

THE NORTH AMERICAN FILIPINO STAR

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Arroyo calls on people to end corruption

Addressing a government mobilized rally on February 22, President Arroyo called on Filipinos to help her fight corruption in government. "Filipinos are still waiting for true freedom - freedom from the chains of poverty, injustice and oppression, and to attain this, we need freedom from corruption" said Ms Arroyo, who delivered her speech entirely in Filipino.

This fight includes charging corrupt officials, members of government, military officers as well as business people and ordinary citizens. This also includes seizing and freezing wealth through forfeiture proceedings before it can be hidden, used or disappear.

On February 25, the president signed the U.N. Convention Against Corruption which represents the collective desire of nations to work together in combating corruption and provides for mechanisms to prevent corruption and make it difficult for corrupt officials to profit from their illegal acts. By signing the official text of the convention, the President was conveying to the

Senate her request for it to ratify the convention so the "instrument of ratification" can be sent to the U.N. The U.N. needs 30 "instruments of ratification" for the convention to take effect. So far, only 19 have been received.

The commitments of support and cooperation between the Coalition against Corruption and seven government agencies was also signed and witnessed by President Arroyo and former presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos.

Undeniably, the fight against corruption, under the Arroyo administration, has never looked this good, as its haul gets heftier with bigger and bigger "fish". Recorded as of January 31 are 81 cases pending with the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission; 100 have been endorsed to the Ombudsman and 23 to the Office of the President. Promising as this picture seems to be, Transparency International recently ranked the Philippines No. 11 among the world's most corrupt

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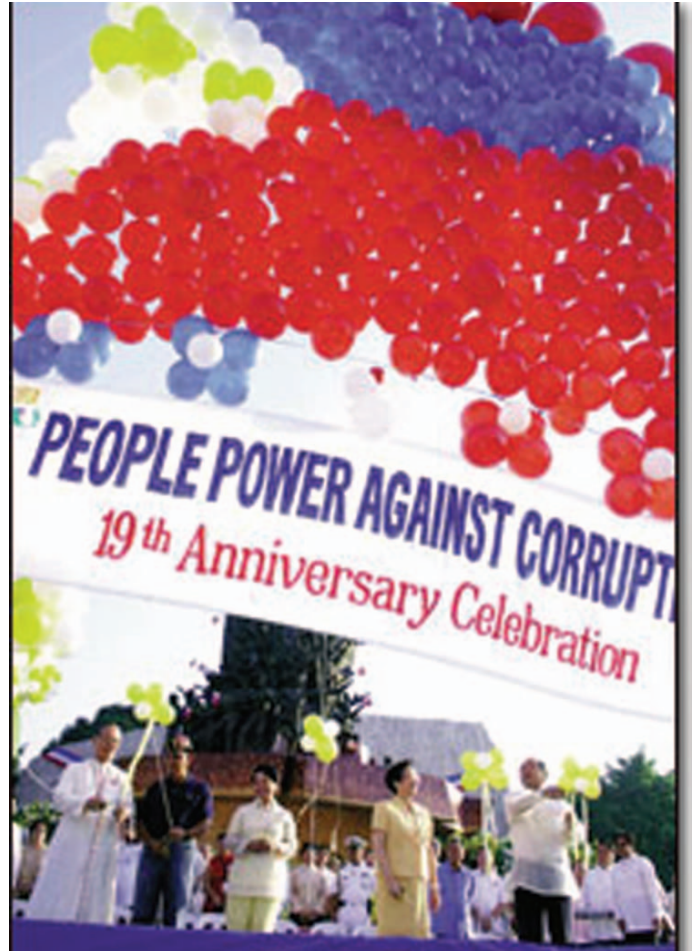
EDSA

Cotler cites priorities for a just society

By: Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi



In an interview with the Star Editor last Sunday, February 20, the current Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Honorable Irwin Cotler, expressed his wish to let the Filipino community know what he has done over the past 14 months and to outline his priorities and clarify his position towards pressing issues, such as same sex marriage and laws to protect women and children in the pursuit of a just society. He said that the Filipino community was the first group he met when he was elected, and then when he became the Minister of Justice and Attorney General. If he were then asked what was his priority, he would have not



President Arroyo, former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Caloocan City Bishop Deogracias Yniguez release balloons forming the shape of the Philippine flag during the commemoration of the 19th anniversary of the first people power revolt at the EDSA Shrine in Mandalayong City.

included the appointment of judges as his first and most important priority. "I now regard the appointment of judges as perhaps the most important responsibility I have because that helps to determine the

administration of justice for the next generation. And therefore long after those of us who have the temporary custody of the administra-

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Cotler



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EDITORIAL

A different kind of hero, the OFWs - will they turn the Philippine economy around?

Most Filipinos living overseas will agree that the transition to a new country, a new culture, a new economic way of life is at least difficult and at most desperate and agonizing. In spite of the smell of diesel fuel, the sound of two stroke tricycle engines, the incessant honking of automobile horns; in spite of the typhoons and their accompanying floods; even in spite of the corruption scandals, kidnappings and bombings, holidays seem happier where family and friends are. Until that is transferred to the new country when they start to put down roots, that place is still the Philippines.

For most Filipinos, the way to improve their lives and the lives of their families is to leave the Philippines, but the agonizing part arises occasionally when Filipinos who have put down roots in a new country are forced to leave because of

their illegal status. But they seem to have no other choice except to take risks in order to improve their lives.

In the face of all these harsh realities, it is the overseas workers in the Middle East, or North America, or Australia or Japan; the domestic helpers in Hong Kong, or Jeddah who keep the Philippine economy afloat. According to the Philippine Central Bank, remittances by Overseas Filipino Workers reached an all time high in 2004. A total of 8.5 BILLION dollars were sent home to the Philippines from around the globe. These workers were forced to leave their towns and cities and travel far from home to earn a living wage and feed their families. They continue to support the economy while Philippine officials, through corruption, ineptness and greed, have taken the Philippines from a position of preeminence in Southeast Asia to the laggard nation it is. It is considered to have fallen behind Vietnam, a country ravaged by war and civil strife.

The past decades have shown that the Philippines is unable to change from within. It needs the help of the overseas Filipinos to support it. Maybe the time has

come, with the adoption of the Dual Citizenship Bill, for Overseas Filipinos to play a more active role in turning the Philippines around. However, this depends upon whether or not they care enough to participate actively in the elections of political leaders and if they find the time to visit the Philippines regularly. In other words, it is not only the money they send that matters but also their personal involvement with their families, and their local communities.

Pope is speaking and has a strong voice

Pope John Paul II is speaking and his voice is "strong" less than a week after surgery to insert a breathing tube in his throat, said Cardinal Joaquin Meissner said. "His voice is much stronger than I expected," Meissner told journalists after visiting the pontiff in the Gemelli hospital in Rome. On seeing the cardinal, John Paul II said "I am very happy that you are here," Meissner recounted.

The pontiff is undergoing speech therapy after the Feb. 24 procedure known as a tracheotomy. Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls, who visits the pope



every morning, declined today to give an update on the health of the 84-year-old pontiff. The Vatican will release its next medical bulletin on March 3. The pontiff was hospitalized for the second time in a month on Feb. 24 after a relapse of the influenza that caused larynx spasms and restricted his breathing. He spent nine days in Gemelli last month after suffering the initial attack of the larynx spasms and was discharged on Feb. 10.

Pope John Paul II has Parkinson's disease, a degenerative neural condition that slurs his speech and confines him to a wheelchair. He survived a 1981 assassination attempt and has been frail for much of the past decade. Polish-born Karol Josef Wojtyla is the third longest-serving pontiff. He is the first non-Italian pope since Adrian VI more than 400 years ago.

The Filipino Star is now available on the Gilmore College website

Since December 2004, the North American Filipino Star has been launched on the internet through the courtesy of Gilmore College. For the time being, the newspaper will be hosted by the College until it has its own domain name.

The advantage of having the newspaper on the internet is its visibility to people all around the world. It is also helpful to

know it is on the internet in case some people are unable to get a copy from the distribution outlets. Usually, the paper supplied to the different stores and offices will only last for one or two weeks. Therefore, it is important for people to know that they can still read the paper anytime they want at the click of their finger tips on: www.gilmorecollege.com.

**The Philippine Centre Foundation
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INTERNATIONAL

Prince and Camilla change venue

The new venue will allow the public to see the couple arrive and leave. Prince Charles and Camilla Parker Bowles have changed the venue for their forthcoming wedding on 8 April.

The pair were set to hold a civil ceremony at Windsor Castle but Clarence House has now confirmed they will marry at the Guildhall in Windsor.

The couple made the decision on the grounds that licensing the royal castle would cause too much disruption.

The wedding will be followed by a prayer service led by the Archbishop of Canterbury at St George's chapel.

Clarence House says the new venue will allow the public to see the newlyweds arrive and leave.

Mrs Parker Bowles has chosen Robinson Valentine to design her wedding outfit and Philip Treacy to design her hat for the ceremony.

Once married, she will take the title of HRH Duchess of Cornwall



and then Princess Consort if Charles becomes king.

The Duke of Edinburgh and I are very happy that the Prince of Wales and Mrs Parker Bowles are to marry

A Daily Telegraph poll of 1,313 people suggests two-thirds of Britons support the couple's decision to marry. But only 40% think Mrs Parker Bowles should become Princess Consort as planned.

Some 47% believe she should have no title, while 7% think she should become queen. The poll also suggested that the majority of

Britons would prefer the monarchy to miss a generation, with the Queen handing the throne to her grandson Prince William, 22, on her death or abdication.

Mrs Parker Bowles, 57, said the prince went down on one knee to propose and added: "I'm just coming down to earth."

Charles, 56, said he and his wife-to-be were "absolutely delighted".

Jackson trial to focus on ranch

Michael Jackson has strenuously denied the 10 charges

Michael Jackson's child abuse trial is expected to hear evidence on Thursday about the raids on the pop star's Neverland ranch that led to his arrest.

The estate in the hills above Santa Barbara in California was searched by police in November 2003 and again in December last year.

Prosecutors at the trial in Santa Maria have alleged that it housed a "private world" of alcohol and pornography.

Mr Jackson, 46, denies 10

charges of child abuse and false imprisonment. If convicted, he could face up to 21 years in prison.

On Wednesday, prosecution witness Ann Kite, a publicist hired to rescue Mr Jackson's reputation, told the court that the singer became a victim of the aides who were supposed to serve him.

Ms Kite said her task was to "crisis manage" the fallout from a TV documentary at the heart of the case, which she described as an "absolute disaster".

I said: 'Don't make me believe that these people were hunted down like dogs and brought back to the ranch'



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From Page 1 Cotler

tion of justice are no longer there, the judges we appoint will continue to have the responsibility for the protection of human rights and the rule of law in this country"

He recently appointed two outstanding judges who happened to be women, namely, Justices Rosalie Abella and Louise Charron. He underscored the significance of having four out of the nine judges of the Supreme Court to be women. He stated that "we can claim to have the most gender equity supreme court in the world." He continued to say that he was delighted that his first two appointments to the Court of Appeal happened to be women also, two outstanding jurists who were appointed on the basis of merit and excellence, thus reflecting the diversity of our society.

His second priority is the relationship between security and rights. On Monday, February 21, he would be appearing before the Senate Justice Committee to review the anti-terrorism law three years after it was adopted in 2001. As far as he is concerned, anti-terrorism laws should be organized around the protection of human rights in two senses: first, that terrorism itself, particularly transnational terrorism constitutes an assault on the security of democracy, on the fundamental rights of our inhabitants, our rights to life, liberty, and security of the person. Therefore, counter-terrorism law and policy has to be seen as the protection of our democracy and the protection of human rights and second, the enforcement and application of anti-terrorism laws must always comport with the rule of law, that torture must everywhere and always be condemned, that no groups should be singled out for discriminatory treatment in the course of the enforcement of our anti-terrorism laws.

His third priority is the protection and promotion of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. He said it is not always

appreciated that in 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was adopted. This country underwent a constitutional revolution - that we moved from being a parliamentary democracy to being a constitutional democracy, from judges being arbiters of legal federalism or deciding disputes between federal and provincial governments to judges being the guarantors of our human rights because we in parliament gave them that authority in the course of adopting the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; that individuals and groups, particularly minorities now have rights and remedies they never had before to protect their rights and freedoms. Therefore, he has always asked Canadians wherever he goes if they are better off now than 23 years ago before the Charter was adopted and the answer is invariably "Yes."

The next question he discussed is the issue of extending civil marriage law to gays and lesbians. If people ask the questions: Where are we? How did we get here? Where are we going? He said that one has to see this question of extending civil marriage to gays and lesbians as being part of the constitutional revolution, as being part of this equality rights revolution. In other words, our Charter prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, and the like. Sexual orientation is one of those prohibited grounds of discrimination. The Charter protects the rights of all Canadians and minorities. Therefore, he said that when the Supreme Court extended the right of civil marriage to gays and lesbians, we are not taking rights from anyone else. He specified that we are talking about civil marriage, not religious marriage. He further clarified that "no religious community will be compelled to perform a same-sex marriage" if it is contrary to their religion or belief. "We are talking only of civil marriage, only about extending it to a minority without taking the rights from anyone else and because seven provinces or territories have already declared it to be constitutional, and because the Supreme Court has

already unanimously affirmed the constitutionality of same sex marriage." As Attorney General and part of the government, he would introduce legislation to make this uniform across the country as the Supreme Court has invited us to do. He pointed out that all they are doing is making sure that freedom of religion and that the legislation will be organized according to two basic Charter principles - equality rights and freedom of religion.

His fourth priority, not only as a Minister of Justice but also as Member of Parliament for this riding, is the protection of the most vulnerable amongst us - women, children, the aged, minorities, new immigrants and refugees. He continued to say: "This is, for me, the test of what a just society is all about, that is, how does society protect the most vulnerable of its members." The first bill he introduced on behalf of the government is a bill to protect children and other vulnerable persons which seeks to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation, abuse, and neglect, where we seek to protect women from violence against them.

The next priority is the matter of the struggle against racism, hate, discrimination and all forms of intolerance. This too, in his view, is a concern for this riding that is so much a representation of so many communities and peoples across the globe. Therefore, he said, "we have to send out the message as a matter of principle and policy, that there will be no refuge in this country for hatred, no sanctuary for bigotry. We will ensure that we will do our best to protect against racism and discrimination." In the weeks ahead, he stated that "we will be adopting a national comprehensive action plan against racism that should benefit people of this riding as well as this province and this country."

His final priority is what he calls protecting against mass atrocity and impunity, the kind of situation that we did not intervene to prevent the genocide in Rwanda and now the humanitarian catastrophe in Darfour. He said that there are three basic approaches here that guide him in this regard. The first is the prevention of mass atrocities to begin with, the second is if we are somehow unsuccessful in preventing the mass atrocities from beginning, then we have the responsibility to intervene and avert the humanitarian catastrophe which is unfolding and to protect innocent people who get caught up in that tragedy. Finally, to bring the perpetrators to justice, to ensure that the culture of impunity will be replaced by a culture of accountability. He also referred to international responsibility of combatting world poverty and humanitarian threats such as the tsunami disaster.

In addition to the responsibilities and priorities he outlined in his capacity as Minister of Justice and

Attorney General, he said he is actually engaged in them on behalf of the people of his riding. Moreover, there are certain specific concerns of this riding which he always has in mind, that is the improvement of the healthcare system, the protection of the environment, the improvement of approaches to learning, and access to learning, the question of social housing, are part of the social justice agenda. He said we should always remember that the two most important groups in our riding that need our protection are the elderly, and we have a disproportionate number in our riding, to whom questions of healthcare in particular are important, and children and the young. He reiterated the fact that the test of a just society is how we protect and promote the welfare of our children and the elderly.

To follow up on the Minister's priorities concerning protection of women and children, he was asked if there is a specific bill being passed to do this. He replied that there is a government policy against the trafficking of women which is organized along the 3 Ps, or three principles, namely, preventing trafficking, protecting the victims of trafficking, and bringing the perpetrators to justice, or prosecuting them. He said that he would be introducing a bill in this parliament intended to do exactly that, to make an expressed offense of trafficking in persons and provide expressed protection of women or the victims of this new global slave trade which is the fastest growing criminal industry in the world today.

Another question concerns the problem of live-in caregivers who have been allegedly the victims of some employers abusing them in various ways. He was asked if he was aware of them to which he replied in the positive. He said that as a member of parliament, he was involved in some cases and that in some instances, he was able to protect and to do something about the individual. He would be seeking to do something about the policy as a whole even though it is not directly his responsibility as a Minister of Justice, although it is related to an enforcement of the law in that regard. As to the policy with regard to helping and assisting live-in caregivers, he said he had discussed this with the Minister of Immigration and also with the Minister responsible now for caregivers, and he hopes that initiatives could be undertaken that will better protect caregivers in particular from any abuses they suffer by reason of the program in general, or at the hands of a specific employer in particular.

With respect to the appointment of justices to the Supreme Court, he was asked if the forthcoming retirement of a male judge could be replaced by another woman. He said all appointments he has made

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are based on merit and excellence with due regard to the importance of gender equity.

To clarify further the Minister's position on gay marriage, he was asked if the government would confirm the fact that gay marriage is limited to being a civil union, and not to be interpreted in the same way as a religious marriage. He reiterated that the government legislation only concerns civil marriage and is basically in accordance with the decision of the Supreme Court. He emphasized that at the same time, the legislation regarding civil marriage will include an expressed declaration of protection for religious freedom.

Arroyo opens EDSA conference

(Manila, Feb. 23) President Arroyo exhorted Filipinos to fight corruption "without fear" as she opened yesterday the four-day annual celebration commemorating the 1986 people power revolt.

Speaking to a crowd of about 20,000 at the People Power Monument in Quezon City, Mrs. Arroyo renewed her vow to stamp out corruption, which analysts say is the biggest stumbling block in the government's efforts to revitalize the struggling economy.

"On this occasion, let us fight more vigorously, use our unity, take the lead in fighting and defeating corruption," she said, adding that she will use all the powers at her disposal to root out corrupt government officials and personnel.

"We have to crush the culture of corruption that is preventing our economic advance, so we can continue generating jobs and so that the nation will continue to progress."

Mrs. Arroyo also renewed her commitment to hale illegal loggers and tax evaders to court. Her administration is currently waging a simultaneous drive against illegal logging and tax evasion.

Mrs. Arroyo said it was massive corruption that led to the ouster of Ferdinand Marcos, who ruled the country with an iron fist from 1972 until his ouster in 1986.

Marcos and his family fled Malacañang just hours ahead of an angry mob that stormed the palace. Marcos died in exile in Hawaii in 1989.

Government investigators

From Page 1

EDSA

countries. As well, there are other officials who are perceived by the public to be no less, if not far more corrupt, but who seem to remain untouched. Thus, doubts persist about the sincerity and resolve of the government in the anti-corruption fight. Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. quoted the government pronouncement that there should be no sacred cows in the campaign against corruption.

For Overseas Filipino Workers who are keeping the Philippine economy afloat with their remittances (\$8.5 Billion in 2004), the corruption in the economy and government also makes them think twice about the Citizenship rights they are now eligible for under the Dual Citizenship Bill.

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Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (L) talks to former president Corazon Aquino during the 19th anniversary of a 'People Power' revolution that ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 at the Epifanio de los Santos (EDSA) highway in Manila, February 25, 2005. Aquino's martyred husband, Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino, was the main opposition leader against Marcos whose assassination in 1983 sparked the People Power revolution. Corazon Aquino was installed president after Marcos fell. (Reuters)



Plant expert tapped as BPI head

The Philippine STAR 02/13/2005
Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap has tapped Clarito M. Barron as OIC-director of the Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), the leading agency tasked to develop plant genetic resources and ensure the protection of the plant industry in the country.

Barron is an agriculture graduate of the University of the Philippines, with a major in Plant Pathology. He has been with the BPI since 1982.

BPI, an agency attached to the Department of Agriculture, spearheads agriculture research and development, production of quality seeds and planting materials in the country. The BPI is also tasked to undertake certain regulatory functions for the country's agriculture products.

With his short stint as BPI director, Barron has initiated and strengthened the research and development functions of the BPI focusing on seed production and research.

"My goal is to bring back BPI to its former glory days in the early 1980's when we were the authority in agricultural research and production in the country", Barron said."

believe the late strongman and his wife Imelda allegedly stole up to \$10 billion during their 20-year rule.

Nearly 10,000 Filipinos who suffered human rights abuses during the martial law era are currently seeking indemnity from the Marcos estate.

At yesterday's rally, Mrs. Arroyo noted that she herself was catapulted to the presidency by a similar popular uprising in 2001 that ousted former President Joseph Estrada, now on trial for plunder.

Various international agencies

have expressed concern about massive corruption in the Philippines, which analysts say has discouraged foreign investment.

The government is losing an estimated P200 billion to corruption every year, according to the Office of the Ombudsman.

In 2003, the Arroyo administration launched an anti-corruption campaign that included "lifestyle checks" on government officials.

Independent estimates suggest at least a fifth of the government budget is lost through graft.
(Ref.: Phil. Star, Feb. 23, 2005 ed.)

Community News

Dr. Ermie Pelausa heads PBSSQ 2005-2007

A new set of officers was formed last January 9, 2005 at St. Kevin's Parish. The new president leading the organization is Dr. Ermie Pelausa, daughter of Natalie Pelausa, the founder of the PBSSQ. Along with Ermie, the following were elected;

Jayjay Villaneuva, Vice President - Benevolence; Atty. Francis O. Diaz, Vice President, Scholarship; Carmen Caro, Secretary; Cecile Crodua, Treasurer; Dolly Villarino, Assistant Treasurer; Sylvia Bulacan, Accountant; Nilo Valenzuela - Auditor; Rose Pabalinas, Coordinator for Benevolence; Terry Esguerra-Simeone & Nilda Archambault, Coordinator for

Fundraising; Nancy Karidis & Meldy Agcanas, Coordinator for Membership; Shinette Khoury, Board of Trustees; Al Abdon, Public Relations Officer; Fred Villarino, Business Manager (Administrator); Elenita Belgica - Ex-Officio; Natalie Pelausa, Founder & Animator

The officers and members of the association have been gearing up to their next major activity which is the Easter Brunch on March 27, 2005 at St-Kevin's Parish. Aside for the meal the guest will be treated with entertainments, raffles and games for the children. Tickets are \$15.00 for adults, \$10.00 for students and senior, \$5.00 for children under 10 years old.

Philippine Centre Foundation announces directory project, donors

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

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DUMANDAN ENTERPRISES

TV program features Filipinos in Montreal on Global CH

Global CH is presenting "Mabuhay Pilipinas," a thirty minutes television interview every Saturday at 8:30 p.m. starting March 5, 2005. It is hosted by Elenita Belgica and Marie Handinero as the reviewer.

The program's focal point is to highlight the activities, achievements, goals and objectives of Filipinos locally and internationally in the fields of arts, culture, films, stage, radio, television, entertain-

ment, literature, new media, education, technology, science, and business as well as their involvement in civic, social and professional affairs which enhance the fabric of Filipino values, cultural heritage and global sentiments.

The Mabuhay Pilipinas production team is ready to present a content oriented program for the local and international appreciation of Filipinos and other communities.

Working with Filipino women

Ating pag-usapan ang seks' [Let's Talk About Sex] is a unique family planning and sexual health resource for the Filipino community launched on 25 March 2004 by Clare Amies, CEO of the Western Region Health Centre.

Women from the Centre for Philippine Concerns, Family Planning Victoria, Women's Health West and the Filipino community at the booklet launch.

Women involved in producing the Filipino sexual health resource. The cartoon booklet was produced through a three-way partnership

between Women's Health West, Family Planning Victoria and the Centre for Philippine Concerns Australia, Victorian branch.

The booklet was written by Maridel Andanar and illustrated by Marta Tesoro. It draws on the long-standing Filipino tradition of conveying information through stories told in the form of strip cartoons in Tagalog, the main Filipino language.

Tagalog is the sixth most-spoken language in the Western Region, yet the Filipino community has had few resources produced specifically for them.

The booklet follows on from 'Chika Tayo', a CD and series of

See Page 21 Filipino Women

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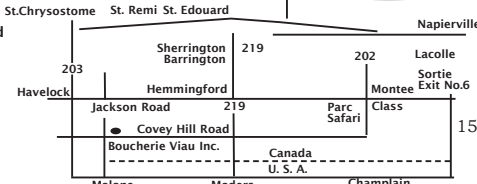
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Business & Economy

Possibility of corporate income tax hike raised

By Des Ferriols

The Philippine Star 02/21/2005

The Department of Finance (DOF) has raised the possibility of an increase in corporate income tax following a proposal to reduce the personal income tax particularly for the lowest bracket.

The DOF said that it will support the Senate initiative to reduce income taxes for the lowest bracket only if there will be a corresponding adjustment in the highest bracket of personal and even corporate income taxes.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima told reporters that corporate income taxes might even be adjusted from 32 percent to as much as 35 percent to make up for the loss of revenues when income taxes are adjusted in the lower brackets.

The debate was an offshoot of the failure of the Arroyo administration to overhaul the excise tax on cigarettes and alcohol, making it necessary to adjust other taxes in order to generate more income.

According to Purisima, he could agree on the concept of offsetting the impact of the two-point adjustment in the value

added tax (VAT) but warned Senate that offsetting one tax with another was difficult since the collection process and efficiency was not the same.

"It is hard to offset an income tax against VAT because they are not the same in terms of ease of collection," Purisima said. "There is no way to guarantee yields," he added.

Purisima said the DOF has started "running the numbers" but there was no proposals yet on actual tax rate adjustments for any of the structures discussed in the Senate.

"I'm just saying if we do agree to lower the tax at the bottom, then we will have losses from income tax collection and there must be a recovery mechanism somewhere else because we can not afford to lose revenue," Purisima said.

"Basically, what I am saying is I don't want to lose anything on income tax collection," Purisima stressed. "If we lose from the bottom, we must adjust the top, both corporate and individual level."

Purisima admitted that the emerging proposals would be controversial but explained that he

intends to make sure that the proposed legislation would address revenue requirements while minimizing the impact on low income households.

"At the same time we don't want to discourage companies from doing business in the country," Purisima said.

According to Purisima, the numbers being discussed by Senator Ralph Recto involved some adjustment that could include exemptions for households with per capita income below P120,000.

On the other hand, there could also be an adjustment in the corporate income tax from the current 32 percent to as much as 35 percent. But Purisima said such numbers would have to run through simulations before actually being considered.

Gov't set to sell P18B in assets

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

The government hopes to sell to private investors this year over P18 billion in assets, including two sequestered television networks and one radio broadcast company. To be auctioned are eight real properties estimated to be worth P14.185 billion, three media companies estimated to be worth P4.375 billion, and shares of stock in five companies with a total value of P118.006

million.

In selling assets, Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) Chairman Haydee Yorac said those with sure buyers would be given priority. "Kung sino yang may bibili, yon ang priority," she said. Among the properties the government hopes to sell is a 18.4-hectare lot along Ortigas Avenue in Pasig City with an estimated value of P13.866 billion. That lot is now the subject of a lawsuit involving PCGG and the Ortigas family. Also to be put on the auction block are the 1.7-hectare Jose Yao Campos compound in Baguio City (P121.536 million), 3,875-square meter Hans Menzi compound (P34.663 million), and a 4.2-hectare property in Mountainview, Tagaytay City (P147.15 million.) Also to be sold is the Wigwam Compound, also in Baguio City (P13.988 million), a lot along Kingswood St. in Emerald Court, Caloocan City (P1 million), and lots along Maligaya and Matahimik Sts. in Pangarap Village, Caloocan City.

As for media companies, for sale are 72.4% of Radio Philippines Network Inc. (RPN 9), which has an estimated value of P1.3 billion, and the assets of Intercontinental Broadcasting Corp. (IBC 13), reportedly worth P3.074 billion.

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Manila revisited - Looking its age and calling for renewal

By Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi

What do we feel after a school reunion? What insights do we gain from a homecoming visit to our native land? For people like us who have lived abroad for so long, the experience seems to bring back some nostalgia for the past, and regret that those good old days are just memories of our youth. It also seems to make us realize that it is not only people that can grow old but a city does, too.

It was in July 2001 when I learned that we would be celebrating our 50th golden anniversary of our graduation from Arellano High School, class 1955. For a period of four years, my classmates and I were corresponding on the internet, talking about this golden alumni reunion which, undoubtedly, is a rare experience. Elaborate plans were made to have a souvenir program, a gala dinner dance party, organized tours for a week, and luncheon parties. I was quite excited about the prospect of enjoying our reunion and exchanging news with my former classmates. For me, I considered this experience a wonderful opportunity to renew friendships and to see my relatives I have not seen for five years. I felt that I would make the most of this visit for I not only had the intention of enjoying a holiday but also to establish some business connections. I was indeed full of expectations and high hopes although I did not know what I would find.

I arrived at Ninoy Aquino International Airport on January 13 at 10:00 A.M. I did not expect that someone would meet me at all. To my pleasant surprise, I saw two gentlemen with a sign showing my full name. They were sent by my

schoolmate, Gus Villanueva who manages four daily newspapers in Manila. I did not have to go through customs for I was treated like a V.I.P. They took care of my luggage and helped me in a taxi that brought me to my hotel. I felt quite fortunate to have school mates who were very generous and did their best to make their fellow alumni feel welcomed. Dolly Legaspi-Lim who

a dinner at a famous fish restaurant called the Fish Wharf on Roxas Blvd. during my second night. Jimmy Ladao, the alumni association president, and his wife, Conchitina, invited me to spend a weekend in their Pali Beach house. Eddie Tan, another fellow alumni, was always willing to give me a lift. Dr. Rudy Ibanez, president of Southerville Foreign Colleges, granted my request for a business meeting and he treated me to a buffet lunch at the Makati Shangrila, one of the most popular hotels. I

after going back to our own daily life and routines. However, we all expressed the desire to have the reunion more often and not wait too long. As everyone agreed, a golden anniversary may only come once in a lifetime, unless one expects to live to be over a hundred years old.

My visit to the Philippines during our class reunion not only gave me the chance to rekindle old friendships but also made me realize that the city where I grew up in is so different now. I could not believe that Manila seemed to have



was responsible for the coordination of arrivals of alumni from abroad was very efficient in everything she did - from making reservations to contacting people who could provide transportation for us. Dolly and her husband even treated me to

would never forget all of these people whose warm hospitality made my visit quite enjoyable. Many other classmates and schoolmates were present but one could possibly develop closer relationships with only a few of them. I exchanged phone numbers and addresses with some of them, hoping to followup our reunion with a letter or e-mail message. But I wondered later if we would ever find the time to do this

nothing to be proud of. It used to be the commercial center and reasonably clean while Quezon City, the capitol city, used to be where new housing developments were. Now I saw how greatly they seemed to have both deteriorated - broken sidewalks seem to be the rule rather than the exception. Smelly canals, ill-equipped washroom facilities, open garbage dumps in the public markets, unruly traffic,

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Ruins of army barracks in Corregidor Island

squatters' cardboard shanties in some areas, uncultivated public parks, and empty lots which are real eyesores have made me feel uncomfortable. When I passed by the Central Market district, I saw many old buildings, some of them really dilapidated and should have been condemned, yet, there are people still living in them as evidenced by the clothes line hanging outside windows and balconies. When I visited Chinatown in Binondo, I also found the sidewalks are quite narrow and dirty. The presence of smelly canals also disturbed me. Even Intramuros which is a tourist spot seemed to be deserted and also dirty. Although the Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard seems to be one of the most beautiful spots in Manila because of the colorful lights lining up the sidewalk, one could still be bothered by the smelly bay water.

On the other hand, I saw how progressive and clean Makati City

is. It has elegant, huge shopping malls and swanky hotels. I could never understand why it is possible to have one part of the island doing so well while another part is obviously "going downhill" so to speak. I asked why and someone replied that it has something to do with the mayor of the city. So until a new mayor is elected who will care about the city, nothing will be done to improve the situation. But one may ask: What about the people living here? Why don't they do something about it? What are they waiting for?

As I did not have the opportunity to travel anywhere in the Philippines when I was living there, I decided to go sightseeing as much as I could. I thought Pagsanjan Falls would be nice to visit. But I was quite disappointed to find the place is not properly maintained. First of all, the area is not equipped with a modern washroom nor a

good changing room. The entrance fee does not cover the services of the boatmen who take two people at a time in a boat to the falls. It is up to the passenger and the boatmen to negotiate on the price of their services. This actually makes it quite stressful to have to do this. How does one know the cost of one hour of boating? There are no recommended rates published. Besides the risk of being overcharged, the place is not in pristine condition. I saw traces of people's spit and litter on the big rocks. The following day, I fell sick and came back to Montreal with a very bad cold and cough.

In spite of these unfavorable things I discovered during my homecoming visit, I still believe that the Philippines is a beautiful country and rich in natural resources. I saw a few examples of its natural wonders like Taal Lake, white sandy beaches in Batangas such as Punta Fuego and Pali Beach and

Corregidor Island, the last bastion of the heroic struggle of Filipinos and Americans during World War II. It is one of the tourist spots not to be missed.

Other countries in Southeast Asia like Thailand and Malaysia have become favorite spots of tourists worldwide. The Philippines could become one, too, if something could be done to develop and maintain the beautiful places which are found almost everywhere. but most particularly in Manila which used to be famous as the "city by the bay." Its sunset used to be featured in postcards and paintings. Now it seemed that it has passed its heyday.

There is a recent move in Montreal to make Manila its twin city. Will this be the beginning of urban renewal and rekindle the interest in this seemingly dying city? I certainly hope so as I am looking forward to another homecoming visit in the near future.



A view of Manila Bay from the Philippine Westin Plaza Hotel balcony.

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Souvenir photos of the Philippines

(See story on page 10)



Pagsanjan Falls, Laguna, February 1, 2005



Sunset at Punta Fuego, Nasugbu, Batangas, January 28, 2005



Posing in the sunset of Punta Fuego are Zenaida Kharroubi and Conchitina Araneta, January 28, 2005



A camias tree in the garden of the beach house of Conchitina in Pali Beach.



A view of Pali Beach, near Punta Fuego, taken in the morning of Saturday, January 29, 2005. The beach is quiet during this time of the year but will be crowded in April when it's hot..



View of Rizal Park (left) and City Hall in the distance from the 17th floor of Manila Pavillon Hotel on UN Avenue.



Some alumni who attended the 50th golden anniversary gala party of Arellano High School, Class 1955, at the Philippine Westin Plaza Hotel, January 23, 2005.



Farewell luncheon by local alumni of Arellano High School Class 1955 in honor of classmates from U.S. and Canada, held at the Global Village, Palm Beach Restaurant, January 29, 2005

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* 1/2 kilo of white and round miki (NOODLES)

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* squid adobo (pusit)
* flaked fish meat (tinapa)
* pork sitsaron, coarsely pounded
* powdered pork sitsaron
* fried minced garlic
* cooked shrimps, shelled
* hard boiled eggs, sliced
* chopped springs onions

Palabok:

* 1/2 kilo fresh small crabs (possibly w/soft shell)
* 1 large onion, chopped finely
* 4 cloves garlic, minced
* 3 tbsp. cornstarch

* 1 1/2 cups water
* 3 tbsp. atchuete seeds or 2 tbsp. atchuete oil
* 2 tbsp. patis
* 1 tsp. vetsin

Directions:

Boil 4 cups water, add a little salt. Put noodles in strainer and dip in boiling water for 5 minutes or till noodle is cooked. Drain. Transfer on plate. Top with garnishings. Pour palabok on top. Garnish with sliced cooked eggs and chopped spring onions.

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The Balikbayan Box

Tony Joaquin (Philippine News)

(Feb. 9) -THE FILIPINO is a lover and among the things the Filipino individual loves is his lifestyle, his immediate family, especially the elders, and his close friends over the years.

As the word 'lovers' often connotes, thoughts bordering on illicit sexual relations may come up but that is not the case in the matter of the balikbayan box. Strictly speaking, however, the human animal being the only rational creature produced by God, is the only one capable of true love.

The Filipino loves the idea of living, singing, dancing, and smiling - all generated by basic feelings of love to be shared with others.

One current symbol of love, Filipino style, is embodied in the balikbayan box that we Filipinos never fail to ship with goodies galore to our loved - there it goes again - ones in the Philippines or elsewhere.

Some observers say that we are among the few immigrants who slave at our jobs - oftentimes, three jobs at a time - and instead of saving most of our earnings we "squander" our incomes on foodstuff and items we know will make our Philippine-based loved ones happy.

In fact, to many the balikbayan box is almost like the galleon of cen-

turies ago which the Spanish throne launched from Manila to Acapulco, those first trading vessels of the time which brought gold, silver, precious metals and rare artifacts.

Our modern galleons today are the balikbayan boxes containing the fruits of our sacrifice which we offer in love to our parents, brothers, sisters and even children, who for some reason cannot yet or will never be able to come and join us as immigrants here in the U.S.

Unlike Pandora's box which tragically contained a multitude of plagues such as gout, rheumatism, and colic which attacked the body, and envy, spite, and revenge which assaulted the mind, the balikbayan box is a more positive offering and that is the hope which lies at the very bottom.

Whatever evils we may suffer in our homeland, hope never entirely leaves us; and while we have that, no amount of other ills can make us completely wretched.

So, the balikbayan box is our hope chest and is at the root of all our efforts in fashioning a life outside the Philippines, building a career in the U.S. while remaining linked, like the umbilical cord between a mother in the Philippines and her son in America.

This brown, cardboard magic box is a treasure chest and its contents represent a loving son's



investment in time and sweat. It could very well be a small treasure straight from someone's heart.

Not only that, the relative who returns as a balikbayan also brings along padala in the form of cash or precious jewelry to some special person in the mainland, "galing sa 'Pinas" as they refer to our home.

Oftentimes, aside from items in the box, some secretly wish vicariously that they themselves are virtually inside the box taking this journey back home - which many yearn to go back to, and reconnect with that special person.

It could be a husband, a son or daughter, or an aging mother or father. For every shipment of a balikbayan box holds within the spirit of love from across the seas, bearing not only products but also our hearts. Balikbayan has now

become synonymous with the intense love of one who wants to nurture it in every box that is sent home.

These brown soldiers of peace - fathers, mothers, and sons - venturing outside the limits of our shores, do so with confidence and hope that someday somehow they can get above the struggle and live comfortably with the earnings they make abroad.

Indeed, the balikbayan box seems to be an indictment against the many administrations over the decades who have failed to provide sufficient jobs for the growing population of Filipinos, all because unscrupulous individuals in government thought of their own selves first and the citizens last.

Myrna, who used to teach in a Luzon town, now works as a muchacha in a Madrid family and has learned to speak Spanish, religiously saves all her income so that she can send money (via bank transfers) and goods (via balikbayan boxes) to her three children living with their grandmother.

Her husband early in their family life just took off with a bar girl and was never seen again. With this chance to work in Madrid, she has really exerted all her efforts at her

See Page 21 Balikbayan

JOURNÉE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES 8 MARS 2005



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Ask the
Video Guy
Al Abdon

What is Home Theater?

Home theater is at first glance is simple to define. We looked at home theater as a set of speakers, subwoofer, dvd/vcr system and a gigantic television. But there is more to just a set of electronic system that produce image and sound in a define decibels. It is the experience that counts. Generally speaking, a home theater system is a combination of electronic components designed to recreate the experience in watching a movie in a theater. When you watch a movie on a home theater system, you are immersed in the experience compared to one on an ordinary TV set.

How did this "Home Theater" evolve? Well remember those days when the VCR's came out during the late 70's? The VCRs basic price is \$1500.00! We buy it because we can watch rented movies right in our living rooms. We even thought that movie theaters will be a thing in the past. But wait! Why do we still go to movie theaters when we can still watch the latest release of movies at home? Simple because the theater offers us an amazing experience we just don't get at home. What is the difference?

One of the biggest difference is the sound experience. When you go to see a movie in a quality movie theater, you'll hear the music, sound effects and dialogue not just from the screen, but all around you. In this surround sound system, you hear different parts of the sound-track coming from different places. When somebody on the left side of the screen says something, you hear it more from the left speaker. And in the movie like "Star Wars",

you hear a rumbling swoosh travel from the front of the theater to the rear as a spaceship flies toward the camera and off the screen. You are more involved in the experience of watching a film because the world of the movie is all around you.

The second chief component of the theater experience is the large size of the movie screen. In a theater, the screen takes up most of your field of view, which makes it very very easy to lose yourself in the movie. After all, you're sitting in the dark with only one thing to look at, and everthing you're looking at seems much bigger than life.

And lastly, in theaters, they have very large film projectors that gives large, clear pictures. The detail is much sharper and than what we see in a 19' size television and the movement is much more fluid. When we can see more detail, we are more engrossed in the world of the movie.

Today, we can almost recreate these elements of movie theater experience at home. It all depends on how much money you're willing to spend and how important certain areas of performance to you.

In the next issue of the Star, we shall cover the different components that make up a home theater, the different models and its terminology & jargons used in defining the system.

Al Abdon
Videographer
Video Hollywoodjunkies
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25th Genie Awards Theatrical Trailer Set for Canada wide release February 18th

(Toronto - February 16, 2005) - The theatricals trailer for the 25th Annual Genie Awards is set for release tomorrow on more than 1700 Famous Players and Cineplex Galaxy screens across Canada. Produced by CHUM Television the 25th Genie theatrical trailer highlights this year's 25th Anniversary of the Genie Awards through edgy music and sexy images from films celebrated over the past 25 years.

As part of this year's extended anniversary marketing campaign, Famous Players and Cineplex Galaxy will air the trailer on all of their screens in Canada, in both official languages for an extended four-week run. This growing support from our exhibition community significantly contributes to the awareness brought to our country's film awards, with potential audience impressions exceeding 121 million for the duration of the campaign.

As part of CHUM's strong commitment to promote the Genie awards telecast, the trailer will air on their 12 local and 21 specialty channels across the country beginning February 21st and running through to March 21st as part of their significant promotional campaign, reaching millions of television viewers.

This trailer was produced by Star's Scott Greig, also the Creative Director of the Genie Awards. Processing for the trailers' production was provided by Deluxe Laboratories and Cine-Byte Imaging and the animation was provided by Crush.

The 25th Genie Awards will air on Monday, March 21st at 8:00 p.m. ET on Citytv Toronto, Bravo!, Star!, and Musimax, at 8:00 p.m. PT

on Citytv Vancouver and at 6:00 p.m. MT on Access in Alberta as well as 9:00 p.m AT on ASN in Halifax.

To view the trailer online and for more information, visit www.genieawards.ca

For more information contact: Joanne Kovich Robinson, Communications Manager, Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television, 4160-366-2227 ext. 242 or joanne@academy.ca.

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The owners of places with videoke are understandably ecstatic with the success of the singing machine. At some places people make lines at the door to get a shot at exercising their singing talent. When inside, the candidate for becoming a star could wait hours till he/she gets his/her turn. In the poor suburbs the fad has become a drain in the pockets of the poor, and that's where the most videoke machines end up. These people are drawn to videoke bars with enticing

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Two more suspects arrested in Philippine bombings(DPA)

23 February 2005 MANILA - Philippine security forces have arrested two more suspects in a series of bomb attacks in the country last week, which killed 12 people, police said on Wednesday. Senior Superintendent Leopoldo Bataoil, police spokesman, said the two suspects were arrested in the southern region of Mindanao. However, he declined to give details on the arrest or identity of the suspects. "They were involved in the

Mindanao blasts," he said. Three bombs exploded one after another in Manila and the southern cities of General Santos and Davao on February 14, killing 12 people and injuring more than 140 others. Two members of the Al Qaeda-linked Abu Sayyaf rebel group were earlier arrested for being involved in the attack in Manila.

The suspects - Gamal Baharan and Abu Khalil Trinidad - were allegedly the ones who made and planted an improvised bomb inside a passenger bus in Manila's financial district of Makati.

Presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye hailed the arrests and assured the public that authorities were taking steps to hunt down all those involved in the attacks.

"Terrorists cannot hide for long and operate with impunity anywhere in the country," he said. "Tougher internal security laws will give us a sharper edge to account for these criminals."

An Abu Sayyaf spokesman claimed responsibility for the bomb attacks, saying they were in retaliation for alleged abuses of the military during offensives against Moslem rebels in the south.



Philippine military officers present two suspects (back row, 2nd and 3rd-L) from the Valentine's Day bomb attack at a news conference in Manila's military Camp Aguinaldo February 22, 2005. Philippine security forces have arrested two men suspected of carrying out last week's deadly Valentine's Day bombing in Manila, saying both were members of the al Qaeda-linked Abu Sayyaf Muslim rebel group. (REUTERS)

signs that say, "Come feel what it is like to be a star," "The dream to become a singer is at hand," and "Wake up the artist who lives inside you." Like gamblers, some blue collar workers spend their whole salary buying tokens for the machines. "Once I got so excited that I spent more than I should. When it was time to leave I had no money left to take the bus back home," said cleaning lady Francisca Pereira, who usually spends around \$25 every time she goes to a videoke place

tion for alleged abuses of the military during offensives against Moslem rebels in the south.

Last year, the Abu Sayyaf bombed a passenger ferry an hour after it left a Manila port on February 27, killing more than 100 people.

The Abu Sayyaf has been included in the United States' blacklist of foreign terrorist organizations due to its alleged links to the Al Qaeda terror network.

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Showbiz 2004 at a glance

Philippine Entertainment Industry never had a dull moment. There's always a cheesy story to rock our world. Tragedies, Scandals, Breakups,

Discovery of new artists and more exciting events bombed showbiz in 2004. The year ended by the sudden death of the King of Philippine Movies, Fernando Poe Jr on December 14, in which his funeral was attended by his solid supporters and loyal fans of all ages. Who can also forget the scandals and intrigues made by Rosanna Roces who gave an impressive performance as the aggrieved wife, narrating nasty anecdotes about her

spiced up the year as Ara Mina and Jomari Yllana call it quits. Ara swears that she has no idea why Jomari left her, while Jomari said it just dawned on him that he had to devote more time to Andrei, his son with Aiko Melendez. However, one showbiz couple that proved it's durability are Dolphy and Zsa Zsa Padilla. The two were rumored to be on the verge of going separate ways. Zsa Zsa confirmed that there was indeed some problems but nothing that they can't sort out. Some says that it has something to do with Vandolph, Dolphy's son with Alma Moreno, who had cursed Zsa Zsa. Dolphy and Zsa Zsa decide to hold their wedding plans until everything settled down. Kristine Hermosa and Diether Ocampo, on the other hand, neither confirm nor deny the rumor that they tied the knot. Not hiding the fact that they got hitched in 2004 were Eula Valdez, Matet de Leon, Lea Salonga (celebrates her birthday on the 22nd), Beth Tamayo, Gladys Reyes and Christopher Roxas, Tonton Gutierrez and Glydel Mercado. A number of showbiz people tried to cross over to politics and ran in the May elections. Among those who made it are Bong Revilla, Lito Lapid and Jinggoy Estrada, who are all senators now. Among those who will have to try again are Dingdong Avanzado and Gary Estrada. Starlet Keanna Reeves leaped into the front pages when she revealed that she once worked in an escort service agency and some of her clients



beau, Tito Molina, in the television nationwide. Claiming that Tito was not the father of the child she was carrying when they were living together. She also admitted that her 14 yr old daughter, Grace, was pregnant by Jolo Revilla, 15 yr old son of Bong Revilla and Lani Mercado. Another breakup story

were lawmakers. When pressed for names by senators and congressmen, she got cold feet, saying she won't talk unless she was given police protection. The year about to end saw a dearth of Filipino movies made. Only 60 were produced. No wonder many film stars have migrated to television. The year has been good to singing champions

himself to a rehabilitation program for drug abusers. If he intends to go back to showbiz after his release, Rudy said he will give his son his all-out support. Mark Anthony is a good actor and if wishes to go back to the movies or television, he can still make it and the industry is there to welcome him with open arms. When he was younger, Mark



Sarah Geronimo, Mark Bautista, Rachele Ann Go, Christian Bautista and Eric Santos. Finally, showbiz lost a number of prominent personalities. Among them: Frankie Evangelista, Tatus Aldana, Rio Diaz, Bomber Moran, Katy dela Cruz, theater icon Zeneida Amador, comedian Larry Silva and Direk William Leary
MARK ANTHONY LEAVES REHAB

Anthony was launched together with Jomari Yllana and Eric Fructuoso as the "Guwapings." They did movies together and became popular. Soon, Mark Anthony and Claudine Barretto fell in love and they were a hot item among young movie fans. However, they broke up a few years later, and their break-up was reported to have been one of the major reasons Mark Anthony got into trouble with prohibited drugs.

Mark Anthony Fernandez, love-child of Rudy Fernandez and Alma Moreno, is expected to be out very soon of the rehabilitation center where he has been confined for almost a year now. Mark might be released in a month or two, he turned 26 last Jan. 18 and to be reunited with his family could be the most important birthday gift for him. When Mark Anthony was brought to the center, it was reported that his parents couldn't visit him for at least three to six months. Rudy and Alma confirm that their son is now on his way to perfect recovery. This is the second time the young actor has submitted



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As it was said, because he loved her so much."



Distrito arraigned for homicide case

Former professional basketball player Rudy Distrito was presented to court Thursday for the preliminary hearing on the homicide case filed against him by the Las Vegas District Attorney's Office. Distrito has been accused of killing his wife's boyfriend in November during an argument. Distrito, along with several other handcuffed crime suspects, lined up to hear the charges filed against them. The former Philippine Basketball Association player's case stemmed from the killing of Las Vegas resident Juan Amaya on November 24. Reports said that Distrito allegedly stabbed Amaya to death when he and the victim met outside his former wife's house. The five-foot-ten Distrito, nicknamed "The Destroyer" was known for his fiery temper on the basketball court, denied the

charge and said that he was only defending himself. However, the judge handling the case decided to postpone the hearing due to lack of interpreters present. Distrito's counsel, Robert Langford, said three interpreters are required to be present during the hearing. Distrito was remanded back to the Clarkson County Detention Center until the next court date is set. Source: ABS-CBN News

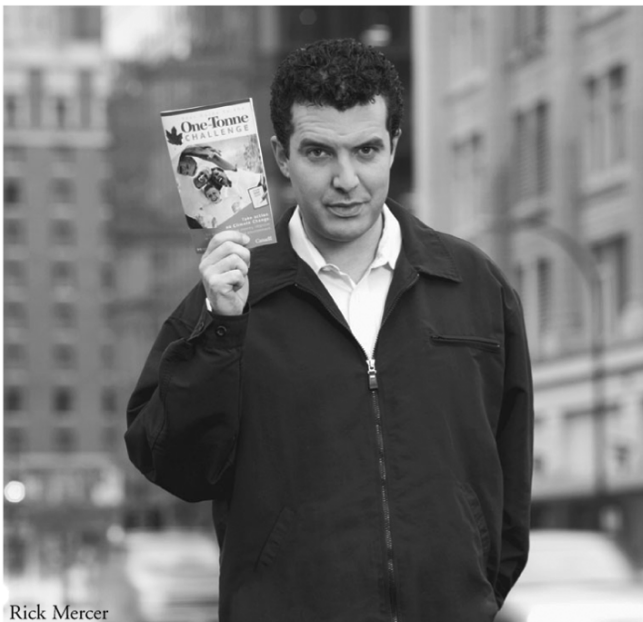
Ramon Fernandez charged with physical abuse by wife

The wife of retired basketball superstar Ramon Fernandez sought an end to their 27-year marriage describing it as "turbulent, shaky, erratic and violent." In a 14-page resolution filed before the Muntinlupa City Regional Trial Court, Maria Socorro Rivera Fernandez, chronicled years of physical and verbal abuse she suffered from the one-time PBA icon who won four MVP awards and who many had come to look up to as a role model. Mrs. Fernandez's petition sought temporary and permanent protection order under the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 (R.A. No. 9262). In it, she is asking the court for permanent custody of their four legitimate children, R300,000 a month financial support, another R60,000 as monthly rental to the family home as well as medical and educational aid to the children. Through her



legal counsel, Howard Calleja, the petitioner asked the court to issue a temporary protection order (TPO) effective for 30 days which shall be extended pending the issuance of a permanent protection order (PPO). According to Mrs. Fernandez, her ordeal began not long after they were married in 1977 as her husband began his alleged philandering as early as 1982. When confronted about this, she said Fernandez, "threw vases and broke glasses" in her direction. "Underneath the respondent's clean, quiet and harmless image is a man with a very short and violent temper," she said in her petition. She also said that Ramon "is a sexually promiscuous man" and this was always the proximate cause of their squabbles which she said later led him to

physically and verbally abuse her. She cited several instances when the ex-PBA player would come home late and as their relationship further deteriorated, wouldn't come home at all for days and later on, for weeks. When he would be confronted about his whereabouts, Fernandez would turn violent and at one point, after one such violent confrontation, she required hospitalization for contusions. She covered this up from hospital authorities, saying she fell in the bathroom because then, she wanted to protect Ramon's reputation. Mrs. Fernandez also said she had no way to defend herself against her husband as she is just 5-feet tall while Fernandez is 6-foot-4 and weighs 175 lbs. In a phone interview, Fernandez said he could not comment on the case as it is



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Sports

Pacquiao vs. Morales could mirror Navarrete vs. Limon

By George Diaz Smith (Inquirer News)



February 28, 2005 General Santos City, Philippines has had world boxing publicity of another lefty unconventional brand before the climb for Manny "Pac Man" Pacquiao, 39-2-2, 31 KO's, ascension to the 130-pound weight category facing off against Erik "The Terrible" Morales, 47-2, 34 KO's on March 19, 2005. Pacquiao, by virtue of becoming a junior lightweight, has matched his own sights set forgone to another championship type caliber fighter known in the past from his hometown in General Santos City. This diminutive left-handed hurdler named Rolando, fought in his most natural super featherweight class, and in my opinion, gave a 1982 "Fight of the Year" greater run for their money.

Rolando Navarrete, 54-15-3, 31 KO's, came from General Santos City, and became etched in the American consciousness nationally lifting Ugandan Cornelius Boza-

Edwards' WBC Super Featherweight Championship back on August 29th 1981. I saw his following defense January 16th 1982 against the Korean Chung-II Choi for his first defense, and was most impressed by his reserved round by round pacing and gradual strength gaining as the rounds mounted up. Navarrete convinced me that he was going to be one tough fighter to defeat while he had the WBC belt, looking evermore like the lion hearted champion he was to be.

Manny year's best in Elorde awards

The Philippine Star 02/16/2005

Filipino ring idol Manny Pacquiao has been chosen once again as the recipient of the Boxer of the Year honor in the coming Gabriel 'Flash' Elorde Boxing Awards Night-Banquet of Champions at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel.

The 26-year old native of General Santos City was the hands down choice for the award following another exceptional year that saw him score a controversial split draw against International Boxing Federation (IBF)/World Boxing Association (WBA) featherweight champion Juan Manuel Marquez in their 12-round title bout at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

Pacquiao had Marquez down thrice in the first round in a blazing start but couldn't finish off his counter-punching Mexican opponent. Only a mistake in the scoring of one of the three judges allowed the champion to retain his titles.

This marks the fourth time in as many year Pacquiao will be hon-



ored with the highest accolade given in the yearly affair held in honor of Elorde - the late great Filipino boxer who reigned as the world's longest junior lightweight champion from 1960-67.

The hard-hitting Filipino lefty will be eligible for elevation to the Elorde Hall of Fame should he win the award three more consecutive years.

"Manny could be elevated to the Hall of Fame kung mananalo pa siya ng tatlong sunod na taon. That means seven straight years, which symbolizes the number of years Papa (Elorde) reigned as world champion," bared Liza Elorde in yesterday's PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion where he accompanied husband Johnny Elorde.

Johnny said Pacquiao promised to be in the country in time for the awards night set March 30, about 10 days after he wages war with Mexican Eric Morales in a mega, non-title bout in Las Vegas.

Also in connection with the event, the Elordes bared in the weekly session sponsored by Red Bull, Agfa Colors and PAGCOR that former world lightweight champion Carlos Ortiz will be feted with the Flash Elorde Memorial Award.

The special honor is being bestowed to former world champions whom Elorde fought during his reign.

Ortiz and Elorde met in the ring

twice, with the Filipino losing on both occasions.

An added treat in the awards night is the conferring of the Ring Magazine belt to the Elorde family by editor Nigel Collins, some 40 years after "The Flash's" reign as world junior lightweight titlist.

Other honorees to be given awards include Filipino boxers who won or retained their world and international titles in 2004 as well as former champions who passed away last year

Tierro, Arcilla lead Davis Cup drive

Philippine Daily Enquirer

ALL EYES will be on Patrick John Tierro when he tries to give the Philippines a head start against tough South Korea today in the Asia-Oceania Zone Group II Davis Cup tie at the Philippine Columbian Association courts at Plaza Dilao in Paco, Manila. The 19-year-old six-footer gets his biggest assignment in his third Davis Cup stint against Suk Hyun-joon in the opening singles at 10 a.m.

"I'm excited and a little nervous, but ready to play my game," said Tierro, son of a retired US Navyman from Olongapo City.

Johnny Arcilla, the country's No. 1, clashes with Jun Woong-sun, ranked 713 in the world, in the second singles. International Tennis Federation representative and Davis Cup referee Denis Overberg of Australia presided over the draw yesterday at the PCA. Also present were Philippine Sports Commission officer-in-charge Butch Ramirez, International Olympic Committee representative Frank Elizalde, Philta president Buddy Andrada, Davis Cup administrator, Ajay Pathak, Philta executive vice-president Manuel Misa, South Korean coach Yoon Yong-il and non-playing captain Ro Gap-taik. Tierro, a product of the Subic Bay Tennis Academy, finally got to play in his second Davis Cup last year, beating Hong

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Kong's No. 1 player in a reverse singles as the Philippines won the tie, 5-0. But Korea is a different story altogether.

The Philippines, according to Pathak, hasn't beaten Korea in the Davis Cup since the '80s. A team led by Ody Gabriel bowed to the Koreans at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Courts in 1984. The result was also the same in 1988 and 1990. The status of Korea's Chuk Hee-seok, winner of the last two PCA Opens, remains uncertain due to a shoulder injury.

Chuk, who drubbed Arcilla in the 2003 and 2004 PCA Open finals, is slated to play in the doubles with Kim Dong-hyun tomorrow against Rolando Ruel and Johnny Victorino. Surprisingly, the Korean hasn't included Kim Sun-yong in their initial list. Kim, who is with the team here, is the world's No. 2 junior player and the other member of last year's Australian Open juniors doubles champion team.

Saturday finish could boost LPGA's ratings

Timing is everything. Just ask Cristie Kerr, who felt that her chance to overtake wire-to-wire winner Jennifer Rosales in the final round of the inaugural SBS Open on Saturday ended when her group was clocked for slow play.



Jennifer Rosales

Being on the clock didn't bother Rosales, who went on to capture the LPGA Tour's official 2005 season opener at the Turtle Bay Resort's Palmer Course, which drew raves from the players who were happy to be back in Hawaii again.

For impeccable timing, though, you couldn't beat the Ko Olina Golf Club. It got an A-plus by lining up Rosales to give a clinic the day after her second career victory.

How's that for fortuitous timing? How often are you going to get that kind of a break? And how often do you see a player taking the time to fulfill a commitment,

right after such an emotional victory?

"We got lucky with that. Jennifer did it because of the kids. She could not have been any nicer," said Greg Nichols, Ko Olina's director of golf.

The clinic was part of the Ko Olina Golf Academy's "Play Golf America/Catch the Bug" program, according to Nichols, who isn't taking credit for the presence - nor presence - of mind in inviting Rosales before the SBS Open started.

He credits Jehu Fuller, a PGA apprentice who is the pro shop's merchandise manager, for setting it up.

"We do a lot of business with

From Page 7 Filipino Women

radio plays on women's health produced last year in Tagalog by Women's Health West and the Centre for Philippine Concerns, broadcast nationally on SBS and community radio.

"This booklet is a good tool for our community, and it will help agencies provide appropriate services," says Maria Selga from the Centre for Philippine Concerns. "Information in people's first language means they can relate it to their own lives. It also encourages younger people maintain their language."

Bally, a high-end golf line, which Jennifer represents," Nichols said.

Still, the fact that she won and yet showed up for the clinic says a lot about her, according to Nichols.

The reason why the SBS Open, sponsored by the Seoul Broadcasting System, ended on Saturday was to provide live television coverage to South Korea, which is a day ahead. (Adapted from Billy Kwon's article in the Advertiser).

From Page 14 Balikbayan

job. Soon she will be sending for her children once her papers are fixed - and many Spanish employers are delighted to help Filipinos whose personalities they appreciate and like.

The same is true in Rome where thousands of Filipino domestic workers quietly care for Italian children. Once they are hired by Italian families, they get personal assistance from their employers to secure their working visas, for these women and men from the Philippines have won the hearts of many Italians.

Would that we see the time when not only boxes of balikbayan reach our shores, but also treasure chests of balik katarungan, balik tulungan, and balik tunay na samahan as our elders knew in their Filipino lives back then before World War II.

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Internet Education

THE NEXT time Malabon National High School (MNHS) teacher Elisa Sta. Maria needs to surf the Internet to do research, she would not have to go far. At the heart of their school in remote Barangay Hulong Duhat is a learning center for teachers with 10 computer units, each with Internet connection. Even better, Sta. Maria will no longer have to spend her own money. Internet access is free, thanks to giant communications and computer companies. "We used to rely (mainly) on books for our lessons. We had no additional resources. But now, we can just download (materials) from websites," Sta. Maria said.

More than two weeks ago, the school received new computers from the Smart Communication Inc. The Philippine Long Distance Telecommunication Company gave them Internet access the whole year. Smart converted two classrooms into the learning center, complete with new tables and stools. Air-conditioners would be installed later.

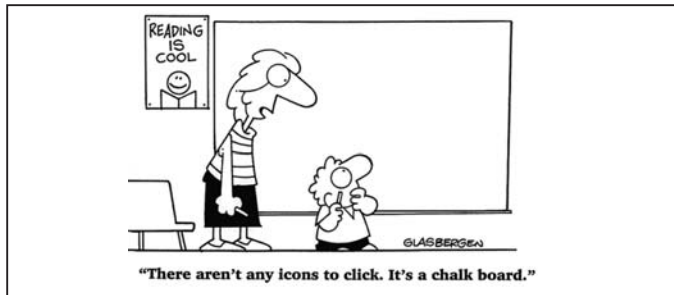
The MNHS is the first to become part of the Smart Schools Program (SSP), a private sector initiative to promote information and communications technology by putting up Internet-based learning resource centers for teachers in selected public schools in the country. "All over the world, education institutions are going online. If we don't speed up our own efforts to use the Internet as an educational resource, the more we will lag behind," Smart spokesperson Ramon Isberto told the Inquirer.

During the project launch, Education Secretary Florencio Abad noted how the quality of education in the country has fallen in the last 30 years. Technology may be one way to reverse the trend, he said. Internet connection in public

schools could, among others, speed up communication between the department and teachers, Abad said. Through e-mail, e-groups or even video conferencing, officials could reach teachers even in the remotest barangays. Abad pointed out that the Department of Education had to communicate regularly with about 560,000 teachers. Communicating with them the traditional way was very costly.

Abad also told the Inquirer later, "With the Internet, we can faster institute reforms in the education system. But right now, only 18 percent of public schools in the country have Internet connections. Thus, private sector initiative is much welcomed, and badly needed.

The SSP has three components: access, content and training. Access means free Internet connection for the whole year. Content refers to educational websites teachers can visit for their lessons. There is a plan to start an online community where teachers can exchange lesson materials. To ensure teachers benefit from the program, they would have to learn to use the technology. World leader Microsoft would train teachers from participating schools. For the pilot school, Microsoft conducted a seminar for 10 MNHS teachers, including Sta. Maria, last month. They, in turn, would train their fellow teachers. MNHS students—even those whose classrooms became the learning center—might have a long wait if they are hoping to use the brand-new computers to surf the Internet." These facilities are really for teachers. We were told by the experts, if we have limited resources, we should start first with the teachers," Isberto said. But students can expect more informed lectures and up-to-



date information from their soon-to-be Internet-savvy teachers.

"Helping one teacher in using the Internet would benefit many (classes). There is a big multiplier effect," Smart president Napoleon Nazareno said in a speech during the launch that Isberto read for him. The MNHS has 140 teachers and a student population of about 8,000. MNHS senior Lalaine, 16, said she and her friends had been using the Internet to do research for their projects. Internet shops outside the school charge P20 per hour. "We can also do research using books in the library. But it is much easier to (use) the Internet," she said. Will the Internet hasten the demise of the habit of reading among the youth? "Properly used, the Internet can only emphasize or strengthen the habit of reading. Information published in electronic form is much more dynamic than publication of books," Isberto said. Compared to books, Isberto said, information from the Internet was more updated. But he conceded that Internet use could be abused. Students and even teachers would have to be protected from or prevented from accessing not-so-good sites.

The schools would have to set the guidelines and the program would help address those concerns, he said. The Smart Schools Project

is an initiative of the Philippine Business for Social Progress, which selects participating schools through its regional offices. "We give premium to poor but deserving schools," Isberto said. He said the program would also be implemented at the Lope de Vega National High School in the hinterlands of Northern Samar. "The community is poor but that school is number one in the entire country in the national achievement test," Isberto said. Performance is an important criteria. But for a school to be chosen, it also has to prove it can sustain the project even after the free Internet connection ends after a year. "We ask them to develop a sustainability plan. They can turn this (learning center) into a sort of Internet cafe (when the free connection expires), make it available to the public or to other teachers to generate revenues," Isberto said. School heads of the MNHS told the Inquirer they were already meeting with the parents and teachers association to draw up a sustainability plan. Smart hopes to implement the program in at least 50 schools nationwide. Aside from the MNHS, the pilot school in Luzon, the program is also being launched at the Science and Technology Education Center in Lapu-Lapu City in Cebu and the Jolo National High School in Sulu. (Source: Inq. 7)

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Isaac Goodine is an international educator with experience in 65 countries. He has designed and delivered numerous cross-cultural communications workshops in the course of his work and his writings have been published in magazines, journals and newspapers worldwide. He is a fellow of the United Writers Association of India. His latest book, "Leaders Leading Leaders," was published in 2003, by Colombo Plan Staff College, an international and inter-governmental organization, based in Manila, Philippines. He has gained membership in several international professional associations, is a member of the International Biographical Centre's On-Line Hall of Fame, and in 2004, he was given life-long tenure of Chair of Human Relations within the World Academy of Letters.

Zenaida Ferry Kharroubi is a professional teacher and the founder/owner of Gilmore College as well as the publisher/editor of the North American Filipino Star. She holds a B.A. degree in English literature from the University of the Philippines and M.A. degree in Educational Studies, Philosophy option, Concordia University.

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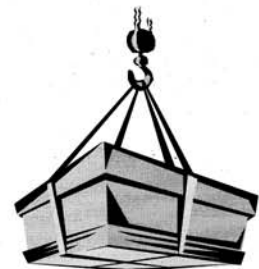
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