

President Duterte unmaskes mayors, judges, police, military in illegal drugs watch-list

August 8, 2016

By Lilian C. Mellejor

DAVAO CITY, Aug. 7 (PNA) -- President Rodrigo Duterte on Sunday morning made true his promise to expose personalities linked to illegal drugs as he revealed the names of eighty judges, current and former mayors, vice mayors, congressmen and over 60 police and military officers in the watch-list of the government's war against illegal drugs.

The President revealed the names of eight judges, 56 current and former mayors, vice mayors and congressmen in the list during his visit at the wake of the slain soldiers at half past 2:00 a.m. Sunday at the naval station in Camp Panacan.

Citing the overwhelming number of drug users and pushers – reaching 600,000 who surrendered to the government nationwide, Duterte said it is “because government personnel are into it.”

“It’s either I read all the names or not read them at all,” he said, adding, “It’s very important for the people to know the state of things and conditions in this country. That is my sworn duty.”

In exposing the names of the judges, local officials and police officers, Duterte said it is not something personal to him. “Hindi ko kayo kalaban. Wala akong sama ng loob sa inyo pero galit na ako ngayon (This is not personal to me. You are not my enemy. I do not have ill feelings toward you. But I am angry now).”

Duterte said he is ready to face consequences if he’s wrong about the names. “I assume full responsibility. I will gamble – I put at stake my life, honor...” he vowed.

“I could be wrong. But this is not trial. Then I said I’m sorry,” said Duterte even quoted part of former American president Abraham Lincoln, who said: “I do the very best I know how - the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what’s said against me won’t amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference.”

Duterte alleged that the judges have the records of dismissing drug charges and would even look for more proofs to justify insufficiency of evidence. He said they can go to whom they must report. Judges:

- 1- Judge Mopas - Dasmariñas Cavite
- 2- Judge Reyes - Baguio City
- 3- Judge Savilo – Regional Trial Court Branch 13 Iloilo city
- 4- Judge Casiple - Kalibo Aklan
- 5- Judge Rene Gonzales (no place mentioned)
- 6- Judge Navidad - Calbayog city
- 7- Judge Exekel Dagala – Municipal Trial Court
- 8- Judge Dapa - Siargao

Duterte’s list showed local officials either incumbent mayors or former local officials nationwide. Mindanao has more personalities than in Luzon and Visayas.

In naming them, Duterte also ordered the cancellation of their gun licenses and permits also effective Sunday.

He ordered the Philippine National Police (PNP) to strip the officials of their police security. “You go out naked to the world and show yang kalokohan ninyo (show your foolishness) ,” he said.

Luzon:

1- Mayor Renaldo Flores - La union; 2- Mayor Dante Garcia - Tubao La Union; 3- Mayor Martin De Guzman - Buwang La Union; 4- Mayor Marjorie Apil Salazar - Lasam Cagayan; 5- Mayor Goto Violago - San Rafael Bulacan; 6- Mayor Marino Morales - Mabalakat Pampanga; 7- Mayor Felix Castillo - Abra

Former local officials

8- Mayor Eufonio Aregel – Agoo, La Union; 9- Mayor Jesus Celeste Boying – Bolinao, Pangasinan; 10-Mayor Jose Pepe Miranda - Santiago City, Isabela; 11-Mayor Vicente Amante - San Pablo City, Laguna; 12-Mayor Ryan Dolor – Bauan, Batangas; 13-Vice Mayor Edgardo Trinidad - El Nido, Palawan

Visayas:

14-Mayor Alex Sentina – Calinog, Iloilo; 15-Mayor Julius Ronald Pacificador – Antique; 16-Mayor Jed Mabilog - Iloilo City; 17-Mayor Wilfredo Salangutin – Carles, Iloilo; 18-Mayor Marciano Malones – Maasim, Iloilo; 19-Ex Mayor Michael Rama - Cebu City; 20-Mayor Hector Ong – Lawang, Northern Samar; 21-Mayor Rolando Espinosa – Albueria, Leyte; 22-Mayor Vida Canamage – Basay, Negros Oriental; 23-Ex Mayor Madelyn Ong - Northern Samar; 24-Vice Mayor Francis Ansing Amboy – Maasim, Iloilo; 25-Mayor Frals Sabalunes - San Fernando, Cebu; 26-Atty. Antonio Fecina - Iloilo City; 27-Erwin Tongtong Plagata - Iloilo City; 28-Congressman Jessie Rama Nava - Guimaras; 29-Congressman Jefrey Seles - Panay

Mindanao:

30-Mayor Abubakar Abdul Kareem – Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur; 31-Mayor Gamar Janin – Siraway, Zamboanga del Norte; 32-Mayor David Navaro - Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur; 33-Mayor Bobby Alingan – Kulambagan, Davao del Norte; 34-Mayor Jusufa Ramin - Iligan City, Lanao del Norte; 35-Mayor Jessie Alegria - Surigao del Norte; 36-Mayor Fahad Salik - Marawi City; 37-Mayor Moh'd Ali Abinal; 38-Mayor Jamal Dadayan – Buntong, Lanao del Sur; 39-Mayor Sabula Makabago – Sagiran, Lanao del Sur; 40-Mayor Moslem Alin Makadatu – Lubatan, Lanao del Sur; 41-Mayor Rasul Sangki – Ampatuan, Maguindanao; 42-Mayor Muntaser Sabal – Talitay, Maguindanao; 43-Mayor Vikman Muntawal - Datu Muntawal, Maguindanao; 44-Mayor Samsuddin Dimakum - Datu Saudi, Maguindanao; 45-Mayor Noriden Salasal - Datu

Salibo, Maguindanao; 46-Ex Mayor Benahar Telawi – Talipao, Sulu; 47-Mayor Reynaldo Paruhinog - Ozamis City; 48-Vice Mayor Nova Princess Paruhinog Chavez - Ozamis City; 49-Omar Solitario Ali - Marawi City; 50-Vice Mayor Abdul Wahid Sabal – Talitay, Maguindanao; 51-Mayor Oto Muntawal - Datu Muntawal, Maguindanao; 52-Nida Dimagkon - Datu Saudi Ampatuan, Maguindanao; 53-Rafac Salik - Marawi City; 54-Rasmiya Makabagos – Siguran, Lanao del Sur - 55-Congressman Guillermo Romarate Jr - Surigao del norte -

56-Former Board member Ricardo Paruhinog

“It might be true...it might not be true. Yung sinasabi n'yong due process isa yan baka sakali mademanda itong mga taong ito (The due process that you have said that's one. Maybe if these people) will be charged administrative or criminal administrative or criminal then this should have due process. Presumption of innocence – lahat yan sa Constitution ibigay ko yan (then I will give what's in the Constitution),” he said.

He however pointed out that “my mouth walang (there's no) due process dito yung (here) – due reprocess nothing to do with my mouth walang (no) proceedings walang abogado. Ako nagsasalita ako sa taong bayan at malaman po ninyo ang katotohanan sa ating buhay dito sa Pilipinas (no lawyer. I am talking to people and that you will know the truth in our life in this country).”

Duterte however emphasized the names have been validated many times and revalidated particularly after seeing familiar names and those he knew. One of them was even his political leader during the election campaign. But he said it does not stop him from revealing their names.

Ordered relieved

Duterte has ordered all police and military, who serve as security detail of the officials to report back to their respective mother units within 24 hours effective at the time of his announcement.

“Twenty-four hours lahat – military pulis na nakadikit diyan sa mga taong ito (Twenty-four hours – all – military, police who are assigned with these people). I give you 24

hours to report back to your mother unit or I will whack you. I'll dismiss you from service," he warned.

There are over 80 police and military officers on Duterte's list. They are assigned and deployed in different units.(PNA) BNB/LILIAN C. MELLEJOR/LDP/RSM

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Smartmatic's admission of secret server spurs Marcos' fight for Vice Presidency

August 8, 2016

By: Yashika F. Torib, Manila Bureau Senior Correspondent

The fight for the Philippine vice presidential post is far from over for Senator Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. even after three months since his chief rival Leni Robredo was declared winner.

Marcos has recently secured a precautionary protection order from the Supreme Court, which also acts as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET), in connection with his election protest against Robredo's alleged vote rigging.

PET, through the protection order, instructs the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) to preserve the integrity of the ballot boxes, voters' receipts, election returns, list of voters, transmission logs and other election equipment.

Marcos appealed that such items should not be tampered with pursuant to Rule 36 of the Presidential Electoral Tribunal Rules.

In his 1,000-page petition, with over 20,000 annexes, Marcos pointed out several issues of vote rigging through unauthorized Smartmatic servers where the election results could have possibly been tampered. His camp argued that a "fourth server" does not form part of the three legally authorized servers and was not subjected to a source code review.

Smartmatic later admitted that it used unofficial servers in the transmission of votes.

Marlon Garcia, head of the Technical Support Team of Smartmatic, stated that aside from the three servers sanctioned by the COMELEC in the transmission of votes under the Automated Election System (AES), another server existed where the voting results were first coursed through.

However, Smartmatic lawyer George Aquino refuted allegations that there were major changes in the transmitted votes on May 9 when Robredo suddenly surpassed the one-million margin of Marcos.

Smartmatic's disclosure on the existence of the fourth server was cited by Marcos' spokesman Vic Rodriguez, stating that it validated their earlier contention that the company was devious on the details of the system used during the elections.

With several contentions raised by the Marcos camp, Smartmatic's admission of a secret server further roused the former's claim of election fraud and an imminent victory against the unfazed Robredo.

Meanwhile, the lady vice president expressed more concern over her legal fees with Atty. Romulo Macalintal versus the "baseless accusations" slung by Marcos.

Innerview

Oligarchs Intentions Unclear

By Gina Villanueva, Associate Editor

The currently undecided Case CA-GR SP No. 70014, based on "alleged nullity of proceedings," is still unheard in court, at eight years after filing in 2002.

The intention of the oligarchs is unclear, but it is certainly unprecedented for an administration to challenge the law of the land by seeking to overturn a ruling which became executory some thirty years prior to challenge.

Rev. Fr. Jose Antonio Diaz's Role

Records show that the Rev. Fr. Jose Antonio Diaz was not a passive participant in the looting and re-allocation of the gold and treasure of Europe and Asia, but took an active role in its movement and processing. His academic achievements are well documented in multiple publications, but here, we are far more interested in his activities relative to looted treasure.

Little is officially known or recorded about a certain Jose Antonio Diaz de la Paz who became Papal Nuncio and was invited to become the new Pope in February 1922. He declined. He had more important things to do. He was chosen by the Royal Families to be the trustee for all the gold left by the Royal Families (they had entrusted him already with their eyes, and so they could as readily entrust him their gold) which was now lying

secretly in the Vatican's caverns in Benevento, Italy. Jose Antonio Diaz (formerly Jose P. Rizal) decided he would bring all the gold to the Philippines. Nobody would look for it there.

It did not last long. There seems to be a buildup for another war. The former owners of the gold got nervous. Pope Pius XI got old. All the while Hitler's SS silently and secretly ransacked the far-away bonded warehouses of the British banks and brought the gold (more often than not in submarines) to Singapore where it was delivered and handed over in brief ceremonies to the Japanese Imperial Army under Hitler's half-brother Tomoyuki Yamashita. The submarines headed back, so that nobody would discover the subterfuge. Jose Antonio Diaz shipped the 650,000 metric tonnes back to the Vatican, with the quip -- "if that is what you want!" Note: 10 years later Pope Pius XII asked him to bring back it back to Manila (see Agana Decision).

Also note that there were no telecommunications systems as we know it today, but we can imagine that Jose Antonio Diaz (or Jose P. Rizal), Adolf Hitler, and Tomoyuki Yamashita knew what they were doing.

They were the original axis powers established during the Berlin Olympics (where Japan's Emperor Hirohito visited Hitler), formalized with Italy in the 1940 Tripartite Pact. They did the planning and they plundered the gold: Hitler in the West, Japanese forces in the East.

They came together and met in Singapore, which was then officially a British Crown colony, and had the smelting of the gold done by the expert German company, DEGUSSA. From there the gold was brought to the Philippines to be buried under supervision of Prince Chichibu, and to become known as the infamous 'Yamashita treasure.'

We now go back in time, just before the start of WWII to what is generally accepted as September 1, 1939 when Hitler ordered his generals to take Poland in one day. We could argue that the start of WWII was much earlier, perhaps in 1937 when the Imperial Japanese Army raided and took China, killing more than 300,000 Chinese in Nanking, in one day.

That was six years after Japan had started the military invasion of China in its quest to capture the Manchuria Province in China's North which had all the natural resources that Japan so importantly needed in order to support a war effort.

It was also in 1931 that Japan started to invade, albeit silently, the Philippines. Disguised mostly as civil engineers, the Japanese started to build a wide array of tunnels and caves. Thus indicating that they prepared well ahead for the burial of the gold that would come from Europe and China.

The gold that Hitler and his Japanese allies stole from the richest of the rich on both sides, from those who had money enough to buy gold, stashed it away in secret bank vaults, so that they would not have to pay tax, but was listed, immediately following the war, in the International Court of Justice (World Court) in the Hague, Holland. The total of the missing gold was 946,000 metric tonnes, and it is still missing.

The World Court had ruled that all gold found from buried treasures in the Philippines would, legally, belong to the Original Claimants of WWII Loot.

To this writing, there has not been a single claimant. The claims are listed per country (there are 13 countries claiming), but no names or persons or families.

My source, Vidimus (S3amazonaws.com) mulls that Jose Protacio Rizal/Reverend Father Jose Antonio Diaz de la Paz was an active participant in concealment and masking of the stolen treasures of WWII. He was a patriot, an accomplished and sophisticated person, a friend of royalty across a broad spectrum, and to the end he served the Philippines, as his Letter of Instruction which details what is to be done with the accumulated wealth, demands that its primary objective be specific projects for the betterment of the Philippines.

Vidimus continues, "Whether subscribing to the accuracy of published history, or influenced by the revelations of (my) essay, it must be admitted that Jose Rizal was first and foremost, a patriot, even if his modus operandi was unorthodox in the extreme. Perhaps we should silently hope that his vision is realized, along with that of President Marcos, his accomplice in the world's most incredible seizure and conversion of stolen wealth."

Conclusion

My source echoes painful cries of the Maharlika Muslim-Filipino.

The Philippines has a poverty index equivalent to sub-Sahara Africa, and agrarian reform has been totally ignored by all of the past administrations.

In his masterpiece called, 'The Mystery of Capital,' Hernando de Soto provided a profound study of the Land Laws of the Philippines, and demonstrated conclusively that land reform was the key element in the elimination of poverty and awakening of the entrepreneurial spirit that is the backbone of every independent nation.

In terms of infrastructure, the beneficiary known by the code TVM-LSM-666 is equally enthusiastic to share the vision of President Ferdinand E. Marcos and Rev. Fr. Diaz to

assure that the Philippines becomes the most stable and progressive state in Southeast Asia.

The three critical elements for reform in all aspects of empowerment of the Philippines (Maharlika Islands), Vidimus opines, are present in way, means, and will. That then will be the catalyst which fuses those critical elements into a national upwelling of interest to generate a Maharlika of promise (?).

Vidimus queries, "Where is the leader who will recognize the available tools, then grasp the initiative, and lead the Philippines -- (the Maharlika Islands) toward the destiny so long planned, and so painfully delayed, by forces concerned more with their own welfare than those of the country they were elected to manage, with perception and integrity?"

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Editorial

DE LIMA'S DILEMMA

The controversy between President Digong and former justice secretary and now senator Leila de Lima has heated up when De Lima made her first privileged speech at the Senate. Her privilege speech highlighted the continuous extra-judicial killings that have been recorded almost daily in the Philippines.

While it is true that there are those incidents where the Philippine National Police (PNP) was involved in their daily police operations known as "Operation Tukhang," there are also killings that appear to be suspicious, albeit, short of being characterized as summary killings.

President Digong in one of his public statements said, "I DON'T CARE" referring to what is happening in his illegal drugs campaign and all forms of criminalities. Even oligarchs are not spare from the President's desire to rid the society of legalized online gambling and mining.

It is a Herculean job for President Digong to precisely focus on his campaign on illegal drugs and criminality in the Philippines. He has shown his tight fist mark in all of his public indignation about the ills of our society, from all levels of the Philippine government as far as corruption is concerned.

The President might look a funny man, sometimes, but when he becomes serious, he shows the kind of metal he is made of, ruthless but firm in his thrust to domesticate the

erring officials in the Philippine government. President Digong has also shown his soft heart for those soldiers who bravely faced the onslaught of terrorism in our own backyard in Basilan and Jolo, and even visited the wounded officers and soldiers in the government hospital.

Senator De Lima, even when she was appointed Secretary of Justice by former President Noy Aquino took 5 years to finally made her move to eradicate the "millionaire" inmates at the Bilibid Prison to contraband such as high-powered armaments, high-tech communication gadgets, millions of money hide in their "kubol" and illegal drugs.

Is there a truth to the allegation that De Lima was just trying to earn her media mileage in preparation to her candidacy as Philippine senator? And that she has known the illegal activities of the drug lords inside the bilibid prison for years, and she was allegedly to be the beneficiary of millions of pesos in payola for protection?

President Digong has repeatedly said to let the Senator De Lima do her job as fiscalizer of the Duterte administration. Even if at this early stage of the President's campaign promise to eliminate illegal drugs and criminality in 3 to 6 months, the lady senator has decided to make her move by asking the Senate to conduct a public hearing on this issue. But President Digong has made it clear that he would not tolerate but instead directed PDG Bato Dela Rosa to start probing the allegations imputed against the PNP.

Let us give the President every opportunity to make good his campaign promise to eradicate illegal drugs and criminality in 3 to 6 months, and should the President fail to do his job, then let his critics advance their own way.

As the old adage says, "Rome was not built in one day."

Straight Talk

By Ed Libranda

IT'S PAYBACK TIME

We have read numerous news articles about certain campaign volunteers who helped President Digong during his political campaign for the highest post of the land.

From his old pals at San Beda College of Law down to his bosom friends in Davao City. They are rewarded with positions in the Duterte administration. Even folk singer and the composer of "Anak," Freddie Aguilar was offered to head the National Arts and Culture,

and lately, it was rumored that Mocha Uson was offered to work at the Bureau of Customs as Social Media Consultant.

It is always a customary that when a candidate wins in an election, whether local or national, and in this case, Mayor Rody Duterte won the presidency of the Philippines, he needs people to help him navigate his way to winning the national elections. And it is normal, of course, to reward people close to President Digo, who have shown their sincere and honest willingness to make sure he trounced his political opponents.

In the case of Mocha Uson, whose supposed appointment was leaked to the media as a BOC consultant, she quickly repudiated the said appointment as non-existent and was intended to bash her in the eyes of those who believe in her advocacy to help the Duterte administration in its fight against graft and corruption in the Bureau of Customs.

Such notable appointment in the Duterte administration is Carlos "Sonny" Dominguez whose friendship with President Digo started when they were students of Ateneo de Davao High School. DOTC secretary Arthur Tugade was a classmate during his law school days at San Beda, while Sec. Jess Dureza was a classmate at the Holy Cross Academy high school.

A lot of prominent Davaowenos contributed to his campaign kitty, but has not been offered any government positions, such as Tony Boy Florendo and the Alcantra brothers, Nic and Tommy.

I don't see any wrongdoing in appointing his friends, campaign volunteers, and other people close to him, in government positions, as long as they are worthy of such undertaking and help the Duterte administration in the campaign to instill a NEW CHANGE in governance.

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News At A Glance

Stay Out of Scarborough Shoal, Filipino Fishermen Urged

Despite a recent ruling by UN-backed tribunal favoring the Philippines, as it dismissed China's territorial claims to large swathes of the waters, the Philippine legal team noted, "We won the court case but lost the ocean."

Manila's Foreign Affairs spokesman Charles Jose told reporters that Filipino fishermen were directed to steer clear of Panatag (Sacramento Shoal) for their own safety, adding that although the tribunal ruling is clear, the "reality on the ground" was totally different.

President Rodrigo Duterte's detractors are likely to be angered by what they described as "being soft" on Beijing -- but water cannons have been used on Filipino fishermen by the Chinese.

Mr. Duterte has stressed that he wants to repair relations with China that was ruffled during the term of his predecessor Benigno Aquino, and is sending special envoy Fidel V. Ramos (former president) to negotiate the issue, at a still undisclosed date.

"This is one of the priority issue that we must take up when we go into direct talks with China," Jose said.

Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan are also claimants to the sea, through which, profits of US \$5 trillion is earned in annual trade passes. (GV)

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Php100-M 'shabu' seized in Angeles City; Chinese national nabbed

By Rea Katherine Mendoza

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga, Aug. 5 (PNA) -- Agents of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), together with the Police Regional Office-3 on Friday confiscated 30 kilos of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) worth Php100 million in a raid conducted in a warehouse in Angeles City.

Arrested during the raid was a Chinese national identified as Yiye Chen, an alleged member of a transnational drug trafficking syndicate.

The raid was made following a tip from a concerned citizen.

After receiving the information, a search warrant was issued by Executive Judge Bernilito Fernandez on Jasmin Street, Hensonville, Malabanas, Angeles City.

Police said inventory of the seized illegal drugs was still ongoing as of press time. (PNA)

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Entertainment

Rosanna Roces to marry partner Blessy Arias

MANILA, Philippines – Actress Rosanna Roces said that she and partner Blessy Arias will marry in Canada next month, where same-sex marriage is legal. The couple will have another ceremony in the Philippines scheduled in December.

In an interview on Rated K, Sunday, July 31, Rosanna or Osang shared how she asked Blessy if they could finally get married. The two first met when they were teenagers.

"Will you marry me Bless? Ganun 'yung pagkasabi ko," Rosanna said. "Bless, I want to marry you. Taray pa din, 'di ba? Nag-yes siya agad. (She said yes right away.)"

Blessy said: "[Kapag] magkasama kami (When we're together), 'yung simplicity ng life. Iyon 'yung tumatak sa akin. Hindi 'yung the showbiz side of her. (It's the simplicity of life – that's what made an impact on me. Not the showbiz side of her.)"

The couple expressed how they are looking forward to spending the rest of their lives together.

"I'll never have to sleep alone at night," Blessy said, as Rosanna added: "Sarap 'no (It feels good right)?"

"Buti na lang ni-ready ko 'yung sarili ko na single ako para pagdating nung forever ko, single ako. So alam mo iyon, tumatak talaga sa isip ko na marunong ka maghintay," Rosanna said.

(I'm just glad that I readied myself to be single so that when my 'forever' arrives, I'll be single. So you know, it just really stuck to my head that you have to learn how to wait.)

Last February on Tonight with Boy Abunda, Rosanna confirmed that she was in a relationship. She was previously married to Tito Molina. – Rappler.com

Photo Caption

FOREVER. Actress Rosanna Roces says she and partner Blessy Arias will marry in Canada, with another ceremony in the Philippines scheduled in December. Screengrab from Facebook/Jennifer Cruz Adriano

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Sports

Filipina lifter ends country's 20 year medal drought; Hsu Shu-ching wins women's 53kg weightlifting at Rio Olympics

And she's going to get quite a reward.

Under laws enacted in 2001 _ and until now, never needing to be actually acted upon _ any Philippines athlete who wins a silver medal at the Olympics is entitled to a bonus of 2.5 million .

Silver medal at the Olympics is entitled to a bonus of 2.5 million pesos. That works out to about \$53,000 in U.S. currency.

If she won gold, her prize would have been 5 million pesos, or about \$106,000.

"I am happy. I did not expect to win the silver medal," Diaz said. "I just aimed for the bronze medal."

Several nations pay medal bonuses. The U.S. offers \$25,000 for gold, \$15,000 for silver and \$10,000 for bronze. Russia's gold-medal bonuses for the Sochi Games were reported to be in excess of \$125,000, and other nations that have paid bonuses in the past include China, Italy, Canada and Australia.

Photo Caption

Hidilyn Diaz's silver medal in weightlifting at the Rio Games ended a 20-year Olympic medal drought for the Philippines.

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Tourism

Cebu's Historic Guitars

By Randy V. Urlanda. Manila Bureau Chief Correspondent

Mention Cebu and it conjures a mélange of images of the Santo Nino during the day-long "Sinulog" revelry, its delectable seafood festive board called "sutukil" ("sugba" or grilled, "tuya" or stewed and "kilaw" or raw fish marinated in coconut vinegar), and its world renowned "sistang gamang Sugbo or Cebu-made guitar.

Cebu's guitar industry started in the ancient coastal village of Maribago in Lapu-Lapu City in the resort island of Mactan southeast of Cebu City. The classical guitar, which first appeared in Spain but was itself the product of a long and complex history of diverse influences, was used by the Spanish friars in Cebu in their masses to enliven up the Eucharistic celebration.

Early guitars that the Spanish priests used were shipped to Cebu at the onset of the 250-year Manila Galleon Trade (1565-1815) when Spanish "conquistador" Miguel Lopez de Legazpi arrived in Cebu from Mexico to establish the first Spanish settlement in the new Spanish colony.

When the imported guitars, which were then strung with dried animal gut, began to wear out and deteriorate, the friars commissioned native artisans to copy and make new guitars instead of waiting for the new ones to arrive from Mexico on board the lumbering 1,700-ton wooden-hulled galleon, which took four months to navigate the treacherous waters of the Pacific from the port city of Acapulco to ferry precious cargoes and passengers from Europe and Mexico.

Four hundred years later, the melodious sound strummed by the guitar makers of yore continued to lift up spirits during Sunday masses and perk up social events, not only in Cebu but throughout the entire archipelago as well.

Before the famed American blind singer Jose Feliciano performed at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 1972, he was presented a Cebu-made American walnut-colored classic acoustic guitar by Fernando 'Bebot' Alegre, now a professional guitarist and owner of the largest guitar factory in Cebu.

"When Feliciano strummed a few notes, he exclaimed, "Oh, it's damn good!" says the 65-year-old

Alegre, who established his own Alegre Guitars in 1996 after working for 25 years in operations and sales manager of Lilang's Guitar, the maker of the guitar he gave Feliciano. "He told me that the guitar felt and sounded like his other branded acoustic guitars."

Alegre, a third generation guitar maker, is a complete guitar master. At age five, he mastered the ukulele, and at 14, he was adept in playing the electric guitar hits of The Ventures like "Sleepwalk" and The Shadows' "Wipeout" that he quit high school to join The Jamstick Band, whose members were his buddies and played in the sailor-jammed American style bars in the bustling port city of Olongapo for more than a year.

Now, Alegre's hand-made guitars – from his 25.4cm (12 in) mini-guitar, 55.88cm small guitar to the full-size classical guitars are the most sought-after stringed musical instrument by amateur and professional guitarists in the Philippines and abroad.

“For my top-of-the-line classical guitars, which sell for P50,000 to P90,000 each, I use a Canadian spruce and cedar wood for the sound board, which is the flat wooden piece mounted on the front of the guitar's body,” explains Alegre who taught private guitar lessons and was a licensed Nihonggo-speaking tour guide in the late 1980s during the peak of the Japanese tourist influx in Cebu. “For the guitar's flat back and incurved side, I use Brazilian rosewood.

“However, it's the neck of the guitar where the six nylon strings with the strength of 260 psi are strung that could make or unmake a guitar,” explains the Cebuano guitar master. “If it's not kiln-dried or aged, it would twist or warp together with the strings, thus making the guitar unplayable.

“My skilled guitar makers, most of whom are also third generation craftsmen, takes 60 days to finish a high-price model after which, it is aged for two years to assure excellent sound quality,” says Alegre during the Sentinel interview in his spacious guitar showroom inside a gated 5,500-square-meter factory cum residence complex in the quiet village of Abono in Lapu-Lapu City where all the five major guitar factories of Cebu are located at the southern edge of the wide 4.5km-long Mactan-Cebu International Airport's runway.

“The cheaper starter models made of plywood sells for just P1,500 while the classical guitar model made of acacia has a price tag of P12,000,” adds Alegre. His classical guitars have four sub-categories within the acoustic guitar group: the “classical,” which has tone quality for sweet musical pieces; the “flamenco,” which is associated with a more percussive tone; the “steel-string guitar,” or folk guitar commonly used in American country music, and the smaller “requinto,” one of the guitars used by mariachi bands in Mexico which permits more projection for the playing of single-lined melodies.

“For aspiring guitarists, their interest in guitar music must not wane, including patience in mastering the craft, and passion for it,” says Alegre, who is married to Alicia Amistad, one of the seven children of Adriano and Lilang Amistad, the pioneers in guitar-making in Cebu, with whom he has three children. “That's where a good guitar player makes a difference from the rest,” he concludes.

“With our ingenuity and long history in the trade, we could be at par with the leading guitar-makers in the world.”

Community News

FREEDOM LODGE 1461 HAS NEW WORSHIPFUL MASTER

Amidst the blistering heat of the afternoon sun on Saturday, July 16, 2016, the Freedom Lodge 1461 new officers for the year 2016-2017 were installed in a formal ceremony at the Arabia Shrine Center in Southwest Houston. The officers were installed by RW Paul Underwood, PPDGM of the Grand Lodge of Texas.

Installed as Worshipful Master of Freedom Lodge 1461 is Dr. Josier "Joey" Nisnisan, a Houston internist with the West Houston Medical Center.

Rev. Timothy V. Marqueuz gave the invocation while Bro. Ramir Adolfo Amper led the pledge of allegiance. WB Manuel P. Yater, PM gave the welcome remarks.

Outgoing Worship Master Marciano "Jun" Pascual received his past master apron from WB Monteflor C. Valmores, PM while WB Mario P. Dipasupil, PM presented the past master jewel, and WB Estanislao "Tany" Suerte, PM presented the past master jacket.

WB Pablito "Lito" Tolentino, PM gave the past master certificate.

Worshipful Master Josier Nisnisan received his Master's Hat from his wife, Sis Eme Nisnisan; Master Gavel from WB Ricardo B. Achico, PM; Book of Constitution from Bro. Nile B. Copeland; and the Travelling Pin from WB Marciano "Jun" Pascual, PM.

RW Edmundo P. Dipasupil, PM, DDGM, introduced the guest speaker, RW Paul Underwood, PDDGM of the Grand Lodge of Texas.

Rev. Carlos D. Iglupas gave the benediction to end the installation ceremony..

First photo caption

Photo shows Freedom Lodge 1461 Worshipful Master Joey Nisnisan with his lady, Sis. Eme Nisnisan.

2nd photo caption

FREEDOM LODGE 1461 members and their guests are shown during the installation of new sets of officers at the Arabia Shrine Center.

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HOUSTON PINOY TV

HOWDY PHILIPPINES - The first Filipino American television channel is now fully operational in Houston, Texas under the name PINOY HOUSTON TV (PHTV) and is now part of the international digital television network.

It premiered on July 30 at Channel 15.3. and will be a weekly show every Saturday, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM, and there will also be a re-run every Sunday from 5:30 to 6:30 PM.

Our program can also be shared in various platforms like Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, Pinoy Houston TV website, live streams and is available to a wide variety of audience, not only locally but also internationally.

PHTV will also be featuring special events, and if you have any interesting story or if you want us to feature a particular subject, call us at 832-448-0450 or email us at pinoyhoustontv.com or send us a Face Book (FB) message..

We are also offering sponsorship opportunities for business and organizations. Having an AD on TV is a positive way of reaching out to your market. This is a great way to spotlight your business. We have packages available for everyone depending on your needs and budget

Photo caption

Photo shows, from left: John Anthony Jamandre, JV Villar, Sheryn Regis, Cheryl Piccio, Iris Lacsamana, Angel Break, and Rex Daniel.

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NORTH TEXAS ASIAN AMERICAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION (NTAACA): PEARL JUBILEE GALA, AUGUST 27, 2016

DALLAS - Edgar Santiago announces the Pearl Jubilee Gala celebration of North Texas Asian American Cultural Association. The NTAACA celebrates its 30 years of Asian American spirit and its Culture in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

The event will be held at The Westin located at the DFW Irving, Texas on Saturday, August 27, 2016. The event starts at 4 P.M.

The non-profit event will benefit victims of natural calamities. There will be raffles and awards to the Best Dressed Guests.

Visit : www.ntaaca.org for tickets and reservations. Limited guests for the first 300 reserved!

The Asian American Cultural Association was formed in 1986 as a means to create and maintain a spirit of understanding and alliance amongst all Asian American Communities in the Dallas Fort Worth Area. In 2006 our organization's name was modified to North Texas Asian American Cultural Association. Leadership [HYPERLINK "http://ntaaca.org/officers-and-board-members/"](http://ntaaca.org/officers-and-board-members/) →

Vision

Building a vibrant community in the DFW area through strength in diversity of Asian American cultures and traditions.

Our community message: "Different traditions, one mission"

Mission Statements

Create and Maintain a spirit of understanding and alliance amongst Asian American Communities in the DFW area

Increase awareness of the rich cultural heritage of all Asian-Americans by holding high visibility social and cultural events

Promote unity amongst the association's members in the bonds of friendship, good fellowship, and mutual understanding by providing means for different groups to reach out to each other and the community

Improving communications by sharing interests and concerns for mutual growth and benefit

Provide scholarship funds for educational welfare and academic excellence of AA students

History

In the last decade, the DFW area has undergone a major demographic change with an influx of Asian Americans into the North Texas area. Currently, there are over 250,000 Asian Americans residing in the DFW metropolis. With growth, there is a need for one collective voice and a mechanism to show the cultural diversity we bring to the local communities. The organization was formed in 2006 as Asian American Cultural Association to bring Asian Americans together and provide leadership in cultural, educational, social and economic areas. NTAACA seeks to bring out the maximum potential of all people in our communities, and seeks to build a better world for all races.

A 501(c)(3) Non Profit Organization ID# 45-0558575

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