all over the metro — to GMA 7. And she just can't turn her back on the network.

Jennylyn also recognizes the big role Becky is playing in her career.

"I owe her a lot. I trust her in my career. She knows what's best for me," says Jennylyn.

She can breathe freely, now that the year is about to end with nary a hint of the controversy she has now gotten so used to. The laidback mode extends to her role as Bianca Samual, Bong's love interest in *Resiklo*.

Unlike last year's Metro filmfest entry *Super Noypi* where Jennylyn moved heaven and earth to save people, she is sweet and retiring in *Resiklo*. After all, the hero's leading lady is supposed to let her Knight in Shining Armor hog the limelight, right?

"The tables are turned. Instead of doing the saving, the way I did in *Super Noypi*, I am the one being saved here in *Resiklo*," reveals Jennylyn. Oh yes, it's the damsel in distress waiting for her Prince Charming to come rushing and save her from the bad guys (in this case, aliens out to sow evil and wreak havoc on earth).

"The pressure has eased up. And I'm so thankful I'm not being linked to my leading man this time," smiles Jennylyn.

Resiklo is her fourth Metro Filmfest movie, after *Happy Together*, *Blue Moon* and *Super Noypi*, in that order.

This time, her starrer is a blend of romance, action and suspense with a lot of CGI special effects thrown in for good measure.

"It's bigger than *Exodus*," Bong promises. And it also delivers a strong social message: Recycle, recycle, recycle!"

The title roler, the robot *Resiklo*, is a product of recycled materials himself. He is made of scrap metal, but is none the worse for it. In fact, he — along with Bong's character, Commander Crisval Sarmiento — even emerges the hero.

"We are using 7.1 Dolby, a first in the Philippines," Bong reveals. He has another reason to be proud. This early, Bong adds, an international distributor has shown interest in the film.

Let's hope — not just for him, but more so, for the local film industry — that these great expectations are met.

Cristine bares all In 10M launching flick



Sweet and seductive Cristine Reyes bares all finally, in her launching movie *"Green Paradise."*

In fact, everyone is talking about this young lady who once entered showbiz and was introduced as Ara Mina's sister. She then charmed people with her naughty and sweet ways.

Little did we know that this young lady would also dare to bare. She posed for FHM and apparently, the copies sold well, with her fresh face but really sexy body on the cover.

Now, Cristine is up to show more of her. In *"Green Paradise,"* she portrays a

typical probinsyana who fell in love with a man whom she just met in their province to visit. In the film, the guy resides in Manila. Andrew Schimmer is Cristine's love interest in the movie.

Bold and sensitive scenes shared by Andrew and Cristine make us wonder what made her approve of it? Is there something romantic between them?

This is a career move for Cristine. Apart from the sexy scenes she did, her role was the most challenging she portrayed, so far.

In the movie, Cristine also proves that she is a sensitive actress and she has the depth in acting.

"Siguro 'yon ang namana ko sa ate (Ara Mina) ko. I'm happy to follow her footsteps. She's an award-winning actress and I want to be like her soon," reveals Cristine.

We were told that the movie was given a big budget, a whopping 10 million! "A quality film, indeed," says Lorenzo Kho, the man behind New City Entertainment.

Starring Joel Torre, Rio Locsin, Kris Martinez, Charee Pineda, Jiro Manio and Juan Rodrigo, *"Green Paradise"* opens November 21. The film is written by Dinno Erece and directed by Bing Santos and Kant Leung. ■

Diether Ocampo denies romance with hot model



Hunk actor Diether Ocampo strongly denied reports that he and hot model Bubbles Paraiso are now an item.

"There's nothing to deny to begin with, there's no romantic affair," Ocampo said.

Ocampo and Paraiso are part of the cast of ABS-CBN's newest musical fantasy series, *"Princess Sarah."*

Ocampo admitted that he and Bubbles are good friends, and that the friendship is a major factor in his decision to accept a role in the new TV series.

"Yes we are good friends and I really know her," he said.

Ocampo was reacting to reports that he and Paraiso were spotted during a romantic tryst in Cebu.

Nowadays, Ocampo is busy taping for *"Princess Sarah"* and running UNO, the men's magazine that he publishes. ■

Alfred Vargas hints of relationship problems with LJ Reyes



Alfred Vargas

A few Sundays ago, actor Alfred Vargas insisted that he and longtime girlfriend, LJ Reyes, are fine and that he is very much happy with their relationship.

But recently, Alfred was singing a different tune as he candidly revealed that he and LJ are indeed going through a tough time because of time issues brought by their contrasting work schedule.

"We're just giving each other space. Kasi ngayon, siguro ang pinakamagandang gagawin namin is talagang i-admit naming kung ano ang priorities namin sa buhay. Tatal mga bata pa naman kami, lalo na siya," said Alfred.

Alfred and LJ have been very busy as of late because of their respective commitments. Alfred juggles his time between acting and his business ventures while LJ is dividing her time on studies and her showbiz career.

Asked if they see each other often, Alfred candidly confessed, "Lately hindi masyado dahil sa schedules naming dalawa."

For now, the hunky actor reiterated that he wants to devote more time to think about his future. "Lumalaki na tayo. I want to be prepared pagdating sa future. I really want to be stable and feeling ko, bawat lalaki naman, 'yon yung hangad."

Though the sexy actor never directly admitted it, his statement seemed to hint that they're currently in a cool-off stage.

"Mahirap sabihin na on the rocks nga kami," he quipped, "kasi open yung communication lines. Our relationship is a very understanding relationship."

He added, "Open pa rin sa communication lines. We still talk a lot pero wala munang expectations."

Despite the imaginable tension, Alfred said that he and LJ seldom argues—something that he owes to familiarity and perhaps maturity.

"Hindi na kami nag-aaway," he proudly said. "We are way past that na kasi we know each other too well para pumunta doon sa bahagi na nag-aaway kaming dalawa." ■

Aiko files for annulment of marriage with estranged husband

Actress and Quezon City Councilor Aiko Melendez has sought the annulment of her marriage with model Martin Jickain, barely two months since their separation last September.

The Quezon City Regional Trial Court is set to raffle on Friday afternoon the petition filed by Melendez seeking the annulment of her nearly two-year marriage with Jickain.

The court refused to reveal the grounds cited by the councilor in her petition for nullity of marriage, citing the confidentiality of the petition being a family matter.

Two months ago, Melendez was granted a temporary protection order (TPO) to keep Martin away from her and their one-year old daughter.

Melendez reportedly cited physical abuse and Jickain's relationship with another woman as grounds for her TPO petition. Jickain has since denied that a "third party" was involved in their break-up.



Aiko Melendez

Shortly after the court approved the TPO, Melendez last October 26 filed a permanent protection order (PPO) against Jickain, which remains pending in court.

Meanwhile, a source disclosed that the reasons cited by Melendez in her annulment petition were almost the same as the ones that were used to justify her earlier TPO and PPO petitions.

Jickain and Melendez were married in 2005, following the annulment of Melendez's marriage with actor Jomari Yllana several years ago. ■

Angelica to meet the ramseys

Derek Ramsey swears he is a faithful lover. For months now, he and young sexpot Angelica Panganiban have been steadies. He says she is his "one and only."

Derek reveals that Angelica is his fourth girlfriend. Before her, his girlfriend was a foreigner (his nationality is British). They were

together for six years.

Is he aware that Angelica had a boyfriend before him? It's common knowledge that as a teenager, Angelica went steady with fellow young star Carlo Aquino. They broke up four years later when Angelica discovered that Carlo, while they were still on, made a pass at her best friend, Camille Prats.



Angelica Panganiban

Camille, as we all know, is pregnant with her first baby by a non-showbiz guy.

Carlo, on his part, is said to be in love with Maja Salvador.

Derek says he is aware of Angelica's past love and believes what is important is what is between them at the moment.

What is it about Angelica that he likes, aside, of course, from the fact that she is one of the prettiest faces in her batch?

"Well, I like her guts," he says. "At her age, she knows what she wants. And she always stands for what she thinks is right, disregarding whether people agree with her or not."

Derek cites as an example Angelica's insistence on speaking in Tagalog, even if she can talk in English fluently. She does this even when speaking with foreigners.

"Kaya natatawa ako whenever we are with my friends and she would converse with them in Tagalog. Tanggap naman nila kung ano siya," he relates. ■

Pops to marry Jomari when she is 50

Pops Fernandez and Jomari Yllana have plans of tying the knot. But this will happen when Andrei, Jomari's only son by former wife, Aiko Melendez, turns 18.

"Ipinangako niya raw kasi kay Andrei," said Pops.

Andrei just turned nine on his birthday last September 7.

In the next nine years, when Andrei finally turns 18, Pops would be exactly 50 years old. She's marking her 41st birthday on December 12.

Pops and Jomari have been sweethearts for almost a year now. Pops described their relationship as more than okay. She is happy with Jomari. And vice versa.

Although Jomari is not a participant in Pops' forthcoming concert, "Divalicious," at

the Araneta Coliseum on Dec. 8, his presence is important as Pops needs his moral support.

Her special guests are Gary Valenciano, Kuh Ledesma, Jay-R, Kris Lawrence and Sharon Cuneta. Pops and Martin Nievera's elder son, Robin, will do a special number.

It's a pity that Martin, her ex-husband is not in her list of special guests. As the concert is a celebration of her 25 years in showbiz, it will not be complete without Martin, members of the movie press at the presscon of "Divalicious" told Pops.

"Yes, I know. But if Martin decides to come, he will be welcomed," said Pops.

According to Pops, she and Martin have not seen each other since her 'confession' to Yes Magazine about the ups and downs of her life with her ex. That article, Martin revealed in "The Buzz," caused him to "lose face."

Although she is more confident as a person and as a performer now, Pops said that after 25 years, she wants a new beginning.

She fondly recalls the highlights of her colorful and illustrious career. Said she: "I don't think I'll ever forget my concert at the Rizal Memorial Stadium. I remember that we had a full crowd of 100,000. But it rained. So we had to postpone it to another date."



"When it finally pushed through, we had to cut it short. Ang daming nawalan ng malay. They had to be carried out. Sa dami kasi ng tao, ang init init." Then there's her participation in "Penthouse Live," where she discovered another talent of hers, hosting.

"Linlang" was her comeback movie after an absence of several years in showbiz. It was directed by Maryo de los Reyes and earned her her first acting nomination.

"ASAP," yes, ABS CBN's Sunday musical show, is another project which she holds dear in her 25 years in showbiz. She was host of the show for a decade. The program, she stated, changed the weekly Sunday habit of the TV viewers. Likewise, it won her several awards as best female host. (

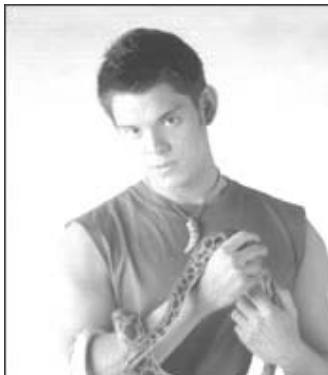
Now, the fortysomething Nonoy is looking forward to 30 more years of performing. Watching Frank Sinatra perform in the Philippines has inspired Nonoy to push thoughts of retiring at the backmost part of his mind.

He will come up with his long-delayed album by the first quarter of next year. Nonoy himself is producing the album and choosing the line-up of songs. He is even plotting the promo campaign for this comeback bid in the recording scene.

Yes, Nonoy's songs will go on and on. And it matters not that this time, he has younger talents to face; fresher voices to contend with. Rock-solid experience will see him through. ■

Richard evasive about KC

We honestly believe that if KC Concepcion would make her first movie with Richard Gutierrez, it'd be a big hit. But this is a pipe dream since they're with rival networks.



Since Richard is being linked to KC, we asked him at the presscon of "Kamandag" if it's true that KC's rumored beau, Lino Cayetano, really got jealous and called him up to inquire about his closeness with KC.

"Why ask me? Siya na lang ang tanungian nyo," he says evasively.

To which movie writers conclude: "Totoo nga, kasi it's so easy to say no kundi nga siya tinawagan."

From what we heard, Lino was surprised when he found out that Richard and KC saw each other in Paris when Richard visited the City of Lights early this year. "Bakit kasi inililhim pa nila, nagselos tuloy si Direk Lino?" asks one wag.

Richard quickly clarified that when he went to Paris, he was with then girlfriend Georgina Wilson, so Lino really has nothing to worry about. "Kaya huwag nyo na kaming intrigahin dahil friendly meeting lang 'yun," he adds.

Has he recovered from his breakup with Georgina? "Yes. Two years din kami kaya somehow, I still miss her. She's still in Australia studying and we decided to give each other some space."

Richard remains to be the signature actor of GMA Films. He now stars in their Valentine presentation with the current toast of GMA, Marian Rivera whose stock was boosted by "Marimar."

They topbill a love story directed by

Mark Reyes to be titled either "A Very Special Love" or "My Best Friend's Girlfriend," also starring JC De Vera and Ehra Madrigal, both wards of Richard's mom, Annabelle Rama. Wonder how Dingdong Dantes feels about this when he's Marian's partner in "Marimar."

About his other new leading lady in "Kamandag," Richard says Jewel Milsche is just misunderstood by some people. "She has no attitude problem like what some people say. Actually, she's shy at napagkakamalan lang na suplada dahil sa pagiging mahiyain niya lalo sa press."

Richard is confident that "Kamandag" will be as a big hit as his past shows like "Captain Barbell" and "Lupin." "I play a taong ahas with superpowers that I use para sa kabutihan. And mind you, we used real live snakes from various countries for the show. Lagi ko ngang nilalaro ang ahas ko dito." ■

Kris, James move to 3-storey, P15M house



Kris Aquino

Yesterday, Kris Aquino and her husband James Yap with their two sons, Joshua (father, Philip Salvador) and Baby James, had their new house on Valle Verde III in Pasig City blessed.

The three-storey house, according to talent manager Dolor Guevarra, who is close to Kris, has an impressive main kitchen, aside from a dirty kitchen. The main kitchen is huge, as spacious as the living room and is air-conditioned.

"Katuwiran ni Kris," related Dolor,

"that part of the house is where she will almost always be. Nahihilig siya sa pagluluto."

"She also plans to have her cooking portion in her lifestyle program, 'Boy & Kris,' taped in her house. Kaya televiewers will, wika nga, have an access to her kitchen."

Kris and James have their own dressing rooms in their new house. "Natawa si Kris dahil 'di raw ma-accommodate lahat ng personal na gamit nila ni James," related Dolor. "Suggestion ko nga kay Kris, ipamigay nila."

Kris has this habit of not bringing anything from her old residence (in this case, a big unit at the plush Oakwood Condominium in Makati) – be it appliances, furniture and fixtures – when transferring to a new house. We guess she gave all her old stuff as giveaways to her friends and the staff of her shows.

Did we hear it right that Kris spent more than P15 million just for the construction of the house? ■

Pops shows tough side

Puwede ba wala na lang Martin? Nakakasawa na, e." This is Pops Fernandez' plea at the presscon of her "Divalicious" concert.

But of course, mentioning Martin Nievera cannot be avoided since they're so associated with one another. Is it true they avoided each other at Beyonce concert and at the birthday of ABS-CBN's Deo Endrinal? "No. Sa Beyonce, talagang hindi ko siya nakita. At Deo's birthday, I was told he left when I arrived. Hindi ko siya iniwasan. Baka hindi pa siya ready to see me. Baka in denial pa siya. Ako, ready na to see him, kasi kundi pa rin niya naiintindihan why I felt bad dun sa sinabi about our sons, I want him to explain fully. Pero ayoko nung sa text lang."

Did she see Martin when he cried on TV about her Yes interview? "No, I wasn't here kasi."

Does she regret now all the revelations she made? "No. I felt I had to do it as people thought we had a fairy tale marriage. It took me ten years to give my side of the story so don't begrudge that against me as doing it has made me more matapang, in a good sense, huh. I'm now more assertive. I was overly submissive then, wala akong boses. Now, I have a voice. I only talked when I felt he did not speak for our sons, Robin and Ram. And it doesn't matter whether

it took 10 or 20 years before I spoke. What matters is that I'm telling the truth. Any wife who has been terribly hurt, ganun din siyuro ang masasabi. I had no plans na basta siran siya. Ang gusto ko lang, lumabas ang katotohanan and now that I've done that, I'm ready to move on."



Pops Fernandez

How did her mom (Dulce Lukban) react after the Yes article? "She got mad at me. Magsasalita na rin lang pala ako, hindi ko pa sinabi lahat-lahat."

So that means she has more to tell? Maybe Yes should interview Dulce next time for the part 2 of that article? "Whatever Martin and I are going through right now, I believe this is just a phase and we'll eventually get over it, hopefully soon."

So why doesn't she invite him to her concert so they can patch things up? "This is a concert that aims to celebrate my 25th year in showbiz. All those who I got to work with in the past are invited. There'll be a video presentation of my past work at imposable wala siya roon as he's very much a part of my career."

Maybe he's afraid she might reprimand him when they see each other in person? "I don't do that to anyone. He should know me better. Never akong nambastos ng tao."

Why is her concert called "Divalicious"? "Why? Am I not delicious, 'di va?" she laughs.

Directed by Rowell Santiago and produced by ALV Events, "Divalicious" is slated on December 8, 8 p.m., at the Araneta Coliseum. It's touted to be the country's biggest production this year and has Gary Valenciano, Kuh Ledesma, Jay-R, Kris Lawrence and Sharon Cuneta as her special guests. ■

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Isaac T. Goodine

Global Perspectives



World bank debt losses could hit \$77B, analysts say

This headline raises a concern about perception. The headline caught my eye because at first glance it appears that the writer is referring to the "World Bank" which is the popular term used for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development that is owned 180 member countries and is designed to lend money and provides technical assistance to developing countries for the express purpose: to fight poverty with passion and professionalism for lasting results.

Jody Shenn's article has nothing to do with the World Bank; it is about possible or projected losses for the biggest banks around world as a result of defaults on loans that were made at sub-prime rates for mortgages in the housing market in the United States of America. The above headline illustrates how our perception of the message depends on the signal transmitted by the lower case letter "b" when compared to capital letter "B" in the second word. For speakers of other languages, subtle signals such as this can be challenging. Culture is an extremely important element of the relationship as it determines how individuals and groups see: a) themselves, b) their relationship to others, c) their relationship to the world, d) their patterns of thinking, and e) their way of expressing themselves through language.

As a member of the Speakers Bureau of the World Bank Group I am sensitive to the importance of communications, particularly in a cross-cultural setting. In fact the World Bank provides more financial and technical assistance to developing countries in the field of education and training than all other agencies combined. That also implies the creation of an international workforce through the internationalization of education and training. English, so called, has become the common language for commerce and cultural exchange around the world and, it is for that reason that cross-cultural communications programs are now being promoted. Immigration has been

identified as essential to sustain the economy in Canada for various reasons that are now reasonably understood and gradually being accepted.

To prevent a further slide in the quality and quantity of human resources that are needed now, the Government of Canada is cooperating with some provinces to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Immigration to fill gaps in the workforce. Under a new (yes another new) pilot project agreed between the province of Ontario and the Government of Canada, foreign students are eligible to become provincial nominees for immigration if they are close to graduating, or are recent graduates from a recognized Ontario college or university in a field of study related to one of the targeted occupations designated by the province. Students have up to two years from the time they graduate to be considered under the program. The new initiative in regard to foreign students is noteworthy and other provinces may follow Ontario's lead in this regard. The Canadian Bureau for International Education which represents 200 post-secondary institutions, urges officials to drop barriers that drive away many foreign graduates and stop squandering a valuable talent pool that could add as many as 30,000 skilled immigrants annually.

In 2006 there were about 157,000 foreign students in Canada, of which 23 percent were from China; 17.5 percent from South Korea and 7.3 percent from the USA. The remainders are from several countries around the world. All are under commitment to leave Canada as a condition for receiving a student visa, regardless of country of origin. Many would like to stay and cash in on their investment of time and money. The estimated average cost to the student, or sponsor, for a student-year in Canada is about \$25,000. This implies that education of foreign students has become big business, bringing in about \$4,425 million per year. Servicing this

business sector has given rise to several issues related to the scale of the operations; the scope of the educational programs and products offered; and the skills required to deliver quality education that is cost effective. This vibrant and challenging field of work has led to the creation of the International Educators Association of Canada (IEAC) to serve practitioners in international education through networking, training, and communication

The three main reasons for the long delay in the integration of new arrivals in Canada have been identified as: lack of recognition of foreign credentials; lack of work experience; and lack of language skills.

Action has already been taken to facilitate evaluation and accreditation foreign earned credentials and the Government of Canada has established a new Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO) to help internationally trained individuals find the information and resources they need to have their credentials assessed and recognized. Information is available at; www.credentials.gc.ca

Work experience, in the home country, and in other countries needs to be evaluated and assessed in regard to "equivalent experience" in Canada. There is need to develop a methodology to for this process.

The third requirement is to provide language capabilities through job related English or French education in the home country and/or or in Canada. These programs need to incorporate cross-cultural communications that involve Canadians and the new arrivals and must be based on mutual learning and move beyond just language training. These programs must be designed to bring about a better

interrelationship in a partnership. That is the most reasonable accommodation that we should all be prepared to make.

Isaac Goodine may be reached at: itgoodine20@hotmail.com

'Foster Child' bags prize in France

November 30, 2007

Filipino filmmaker Brillante Mendoza's "Foster Child" won the Prize for Fiction at the International Environmental Film Festival, besting entries from Australia, Spain, Russia, Iran and Turkey.

The environmental film festival ran in Paris, France, from November 21 to 27.

Mendoza, who attended the Entrevues Film Festival in France, was already at the airport when he learned of his film's triumph.

"French distributor Ad Vitam's Emmelie Gree informed me [about winning] by calling me on my cell phone. I was just about to board the plane then," Mendoza told the Philippine Daily Inquirer via SMS.

Mendoza is scheduled to arrive in Manila today (Friday).

The film stars Cherry Pie Picache as a surrogate mother who takes care of abandoned or orphaned children for P1,500 a month in line with a government program.

"It's a great bonus," Mendoza said of his film's latest award.

It is the third international trophy for the film, according to Picache's manager Ed Instrella. It previously won the Best Actress award for Picache at the Osians Cinefan Film Festival in New Delhi and the Special Jury Prize at the Eurasia Film Festival in Kazakhstan.

"More than the international recognition, for me, what is more important is that I'm happy with my work," Mendoza pointed out.

The film's producer, Robbie Tan of Seiko, echoed Mendoza's sentiments.

"These international recognitions inspire me to keep producing more significant films even if they are not financially rewarding," Tan explained via SMS. "I feel so good that Filipino films are alive abroad whereas Philippine cinema is like a dead man walking in the country."

Tan confirmed that the film had won 5,000 euros as part of the prize. "But it will go to its French distributor, Ad Vitam," Mendoza clarified.

"Foster Child" bested "Lucky Miles" from Australia, "Querida Bamako" from Spain, "Le Bannissement Izgnanie" from Russia, "Days of Rain" from Iran, and "Times and Winds" from Turkey. ■

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YOUNG FILIPINO ACHIEVER

Twelve-year old boy excels in sports competition

Van Cousineau, son of Vangie, a Filipina mother, and Henri Counsineau, won a trophy during the Katas competition held at Kyukoshin-Yume Dojo Kyukoshinkai Rive-Sud last November 17, 2007. What is amazing about his accomplishment is that he was able to beat other competitors

belter, first Dan. He broke 4 boards in their breaking class known as tamashiwari in Japan. Although he could have broken 6 boards, he was not allowed to do so because of his age. He was first place gold medalist for doing 767 sit ups within 15 minutes. He is a sempai, teaching karate at the



Van Cousineau shown here as he is about to break four boards with his fist while his classmates look on.

who are much older and bigger than he is. Among his accomplishments are the following:

At a young age of 12, he is a black

said Dojo.

Van is indeed a role model for other young Filipino children of his age.

The Government of Canada Announces New Measures to Enhance Canada's Food and Product Safety

BEIJING, CHINA--(Marketwire - Nov. 27, 2007) - The Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health, made two announcements today during a visit to China that will help to enhance the safety of Canada's food and products.

"Canadians have told us they are concerned about the safety of the food and products they buy and use, and our Government shares these concerns," said Minister Clement. "By announcing these measures today in cooperation with one of our trading partners, we are taking an important step to protect the health and safety of Canadian families."

Minister Clement joined China's Minister of Health to launch a new Canada-China Joint Committee on Health. The Joint Committee will consist of representatives from a number of Canadian and Chinese departments involved in health matters to share information, establish goals, and address emerging issues. Areas to be discussed include:

- Food, drug and product regulations;
- Emerging infectious diseases; and
- The promotion of scientific exchange.

The Committee may also invite academics, researchers, and representatives from non-governmental organizations to attend meetings.

Minister Clement also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with China's Minister of the Chinese General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) to enhance cooperation on issues related to consumer product safety. The MOU will:

- Establish technical working

groups that will share information on regulatory requirements and laboratory testing procedures for specific consumer products of common concern, such as toys and children's jewellery;

- Set up training workshops for Chinese manufacturers in order to ensure their full understanding and compliance with Canadian safety requirements; and

- Establish ongoing information-sharing mechanisms and approaches between the two governments, including an urgent consultation mechanism which would be used when critical product safety issues arise.

"This announcement is an important next step in health cooperation between both countries, a priority agreed upon at the G8 Meeting in July by President Hu and the Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper," said the Honourable Dr. Chen Zhu, China's Minister of Health. "Many of the world's health issues are truly global in scope, and demand the high level of collaboration this committee signals."

During the visit to Beijing, Minister Clement also spoke at the International High-Level Food Safety Forum, which was organized by the Chinese government and the World Health Organization, on the importance of international cooperation on issues related to food safety.

"Food safety is a global issue and we must work together for the health of all of our citizens," said Minister Clement. "Canada has one of the safest and most effective food supply systems in the world, and we are working cooperatively to keep it that way."

Israeli flag is world's largest: Filipinos made it

November 27, 2007

Same dream, different flag. Filipino entrepreneur and evangelical Christian Grace Galindez-Gupana, who last year unfurled the biggest Philippine flag which ended up in shreds, is at it again.

This time, she made a giant Israeli flag.

Beneath the ancient Jewish desert strongpoint of Masada, the world's largest flag was unfurled on Sunday, covering a large stretch of sandy hinterland.

Masada, the ancient mountaintop fortress in southeastern Israel, is where the

Large stones anchored both flags as they billowed in the desert winds.

The flags were made in the Philippines and shipped to Israel days ago, said Daniel Rozen, spokesperson for Living Stone Ministries, a group that helped bring the flags to Israel.

There are about 31,000 Filipinos in Israel, most of whom are foreign workers, said Gilberto Asuque, consul general of the Philippine Embassy in Israel.

"This flag expresses the friendship between the Philippines and the state of Israel, and also the friendship between Jewish and Christian communities," Shaul



The large Israeli flag, after it was laid on the ground at the Masada airfield near the Dead Sea, Sunday, Nov. 25, 2007. The massive blue and white flag, measuring 18,847 square meters - the size of two soccer fields - and weighing 5.2 metric tons, broke the record for the world's largest.

Jews held out for three years against the Romans before committing mass suicide in 74 AD in the face of imminent defeat.

The huge blue and white Israeli flag, 660 meters long and 100 meters wide and weighing 5.2 metric tons, breaks the record for the world's largest, according to Israel's Ministry of Tourism.

The flag was measured by representatives of the Guinness Book of Records.

Zemach, director of the Israeli Ministry of Tourism.

In September last year, Gupana unfurled a giant Philippine flag in Arifao, Nueva Vizcaya, in an attempt to clinch the record for the world's biggest flag.

Hundreds of residents and volunteers unveiled the Philippine tri-color that measured 200 meters by 100 meters and weighed 3.75 tons.

The historic event, however, was



An aerial view of both Israeli and Philippine flags. Filipino entrepreneur and evangelical Christian Grace Galindez-Gupana decided two years ago as a celebration of 50 years of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Israel.

Gupana said she decided two years ago to produce a giant Israeli flag as a testament to her love for Israel and the Jewish people, and as a celebration of 50 years of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Israel.

"God spoke to me in thunder and lightning," Gupana said. "The Lord said, 'Make the flag of Israel, the standard of my people.'"

"This is a tall order," she said, as she broke down in tears.

The record-breaking Israeli flag was accompanied by a giant Philippine flag -- huge, but not quite as big. It weighed "only" about 3.8 metric tons.

marred when the flag, made of 100 percent Taffeta nylon, suffered a large tear on its white triangle about halfway while it was being unfurled down to its base.

Gupana earlier planned to unfold the same giant flag at the Sunken Garden at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City. But her request to do so was denied both by the National Historical Institute and the university.

The NHI, citing Republic Act No. 8491, said "Gupana will not be able to comply with government flag specifications [regarding] design, size nor for lawful display." ■



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All Longaniza Sausage, 375 g
\$2.29 ea



All Tosino, 375 g \$2.79
Chicken tosino & beef tosino \$3.49



Diwa pancit palabok, 227 g
3 for \$1.99, 69¢ each



Diwa bihon, 454 g.
\$1.49



Shredded Young Coconut
from Diwa , 99¢



Golden melt- Ensaymada - 360 g
Pandan – Ube – Cheese \$3.99



Eggplant
\$1.29 lb



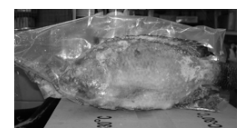
Shanghai, Bok Choy
99¢ lb



Pomelo
\$2.29 each



Bitter Melon
\$1.49 lb



Tilapia
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no clean, size 400 – 600 \$15.99 box



Black Tie Shrimp,
size 41-50, 500g \$9.99



Chicken Legs
99¢ lb



Squid & Isla Fish Sauce
\$1.49



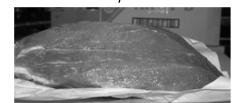
3 Crab Fish Sauce
\$3.99



Dati Puti, Soya Sauce
4 L, 99¢



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