

Miriam wages all-out war on Clark's HUMAN TRAFFICKING

THE 2,500-hectare Diosdado Macapagal International Airport (DMIA) is well on its way to become not just the country's premier airport but also as a major exit point in human trafficking.

This was the assessment of Senator Miriam Defensor-Santiago as she declared an all-out war to stop the alleged use of the DMIA in the trafficking in of Filipino women.

Santiago cited reports that two suspected couriers of a human trafficking syndicate operating in Pampanga were arrested recently by immigration officers at the DMIA after they tried to escort six undocumented overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to Malaysia.

Bureau of Immigration (BI) officials said the suspects were apprehended last October 31 at the DMIA departure while escorting six women workers.

Initial investigation conducted by BI acting chief Ronaldo Ledesma showed that the suspects and their wards were about to board an Air Asia flight to Kuala Lumpur when they were offloaded.

Ledesma identified the alleged couriers as Ernida Serrano, a resident of Quezon City, and Juliana Mercene of Tondo, Manila. They were turned over to the National Bureau of Investigation and were charged with violating the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act before the prosecutor's office in Angeles City.

Carlos Capulong, DMIA-BI head supervisor, reported that the six would-be OFWs were barred from leaving after they presented fake company identification cards allegedly provided by Serrano.

Capulong said the apparent trafficking victims then executed affidavits pointing to Serrano as the one who facilitated their trip and gave them the fake IDs.

They also alleged that Serrano and Mercene were supposed to accompany them to Kuala Lumpur where they would work as salesclerks and waitresses, prompting the agents to arrest the two.

"They claimed that they each gave Ms. Serrano between P10,000 and P30,000 to process their travel and work documents," Capulong said.

GMA News TV reported that the fearless lady senator recently filed Senate Resolution 287 which seeks to investigate reports that a human trafficking syndicate has been using the DMIA in Pampanga to bring women from that province to Sandakan, Malaysia, where they are forced into prostitution.

"There is a need to address the issue of the possible use of government facilities, such as the international airport, and the possible collusion of public officials assigned in such facilities with members of these trafficking syndicates," an irate Santiago said.

Santiago also asked her colleagues to delve



into the "seeming inability of these government personnel to prevent the continuing operation of these trafficking rings."

She said reports indicate that the syndicate operates as a labor-hiring agency which targets women from Mount Pinatubo resettlement sites in Angeles City and Mabalacat, Pampanga.

She said that women are promised jobs as waitresses, a monthly salary of \$600, free travel fare, and free board and lodging.

Upon their arrival in Sandakan, Malaysia, she said the women are taken to a house, raped, and then brought to a brothel in a high-end subdivision operated by Chinese businessmen.

Santiago said the brothel, which caters to foreign sailors, is supposedly packed with around 200 women, most of whom hail from Pampanga.

She said Susan Pineda, executive director of the Inang Makababaying Aksyon (IMA or Pro-Women Action) Foundation, said the police had already issued an arrest warrant for the alleged head of the syndicate, Cindy Garcia Zamora. However, Zamora had reportedly posted bail.

Earlier, Susan Ople of the Blas F. Ople Policy Center said the DMIA has become "the obvious choice" for human traffickers victimizing Filipinas.

Ople said that "the rise of budget flights in the airport, the relatively lenient security procedures there, and the lack of media practitioners covering the facility make DMIA an ideal takeoff point for human traffickers and illegal recruiters."

The center, which has been helping provide social and legal aid to victims, was approached by two victims who left for Malaysia through DMIA. The two (the Anti-Human Trafficking Act protects the privacy of both victim and suspect and prohibits revealing their names) have been instrumental in the filing of case against 15 people, mostly immigration personnel assigned at DMIA.

Ople also called on the Senate to look into the rising number of trafficked victims in aid of legislation citing loopholes in the Anti-Trafficking Act of 2003. Under Section 7, the law states that the victim and the accused are entitled to their right to privacy.

Media entities and nongovernment organizations are prevented by the law from reporting to the public the activities of notorious human traffickers, even those considered as fugitives from the law.

Also, the United States State Department put the Philippines on the Tier 2 Watch List for countries that have a significant number of

trafficked victims and failed to show increasing efforts to combat severe forms of human trafficking.

As the Philippines was on the Tier 2 Watch List in 2009 and 2010, it faces a downgrade to Tier 3 in 2011 unless the country increases its conviction rate and reduces evidence of complicity in trafficking by government officials.

Given all of these negative reports on DMIA, the strategic importance of Clark for the near future is vital on the economic development being undertaken in Clark and nearby Subic Freeport. From an initial design capacity of 500,000 passengers per year, the new Clark Airport terminal can now handle more than 2 million passengers per year. Included in the new terminal is a total of 6,279 square meters of floor space, up from the previous 5,365 square meters of floor area.

Also included in the remodeled Clark Airport is a new immigration counter, five new airline administrative offices, five new airline ticketing offices, new restrooms, a new coffee shop and a new predeparture check-in lobby area.

Before it's too late, Clark airport authorities should act now and move swiftly to avert the wicked plans of unscrupulous humansmugglers wanting to put a halt and eventually destroy the continuous progress going on at the DMIA.

Magsaysay welcomes Romano resignation

ZAMBALES 1st District Rep. Mitos Magsaysay commended Department of Tourism (DOT) Undersecretary Vicente Romano for tendering his resignation.

Magsaysay, however, claimed that the "Pilipinas Kay Ganda" snafu is proof of the haphazard leadership of the Aquino administration.

She also believes that DOT Secretary Alberto Lim wasn't responsible enough to study the project.

Magsaysay said the issue is a wake-up call for the Aquino leadership. She said that lawmakers were surprised to receive invitations to the project's unveiling.

She added that government wasted money on it.

Magsaysay claimed that Romano does not seem to have the "credentials" for the job. She said the Aquino administration has been on "OJT [on-the-job training] mode."

Magsaysay said while the President has rid his administration of corruption, he hasn't cleansed the incompetent. She urged the President to do a performance check on executive officials.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said Romano admitted his mistake.

"It was honorable of him to offer his resignation and the President respects him for his act. And it is with reluctance that the President accepted his resignation," he added.

Meanwhile, a House bill has been filed seeking to criminalize plagiarism among public officials. Quezon City Rep. Winston T. Castelo (1st district, Quezon City), author of House Bill 3729, only covers public officials, government lawyers and justices who commit plagiarism, which is currently only considered a civil offense under the Intellectual Property Code (Republic Act 8293).



"We are still studying penalties for private citizens. We also want to include in the amendments when the bill is tackled in the committee penalties for nonliterary plagiarism," Castelo said, referring to the scrapped "Pilipinas Kay Ganda" tourism campaign which drew flak from none other than Aquino himself.

The said logo was allegedly copied from Poland's tourism campaign.

Castelo also cited the case of Supreme Court Associate Justice Mariano C. del Castillo, who was claimed to have used citations from journals without attribution in writing the deci-

sion on the case of comfort women.

"A big step toward protecting and promoting the rights of our artists, writers, performers, composers and the creative sector in general," this is how Rep. Albert Garcia of the Second District of Bataan and chairman of the House Committee on Trade and Industry described the committee's approval of the consolidated bill amending the provisions on copyrights of Republic Act 8293, otherwise known as the Intellectual Property (IP) Code.

The consolidated copyright bill incorporated provisions of House Bills 47, 267 and 2040 filed by Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, Rep. Edgardo Sonny Angara and Rep. Irwin Tieng and Rep. Micheal Velarde, respectively, which seek to amend certain provisions of the IP Code.

The three bills were referred to the Committee on Trade and Industry for deliberation. These bills were then consolidated by a Technical Working Group (TWG) headed by the committee vice chairman on intellectual property, Rep. Joel Duavit.

"We are a country blessed with literary, musical and artistic talents. It is but proper that we protect their rights and promote their interests while ensuring the public's right to enjoy and benefit their works," Garcia explained.

"While it is true that copyright is one of the intellectual property rights like patents and trademarks, it has not received the proper importance and attention which limited the growth of our artists, writers, performers, composers and other members of our creative sector," Garcia added.

The Copyright Bill provides for the establishment of a Bureau of Copyright, clarifies acts constituting copyright infringement, award of statutory damages for copyright infringement cases, and regulates collective management organizations, among others.

Bataan assures traders' safety

A TOP police official in Limay, Bataan, has allayed fears of a number of foreign and local investors that this industrial town's peace-and-order situation is getting worse even as he assured the safety of the traders here.

Chief Insp. Ricardo "Ric" Santiago, Limay chief of police, said this town is a safe place to invest in and so peaceful and that not even a single incident involving businessmen here was recorded to the police.

"Although there was a recent incident where two suspected robbers were killed after they were sighted by the police on Roman Highway in barangay Duale, this is only an isolated case and nothing to worry about since we were able to immediately neutralize them," said Santiago.

He said that Mayor Lilver Roque has sought a meeting to discuss the prevailing peace-and-order situation in his bid to further ensure the safety of the traders here.

This town hosts the Bataan Petron Refinery where at least 60 to 80 percent of the country's need for petroleum is being processed, the explosives plant, the Department of National Defense Arsenal, the petrochemical plant, power plant, a fertilizer manufacturing plant, among other multinational companies, making Limay as one of the richest towns in Region 3.

Roque said that the Petron Refinery is now in the process of constructing its own 70-megawatt power plant in preparation for its expansion program.

Mar T. Supnad

Editorial

www.newscentralsite.com

Olongapo City celebrates World AIDS Day

THE Olongapo City government, in collaboration with Olongapo City AIDS Council (OCAC) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), is gearing up for observance of World AIDS Day on December 1.

With the theme "Universal Access and Human Rights," the traditional program for this event will be held at Rizal Triangle Multi-Purpose Center here.

Civic groups, local government representatives, nongovernment organizations, students and owners of various establishments in the city are expected to attend the occasion.

Delegates will wear white t-shirts with red ribbons. The red ribbon is the international symbol of AIDS awareness.

Advocates wear this ribbon year-round to demonstrate their care and concern for HIV and AIDS victims.

The celebration will be highlighted by candle-lighting which will symbolize Olongapo City's participation in World AIDS Day. Candle-lighting is also a way of remembering those who died of AIDS and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Based on the Joint United Nations Program estimate on HIV/AIDS in the Philippines, there are about 8,300 HIV cases with 5,625 actual reported cases in the September 2010 HIV registry. Such reported cases cover a 7:3 male-to-female ratio.

Records also show majority of people with HIV and AIDS live in lower- and middle-income countries.

Olongapo City government and OCAC continue implementing programs for AIDS awareness and consciousness. **PNA**

Stop child pornography on the Internet now

A STUDY on child pornography in the Philippines conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) found extensive evidence that child pornography is occurring in the country as a result of both foreign and domestic perpetrators seeking to exploit poor and vulnerable families and children.

The use of the Internet is one of the most troublesome conclusions as the link between local producers and networks of pornographers operating overseas for the purposes of distributing child pornography has been ascertained.

The study details the way Internet technology makes it difficult for officials to monitor and investigate the criminal practice.

It is increasingly clear that unchaperoned Internet use by children leaves them vulnerable to child pornographers through e-mail, chat rooms, web sites, web cameras and Internet cafés.

Digital cameras and mobile phones equipped with cameras are also reported as being used to produce and disseminate child pornography.

It is reported that Internet service providers (ISPs) are resistant to divulging personal information of users suspected of being pornographers or pedophiles. In addition, credit-card companies do not make sufficient efforts to assist in law enforcement, citing privacy rights.

The study highlights numerous challenges in the fight against child pornography. Among these are:

- Child pornography is a little-understood and hard-to-investigate



practice;

- Identifying victims, perpetrators, and users of child pornography is difficult;

- Knowing the age of the child is difficult;

- Information technology's use is uncontrollable;

- Child pornography is linked with other forms of sexual exploitation;

- Official statistics on child pornography is incomplete;

- Credit-card companies and ISPs are not cooperating;

- Gaps in the law and enforcement exist.

The study was conducted five years ago and the problem remains

the same until today.

Just last month, elements of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) from Angeles City, in coordination with Olongapo CIDG, raided a cyber-sex den in a private house located just a few minutes from the city hall.

The raiding team rescued five children ages 14 to 16 hired as "show girls."

Rev. Shay Cullen, founder of Preda.org, a nonprofit dedicated to ending the exploitation of children, reported that the rescued children are now under the protection, therapy and help at the Preda foundation.

He said the rescued children tearfully told their story of how they were recruited and persuaded with

money to train as sex workers at such an early age, and many of their peer groups are doing the same thing.

Cullen related in his report that the den, operated by a married couple with four young children, had two large rooms with as many as 10 computers linked to the Internet. In one room, young women were performing sex acts before a digital camera that was sending their images to customers in Europe, North America and Australia.

The five minors were in the other room, according to their account, talking to male customers and exposing their naked bodies in lascivious poses. This was the first stage of their training. Later, they, too, would be compelled to perform sex acts on camera. The customers send their payments to the den operator by credit card. The children had been trafficked in from Angeles City and were paid from \$20 to \$50 a week.

"The members of the international sex mafia and sex tourists come here thinking they can do what they like and exude an air of racial and financial superiority that seems to intimidate the government officials," Cullen said.

"To be sure some are partners in the crime. A strong city ordinance can close or forbid such establishments if it has the political will and the moral strength to do so," he added.

"We, at the Preda foundation, rescue, protect and heal the child victims, but it is only the government that can prosecute and give justice to the countless victims. For this we have to campaign all the more and never give up," Cullen said.

Stand Against Violence Now!

ANTI-CHILD abuse and women's-rights advocates trooped recently in front of the Olongapo City Justice hall and conducted a lightning rally to demand fair trial on all cases involving child abuse and violation of women's protection law.

The group belongs to the Stand Against Violence Now!, a coalition of local government units, special advocates of children's rights, Federation of Barangay Human Rights Action Officers, child-rights organizations, nongovernment organizations, people's organizations and faith-based groups from Olongapo City.

In a statement, the coalition said, "We are working for a system of justice that will empower children and protect their rights, no matter how hard it is for us to go after child abusers and exploiters because of the deeply rooted problems in the system."

The statement added as the world celebrated the International Day of No Prostitution, they are one in advocating for a society that is against

the proliferation of prostitution.

"We are demanding our government to help and support all victims of abuse and exploitation in the country and to act accordingly in combating the social menace of prostitution, especially child prostitution."

The group also said they are strongly urging Congress to pass the Anti-Prostitution Bill as soon as possible.

"Lastly, we are calling on all the Filipino people to be vigilant and continually advocate for a society that respects, protects and upholds the rights of all women and children," the statement said.

"At the time when our beloved President Benigno Simeon Aquino III is calling on everybody to follow his lead to the right path, a powerful and influential municipal mayor seems to be going in an opposite direction," they said.

The coalition has received reports that justice maybe thwarted since the poor child victim and her relatives are allegedly being intimidated.

The coalition finds this allegation



as unacceptable and insulting. "We strongly condemn and denounce the act and we demand that an investigation on this matter be conducted."

Furthermore, the coalition is calling on the judiciary to do its duty in a timely manner and without bias. "Justice delayed is justice denied," the group said.

The coalition is currently assisting a 12-year-old girl who is an alleged victim of child abuse and trafficking in Zambales.

"For Mayor Jose Rodriguez of San Marcelino, Zambales...we call on him to take a leave of absence pending the investigation of this case so as not to cast doubts in the investigation

phase of this case due to his power and influence," the group said.

For his part, Rodriguez has vehemently denied the accusation and has expressed optimism that the case will be dismissed by the Zambales Prosecutor's office for lack of evidence. "Justice will prevail," he said.

News Central

Executive Publisher
Roger M. Garcia

Editorial Team

Rey Garcia, Bob Coutie
Rendy Isip, Arnel San Pedro,
George Hubierna
Cecille Garcia, Jojo Due
Rodin dela Cruz, K.M. Stearmer
Sonny Dobles
Consultant for Community Affairs

NewsCentral is a regional business newspaper for Central Luzon published fortnightly by Newsphiles Publishing Corp., with offices at 7740-F, Saint Paul St., San Antonio Village, Makati City. Tel. Nos. 338-40-75 / 0918-924-8544

Unit 25, Westgate Suite, Sampson Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone
Tel. Nos. (047) 603-1353
and 0928-958-5361
publisher.newscentral@gmail.com
www.newscentralsite.com

Pocket open-skies policy in the Subic Bay Freeport

By Danny Piano

November 8, 2010

PRESIDENT BENIGNO S. AQUINO III
Malacañang Palace
JP Laurel Street, San Miguel
Manila, NCR 1005, Philippines

Subj: Support for Pocket Open Skies Policy in the Subic Bay Freeport

Dear President Aquino,

The Subic Bay Freeport Chamber of Commerce (SBFCC) fully supports, and endorses, a pocket open-skies policy for the Subic Bay Freeport Zone (SBFZ).

Since FedEx's AsiaOne hub discontinued its operations in the SBFZ and transferred to China almost two years ago, the Subic Bay International Airport (SBIA) became underutilized and almost dormant. Even while the SBFCC formed the Subic Airport Revival Committee and collaborated with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) and many other organizations, our progress has been slow partly because of limited rights of budget carriers. The SBMA, on the other hand, continues to service the debt incurred from the airport's modernization. By providing for a more liberalized air space, we would undoubtedly reinvigorate the SBIA faster.

While Executive Orders 253, 500 and 500A granted rights to foreign carriers operating at the DMIA and SBIA, the limitation on designated carriers and withdrawal of the 5th

freedom right—the right to fly between two foreign countries, more popularly known as "connecting flights"—hampered the SBIA's progress from taking off once more.

While there have been moves already in the House of Representatives to promote pocket open-skies policy for secondary gateways including Subic, the SBFCC feels that an executive order amending EO 500A, previously issued by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, would be the quickest way to revive the Subic Bay International Airport.

The SBFZ is one of the major growth areas in Philippine tourism. Liberalizing our air space will enhance access to Subic Bay and surrounding destinations. We are a Freeport after all. Coupled with budget fares, this will certainly spur an increase in international and local tourist arrivals.

The Subic Bay Freeport Chamber of Commerce, representing the businesses, residents and other stakeholders inside the SBFZ, supports your Excellency's administration. We hope that by bringing to your attention our sentiments, by providing suggestions, by demonstrating our willingness to work with you, we can together bring the Subic Bay Freeport's economic prosperity to greater heights.

Yours truly,
Prof. DANNY J. PIANO
SBFCC President

Zambales, Tarlac execs press Malacañang to complete road link

THE long-delayed road-link project which was envisioned to spur economic progress for the provinces of Zambales and Tarlac, the home province of President Noynoy Aquino, may soon be completed with the blessings of Malacañang.

Gov. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. announced here yesterday that Tarlac Gov. Victor Yap has agreed in a meeting for both of them to request President Aquino to prioritize the highway project to be able to speed up economic development in the two neighboring provinces, as well as the Central Luzon region.

"We will make the request to the President, with the hope that he would make this his legacy project since he hails from the province of Tarlac," Ebdane said.

"It would undoubtedly be to President Noynoy's credit if the project is completed under his term, since the Zambales-Tarlac road project has been planned as early as 1901, during the time of the Americans," he added.

President Aquino's father, the martyred former senator Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., has also revealed the same project to connect Tarlac to Zambales in 1963, Ebdane said.

Construction of the proposed highway had since started from both the Zambales and Tarlac sides over several decades, but was temporarily halted after the Mount Pinatubo eruption in 1991.

Ebdane said that the government recently allocated P50 million to complete the road link that would cut through the Zambales mountain range, after the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) spent some P15 million last year to clear portions of the jungle for the highway.

Ebdane also said that he and Yap had already ironed out concerns on the road alignment after making a helicopter inspection of the project area on Wednesday.

"We agreed that both the Tarlac and Zambales segments would meet at the Camp O'Donell area and then connect to the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx)," Ebdane said. "This way, we could prevent extraneous cost while maximizing accessibility for Zambales and Tarlac in relation to other areas in Central Luzon."

Ebdane said the Zambales-Tarlac road project would not only open up Zambales to trade and tourism opportunities in the region, but would also ease the transportation system in the coastal province.

The proposed highway would also provide an alternative route to central Zambales in case of flashfloods that sometimes occur in towns still affected by volcanic wastes that course down Pinatubo during the rainy season.

Reacting to the governor's announcement, Palauig town Mayor Generoso Amog lauded Ebdane for being "a gentleman and a professional," pointing out that the provincial executive has set aside partisan politics after assuming the governorship last July.

"In turn, we pledge our support to you. We will follow and work to help realize your good programs," Amog vowed.

Another ongoing road project, the Santa Cruz-Mangatarem highway, would meanwhile connect northern Zambales to eastern Pangasinan and boost trade in that area, Ebdane added.



Gov. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. identifies the site of the proposed highway that would connect the provinces of Zambales and Tarlac.

Funds set to link Manila's ports to Subic, Clark

AMETROPacific Tollways Corp. (MPTC) unit that operates North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) said it will spend more than a billion pesos next year for expansion and maintenance.

Rodrigo E. Franco, Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) president, said the company's capital expenditure would amount to more than P1 billion next year.

Of the total, P400 million to P500 million would be allotted to finance the extension of NLEX to McArthur Highway in Valenzuela, while another P400 million would be spent on the Subic Clark Tarlac Expressway (SCTEx).

The NLEX extension forms part of the eight-kilometer NLEX-Harbor Link Project, which involves providing access to C-3 Road leading to the port areas in Manila.

Construction of the largely elevated road will cost about P8 billion, which MNTC expects to fund on its own. "We expect the construction to start by fourth quarter of next year," Franco said, adding that the project aims to be completed by 2014.

The expansion is designed to help decongest traffic in Metro Manila as it provides a direct route to the Calocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela (Camanava) area from North and Central Luzon, bypassing Edsa and the Balintawak interchange.

The project also sets the stage for the Connector Road, a 13-kilometer elevated expressway that will connect NLEX from C-3 to Skyway on Buendia Avenue, Makati City.

Franco said the company expects a 15-percent growth in revenue next year if the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB) approves its petition to increase tolls by 12 percent.

This year, revenues are likely to grow by 5 percent, he said.

MPTC earlier reported a net income of P1.09 billion during the first nine months compared with P895 million in the same period last year. Its revenues rose 7 percent to P4.34 billion due to a rise in average daily vehicle entries.

Cyber crime bill filed

PAMPANGA Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo urged Congress to approve her bill seeking to protect individuals and institutions from malicious attacks through cyberspace.

House Bill 383 coauthored by her son Rep. Diosdado M. Arroyo (2nd District, Camarines Sur) seeks to criminalize the use of Internet to advance nefarious activities.

Macapagal-Arroyo said the steady growth of crimes committed through the Internet has become alarming because of the global reach of the Internet.

"People from all walks of life may fall prey to fraudsters and other unlawful attacks such as committing fraud, child pornography, intellectual property infringement, stealing of identities and privacy violation," Macapagal-Arroyo said.

Macapagal-Arroyo lamented that because of the proliferation and ease of committing cyber crimes, there is a need to ensure the security, integrity, confidentiality and dependability of the country's information and communications structure.

"A law that will facilitate the detection, investigation and prosecu-



tion of the misuse, abuse and illegal access of our information and communication system is therefore imperative," Macapagal-Arroyo said.

Macapagal-Arroyo said it is the declared policy of the State to provide an environment conducive to the development, acceleration and application of information and communication technology (ICT) to attain free, easy and intelligible access to exchange and/or delivery of information.

"There is a need to protect and safeguard the integrity of computer and communication systems, networks and database, and the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information and data stored therein, from all forms of misuse,

abuse and illegal access by making such conduct punishable under the law," Macapagal-Arroyo stressed.

Macapagal-Arroyo said the State must have sufficient powers to effectively prevent and combat such offenses by facilitating their detection, investigation and prosecution at both the domestic and international levels, and by providing arrangements for fast and reliable international cooperation.

Under the measure otherwise known as the "Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2010," a person can be criminally liable if he commits offenses against the confidentiality, integrity and availability of computer data and systems, computer forgery and computer-related fraud.

It is also punishable under the Act content-related offenses such as cybersex, child pornography and unsolicited commercial communications, aiding or abetting in the commission of the cyber crime and attempt to commit cyber crime.

The bill provides penalties ranging from P200,000.00 to P1.25 million and imprisonment of prison mayor.

Lorelei V. Castillo

Mabalacat gate rehab to commence soon

OFFICIALS of Clark Development Corporation announced the rehabilitation of the Mabalacat gate that is expected to be completed in the first quarter of next year.

CDC Vice President Frank Madlangbayan of the Operations and Technical Services Group of CDC said that the construction of a new P12-million gate could start within the first week of December this year, depending on the outcome of bidding of the project.

Under the time table prepared by the CDC, the completion of the project could take place within 120 days from its commencement.

Included in the P12-million Mabalacat gate project is the construction of new terminal shed, parking area, comfort room, improvement of the existing road and drainage.

The project will also include construction of new access road to the new jeepney terminal site, construction of curb and gutter, curb inlets and covered walkway.

Madlangbayan said that the state-owned firm has programmed the beautification and improvement of all gates for ingress and egress to the Freeport Zone in anticipation of an increased number of business establishments, motorists and workers in Clark.

The project implementation, long in the drawing board, was subject to various government regulations, especially in the bidding of mode of procurement as stated in Republic Act 9184.

"Hopefully, by March 30, 2011, Mabalacat gate will have a new and improved structure that would complement the world class status of the Freeport zone," Madlangbayan said.

CDC has also funded the covered walkway of Velasquez Street that stretches from the Mabalacat Gate to MacArthur Highway. Said project was implemented by the host local government unit.

Digital literacy program launched in Tarlac



Tarlac Gov. Victor Yap

THE provincial government of Tarlac (PGT) and the Local Government Unit of Victoria, in partnership with Sutherland Global Services and computer software giant Microsoft, launched the Digital Literacy Program recently aimed at providing training for basic computer concepts and skills to Tarlaquenos.

The Microsoft Community Technology Center (MSCTC), which was launched in May of last year, was already able to train some 1,000 individuals in the province that were

largely employed at Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) centers and other information technology companies.

Part of the five-day training module includes basic computer learning, internet and World Wide Web applications, digital lifestyle, computer security and privacy and productivity programs. Victoria was provided a 20-seater training center located right beside the municipal building.

Mayor Candido Guaim III lauded Tarlac Governor Victor Yap, Sutherland and Microsoft for choosing Victoria as the first satellite training

center in the province.

"It is indeed an honor for Victoria to be chosen as the first training center outside of Tarlac City," he said.

Yap for his part said that the (Digital Literacy) program is training designed to connect everybody to the world.

"This is an opportune time for the people of Victoria to learn how to connect to the world. All should be knowledgeable in the latest technologies," Yap said.

According to Vijayendra Nagar,

Sutherland senior manager and Jay Yulo, Sutherland's director for recruitment in the Philippines, it is their company's social-corporate responsibility to train people who are illiterate in computer.

They added that Sutherland has opened up 1,500 seats for their call center industry located at San Isidro in Tarlac City.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing between the PGT, Victoria LGU, Sutherland and Microsoft was undertaken. **Tarlac Provincial Media Affairs Office**

Community

www.newscentralsite.com

SBMA HONORS 10 OUTSTANDING FREEPORT WORKERS

By Raquel F. Dimaano
& Hernan Habacon

As part of the annual celebration of Volunteers Day here, 10 "local heroes" were honored yesterday for their economic contributions to their respective companies and the Subic Bay Freeport.

The awardees for the Ten Outstanding Freeport Workers (TOFW) were announced by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) and the Subic Bay Workforce Development Foundation Inc. (SBWDFI) in a ceremony held at the Subic Bay Exhibition and Convention Center.

Now on its ninth year, the TOFW award has turned out workers who personify excellence in their respective fields of expertise. The winners are selected through a rigid screening process that emphasizes efficiency, positive work attitudes, leadership capabilities and interpersonal maturity.

The Ten Outstanding Freeport Workers for this year are Larry Aquino (SBMA), Nedelyn Catiis (SBMA), Jean Castro (Nicera Philippines, Inc.), Benamor O. Labadan (Ocean Adventure), Jesus Vener Mallen (Philippine Coastal Corporation), Elvira Reyes (SBDMC), Roberto Francisco (Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium), Alfredo Sadora (Philippine Coastal), Marissa Tamayo (Nidec) and Mark San Gabriel (Subicwater).

Larry Aquino. When opportunity presents itself, most Filipinos would immediately grab the chance to permanently live and work in the United States. Larry Aquino, however, belongs to the select few who would rather stay and work for the good of his homeland.

Larry served the US defense establishment for 20 years – starting with a four year stint in the US Navy, after which he worked with the US Naval base here in Subic Bay. When the Americans left, Larry had the chance to go to the U.S. under a Special Immigrant Status. But he chose to serve his country.

During the critical transition period of Subic Bay, he volunteered to work at the personnel department. For eight months he worked without pay. He toils silently in his corner—doing ordinary work, extraordinarily well.

Jean Castro. Hard work and dedication cannot be ignored. In the case of Jean Castro, a process coordinator of Nicera Philippines, Inc., not only was she given recognition; she also earned a promotion.

Jean joined Nicera as production



worker in May 2004. She mastered her work, and thus, was promoted to a supervisory position. As a process coordinator or "PC" in the manufacturing jargon, Jean leads a group whose task is to improve the productivity in a process.

The most recent innovation she introduced is to change the methodology of three different production processes. These proposals were deemed the best projects in the company for the months of July and August this year.

Nedelyn Catiis. In the workplace, we see many people who lock themselves up within their comfort zones and shield themselves from additional work. In that sense, Nedelyn Catiis defies human nature.

Nedz is assigned to the payroll section of the SBMA Human Resource Management Department. Her primary function is to manage the salaries and leave records of plantilla employees of all 24 SBMA departments.

In addition to this, she serves as coordinator of the SBMA energy conservation committee; member of the SBMA Council of Trainers and Facilitators; and is the designated Officer-in-Charge of the Gender and Development Program or the GAD program of her department.

It was in executing the SBMA gad program that Nedz' star shone the brightest.

Benamor O. Labadan. Benamor O. Labadan, or Ben to family and friends, has 15 years of work experience as an automotive mechanic and driver. In 1994 he found a new love—diving. He combined diving skills with his auto-mechanic skills, and this formula opened up a new career for him, set-

ting him apart from other mechanics.

In 2004, he joined Ocean Adventure as a diver. Ocean Adventure's regular personnel assessments show that Ben consistently delivers high-level performance. Because of his dedication and passion for his work, he was promoted to a managerial position.

From a simple mechanic, Ben has become the architect of a safe and comfortable environment for the marine animals at Ocean Adventure.

Jesus Vener Mallen. A truly exceptional worker immediately stands out among the rest. Take the case of Jesus Vener Mallen, who started fixing diesel and gas machines in his elementary days. He was considered the youngest mechanic during that time, dubbed as the legendary motor mechanic of Harley Davidson, Yamaha, Suzuki, Kawasaki, BMW, and other big brands. Name it, he can fix it!

Jesus has been running his own shop for 21 years when Philippine Coastal Corporation offered him a job as gas/diesel mechanic. Jesus recalls - it was the biggest break of his life - a chance to give his family a secure future.

As soon as he joined the company, he topped the performance rating of all rank and file employees at Philippine Coastal. His co-workers say Jesus has a magic charm for machines. Erring machines go back to normal operating conditions after Jesus lays his hands on them. Thus they call him the 'automotive whisperer'. He also finds a way to put to use even junked vehicles and parts.

Elvira Reyes. In December 1996, Elvira Reyes was hired by the Subic Bay Development and Management Corporation as company housekeep-

er and custodian. She usually reports to work two hours early, and leaves 30 minutes later than her scheduled time-off. She does not file for overtime pay. She just wants to ensure that she completes her tasks for the day.

In 2003, Elvira got married to Ralph Mullis, an American who runs an auto-mechanic shop in Pennsylvania. She could have stopped working, but Elvira doesn't want to burden her husband with expenses she could fund on her own. So, she continued working and doing her job the best way she can - determined to leave the imprint of excellence in whatever task she does. Thus, for the first half of 2010, Elvira was awarded the most outstanding employee of SBDMC.

Roberto Francisco. In 2008, the Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium posted a job vacancy for a security officer. Eventually, they hired Roberto Francisco for the job. The company soon discovered that they got more than just a security officer.

Francisco, or "Pangkoy" as he is fondly called, is an employee who will stop at nothing to please the company's guests that sometimes, fellow workers forget that he is from the internal security group. The safety and security of their guests is Pangkoy's number one concern, but he fulfills this task with infectious courtesy.

He does not complain even when asked to do tasks outside of his job description. For his fellow workers, his honesty is beyond doubt. All these endear Pangkoy, not only to his fellow workers but also to the SBME management.

Alfredo Sadora. Alfredo Sadora is the only employee of Philippine Coastal

Storage and Pipeline Corporation who was rehired from retirement. Alfredo is a shift supervisor who leads the discharging, loading, bunkering and other support services for the company's clients.

He started working in the former US Naval Base in 1983, as fuel operator and dispatcher. When the Americans left in 1992— with people left wondering what will happen to Subic Bay— it was Alfredo who encouraged his colleagues to stay on as volunteers and to guard the fuel storage facility from looters.

Alfredo worked with the company until his early retirement in 2004. His vast experience and technical knowledge proved to be indispensable. In 2009, under Philippine Coastal's new management, Alfredo was rehired.

Marissa Tamayo. For someone who has reached the top of Nidec's corporate ladder, Marissa Tamayo has a lot of valuable lessons to share, especially when it comes to leadership. She believes that if one aspires to lead, that person must first learn how to follow.

It was a tried and tested principle for Marissa, who started out as a production technical staff in 1991, but is now reaping the fruits of her diligent labor as one of Nidec's senior executives.

With Marissa's loyalty, diligence and dedication to her job, she has helped the company achieve its long-term targets. Her fellow workers look up to her today. She remembers the days when like them, she looked up to her superiors, listened and did her best.

Mark San Gabriel. Twenty-six-year old Mark San Gabriel is a process shift engineer at Subicwater's Water Treatment facility in Binictinan.

For almost four years now, mark has worked diligently to ensure that enough and high-quality water is being produced in this plant, where the Subic Bay Freeport gets most of its potable water. It is also his job to coordinate the water services requirements of various locators here in the freeport.

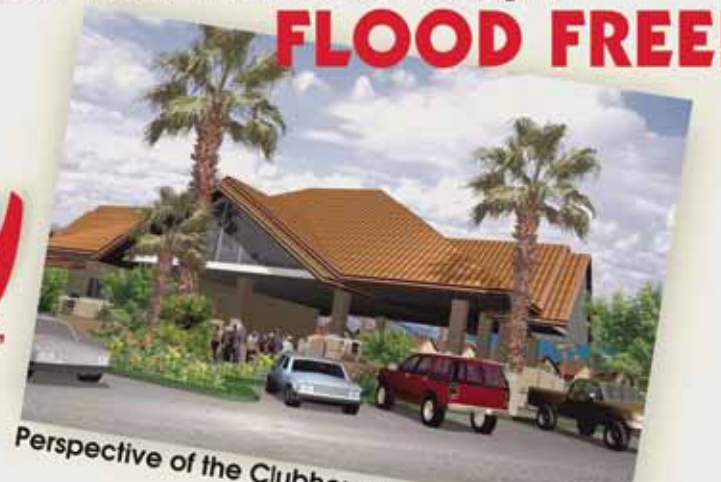
Mark is a self-professed lover of nature. He once dreamt of being a wildlife researcher. That explains his consistent participation in the company's annual tree planting drive. By serving as lecturer in Subicwater's information, education and communication committee, he has helped increase awareness of environmental protection and preservation in this Freeport and in the Olongapo City area.

Kudos to all winners...job well done!

The Life You Want.
Right Here, Right Now.

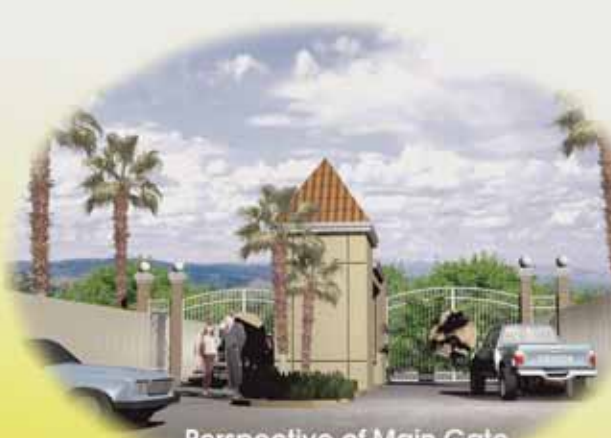
San Antonio Valley
Subdivision Sitio Maligaya, Bgy. Burgos,
San Antonio, Zambales

First-Class subdivision with Recreational
Facilities. Your Home For Keeps.
FLOOD FREE!



Perspective of the Clubhouse

Attractive Financing Schemes available...
Check them out today!
Call (047)-913-3718* Cell (0918)-909-4913*(0916)-368-4161
2/F Padua Bldg., Bgy. Rizal, San Antonio, Zambales



Perspective of Main Gate



Perspective of the Clubhouse and Recreational Facilities

Owner/Developer : Anbar Holdings & Development Corp.
Exclusive Marketing : Aba Realty and Marketing Corp.
Architect : R.S. Ancheta. Architect



GIFT OF LOVE AND CARE. Hitachi Terminals Mechatronics Phils. Corp. President Tadayuki Kaji led the gift giving and feeding project at the Iram Resettlement Day Care Center as part of its corporate out-reach program benefitting poor students. Among those company department managers who attended the project were Akira Inoue, Shinji Ito, Hiroyuki Shimomura and Nobuaki Niiya. The program was also graced by Filipino managers Lyn Amor Doble, Marilyn So and Marlon Lutan along with several other employees of HTMPC. Photo shows Teacher Leonita Rusek of Upper View Day Care Center receiving a television set from Kaji and other officials of HTMPC. (Photo below) Young students of the Iram Resettlement Day Care Center are excited to open school bags with school supplies donated by HTMPC. PHOTO AND TEXT BY RAECHELLE ANN GARCIA

Avecilla wins seat at SBFC board

JESUS "JUN" AVECILLA JR., president of The Lighthouse Marina Resort and a prime mover of sailing in Subic being the skipper of the multi-awarded Team Selma Star sailboat, won the recently concluded elections for directorship to the Board of the Subic Bay Freeport Chamber of Commerce (SBFC).

The entry of Avecilla to the SBFC Board of Directors is expected provide a big boost to the growing tourism industry inside the Freeport to sustain its reputation as one of the country's top tourism destination.

As hotelier, Avecilla successfully managed The Lighthouse Marina Resort, a quaint boutique resort-hotel, to become the newest vacation paradise in Subic Bay Free Port.

Snug and cozy, relaxing and exhilarating, the resort captures all the right elements for a great holiday with love ones, friends and families, which constitutes what Subic tourism is all about.

His wits and talents in tourism industry which without doubt, he would share to the influential SBFC Board, is welcome development to investors engaged in tourism-related businesses such as restaurants, duty-free shops, theme-parks and among others.

Aside from Avecilla, the new set of SBFC Board of Directors and executive officers are Danny Piano (President), Tom De Bruin (Vice President), Omy Duran (Corp. Sec.), Renz Lusung (Treasurer), Reimond Silvestre and Lewis Strickland.

Avecilla made his commitment to have a determined and directed advocacy and support for the continued growth, modernization and development of the Freeport as a bustling and expanding economic seaport hub in Southeast Asia and the Pacific realm.

Avecilla would also push for the improvement of the needed seaport, airport facilities and infrastructures of the Freeport Zone to attract more business locators in the area and strive for projecting and establishing an image, reputation and recognition for the Freeport as an iconic and ideal seaport in this part of the globe.

He also vowed to suggest and recommend sound economic and investment policies to encourage more busi-



ness locators and investors to establish their businesses in the Freeport.

Also, Avecilla said that he would improve cooperation, interaction and harmonious business relationships amongst the members of the chamber as well as to strengthen the dissemination of relevant business and investment information amongst the members of the chamber and future members.

More importantly, Avecilla has committed to preserve, protect and conserve the environmental ecosystem of the Subic Bay Freeport from decay, deprecation and deterioration...its pristine seawaters, flora and fauna, lush forest vegetation and the natural scenic beauty of the cove being its

major attraction to tourists.

While the Chamber Board is fully voluntary, each Director is responsible for various duties such as a minimum average of 15 hours per month from each Director is required, to attend Board and General Meetings, to address individual areas of concern common to the Chamber Membership, to promote new business and investment within the Freeport, and to act as liaison in creating a bridge between the investors and SBMA in problem solving.

Confidentiality agreements are not mandatory although it is expected that all Board members conduct Chamber business in a professional and confidential manner. **Ray Garcia**



SUBIC PHOTOSCAPE. Model Chen Nicolas poses at the El Kabayo riding stable in this photo taken by Allan M. Fabricante, president of Subic Shutter Club (SSC). SSC, a newly organized photography club in Olongapo City, recently launched its website www.subicshutterclub.com. The website tells that SSC was formed "not just to shoot the pictures to express themselves, but also to share themselves and the art they all love to others, and care for each other's growth in this art form, as well as for the community and society to which they belong. Other club officers are Larsen F. Zapanta (VP), Mark Louie Meru (secretary) and Agnes Dela Cruz (treasurer) with Jay Mendoza and Dr. Gary Orino as advisers. Committee heads are Candy Lacsa, Jewel Bolina, Ej Soriano, Romell Isidro, Arch. Carlo Manabat and Zapanta. Other members are Glen Guardian, Henry Obispo, Jackie Lou Soriano, Rachelle Nordgren, Rowena Go, Noel Tala, Michelle Diaz, Maann Sagun, Dr. Cristina Co, Carlos Co, Cu Yeng Yeng, Jason Bacosa, Cesslene Minas, Glen Fabricante, Jaded Jimenez, Elvin Iglesia, Lloyd Manaoag, Aivy Cabanglan and Aries Salvador.



COURTESY VISIT. South African Ambassador to the Philippines Agnes Nyamandade-Pitso shows the Clark Freeport investment brochure during her courtesy visit with the officials of Clark Development Corporation led by President Benigno Ricalfort who informs the South African envoy of the present economic growth of the former US-run Clark Air Base. The South African envoy toured the former US-run Clark Air Base which has been transformed as the new investment destination in the country. **CDC-PRD**



SAVED EAGLE. Eric Gomez of Paradise Ranch, the wildlife sanctuary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), holds the young and ailing eagle which was turned over to him by the Environment and Management Department of Clark Development Corporation. The eagle was captured by the CDC's utility personnel at Housing Area inside the Clark Freeport. The eagle will be released to the wild once fully grown and healthy. The young and ailing eagle was received by Gomez and Operations Manager Roman Goce from Environment and Management Department Vivencio David and Public Relations Officer Eric Jimenez of CDC.



WE SERVE. The Olongapo City Peninsula Lion's Club in cooperation with Olongapo City Mayor James "Bong" Gordon, Jr. successfully conducted its Cataract Operation project at the James L. Gordon Memorial Hospital benefitting indigent patients from Olongapo, Zambales, Bataan, Pampanga at Pangasinan. Photo shows businesswoman Linda Lim (5th from the left) leading other members of the civic-oriented club. Lions Club is best known for fighting blindness by conducting vision screenings, equipping hospitals and clinics, distributing medicine and raising awareness of eye disease, Lions work toward their mission of providing vision for all. Lions have extended their commitment to sight conservation through countless local efforts and through their international SightFirst Program, which works to eradicate blindness. Lions Clubs International is the world's largest service club organization with more than 1.3 million members in more than 45,000 clubs worldwide. Lions Club is also helping different kinds of community projects - including caring for the environment, feeding the hungry and aiding seniors and the disabled. Lions are part of a global service network, doing whatever is necessary to help our local communities.

Marine helps to rebuild an island

By Dona Fair

NEARLY two decades after Mount Pinatubo erupted, spewing tons of ash that killed close to 1,000 people and destroying or damaging more than 75,000 homes in its path, the daughter of a Manassas couple is back in this lush, tropical paradise to help locals continue to rebuild.

U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Janelle M. Horton, daughter of Kirk S. and Julie A. Horton of Manassas, is a member of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit based out of Okinawa, Japan. She deployed to the island of Luzon to not only train with her Philippine counterparts, but also provides much needed humanitarian and nation-building relief in an area still recovering from the volcano's devastation.

Horton is an intelligence analyst for the exercise.

"My role here is to provide intelligence support during the exercise," said Horton, who graduated in 2009 from Keystone National High School.

The amphibious landing exercise, also called Phiblex '11, combined sailors from the USS Essex, USS Harpers Ferry and USS Denver, along with the Marine Corps unit and members of the Philippine military. The Americans and Filipinos shared tactics, weapons, and even field rations during the exercise to get a better understanding of how each other's system works.



Manassas resident Lance Cpl. Janelle M. Horton, a member of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit stationed in Okinawa, Japan, recently participated in Amphibious Landing Exercise 2011 at Subic Bay, the Philippines. AIR FORCE SENIOR AIRMAN CHRISTOPHER GRIFFIN

Horton said the exercise allowed both sides to share ideas and learn from one another, free of walls or boundaries.

"This type of exercise is important because it provides us with training on what to do in case of a real-world disaster or terrorist situation," she said.

The exercise not only gave Horton and her unit a chance to train in a totally foreign environment. It allowed them to help in an area where the average daily income is less than \$10.

Horton believes the team truly

makes a difference.

"The Filipino people are very nice and love to help you," said Horton, who has been in the military for more than a year.

The motto for this year's exercise, which has been held annually since 2003, is "sama-sama sa pagbigay kalinga," which translates to "togetherness for the people."

For Horton and her Marine Corps team, it means a togetherness that reaches across different cultures and lifestyles and helps establish a partnership that will last for years to come.

Shipping

www.newscentralsite.com

The 'Iron Nickel' docks in Subic



AMPHIBIOUS assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) nicknamed as the "Iron Nickel," and the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) recently completed its three-day routine port calls in Subic Bay.

"Coming to the Philippines is a homecoming for many of our sailors," said Capt. Mark Cedrun, USS Peleliu commanding officer.

"There is a tradition of cooperation and friendship between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines, and we appreciate the hospitality the Filipino people provide every time the Navy and Marine Corps visit."

While in Subic Bay, Sailors and Marines will take part in community service projects, and during their liberty experience the crew will spend time shopping and dining out in the night life of the Subic Bay Free Port Zone.

"Some of the Sailors and Marines aboard Peleliu remember when Subic Bay was a Navy base," said Command Master Chief Brent Williams. "I'm sure all of us are happy to see the positive changes that were made after the base closed."

Since the closure of Naval Base Subic Bay in 1992, the Republic of the Philippines converted the area into the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, which is the first of its kind in the Philippines.

Subic Bay will be the final liberty port for Peleliu in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility (AOR). Also, while in port the local media including News Central have the opportunity to take a guided tour of the ship.

Peleliu completed more than 100 days of operations in the 5th Fleet AOR, supporting humanitarian aid and disaster relief operations in Pakistan, conducting maritime security operations, supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and participating in exercises promoting security and stability with partner nations in the region.

Peleliu is the flagship of the Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group and is transiting through the Pacific back to its homeport in San Diego. Peleliu is currently in the U.S. 7th Fleet AOR, as part of a deployment to promote peace, partnership and cooperation throughout the region.

USS Peleliu hosted ship tours for Olongapo City Mayor James "Bong" Gordon and his wife, former Zambales Vice Governor Annie Marie Gordon, students from Olongapo City National High School and cadets from the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy in San Narciso, Zambales.

According to the US Navy, the USS Peleliu's visit is expected to contribute approximately P57,434,000 (\$1.3 million) to the Subic Bay area economy estimated from port fees and crew expenditures.

Pampanga gov vows to boost multibillion furniture industry

PAMPANGA Governor Lilia G. Pineda has vowed to help boost the multi-billion local and export furniture industry in the province.

Pineda said the furniture industry is one of the important keys in generating more jobs and employment for her constituents and would help strengthen the local economy.

This developed as the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP), Pampanga Chapter led by its President, Remigio L. Lastimoso paid a courtesy call on Monday to the governor as a way to get her support for the industry.

After a brief meeting, both Pineda and the furniture makers look forward to a productive partnership towards giving the furniture industry and the local economy a big boost.

With this, the governor committed to set up a showroom where the CFIP members could display their products.

"We shall find an appropriate location and set it up as a decent and attractive venue where you could showcase your beautiful and quality furniture pieces," she told the CFIP.

Lastimoso and his group expressed elation over the governor's commitment, adding that a showroom would help attract buyers, strengthen the local market and revive the weakened export market.

"We have a very productive meeting with the governor who expressed a desire to have a stronger government and it needs all the support it can get from the provincial government."

The governor said Pampanga is known for its beautifully crafted furniture pieces and it needs all the support it can get from the provincial government.

"A closer tie-up between us would result in generating employment for our cabalens and a stronger economy for the province," she said.



She asked Lastimoso and his group to conduct continuous training programs to upgrade the skills of local designers, carpenters, weavers and other workers in the industry.

The CFIP is holding design competitions particularly among local schools, technical and vocational schools to give young students an early exposure to commercial furniture designing.

At present, Lastimoso said they have been getting projects that include the production of furnishings for residences, hotels, restaurants, resorts and other institutions.

Here revealed that the CFIP Pampanga chapter is composed of 55 companies. His company, Country Accents, being one of them.

"We employ a total of 150 people per company and we have at least 10,000 employees, suppliers, subcontractors and other stakeholders in the local furniture industry," he said.

He also declared that the furniture industry in the province alone is a multi-billion business covering machineries,

production, properties, among others.

"Even a small scale furniture maker would have at least P15 million worth of property, while bigger companies would definitely cost higher," he added.

However, Lastimoso lamented the downturn in the furniture industry caused earlier by the global recession and now compounded by the strong showing of the peso against the US dollar.

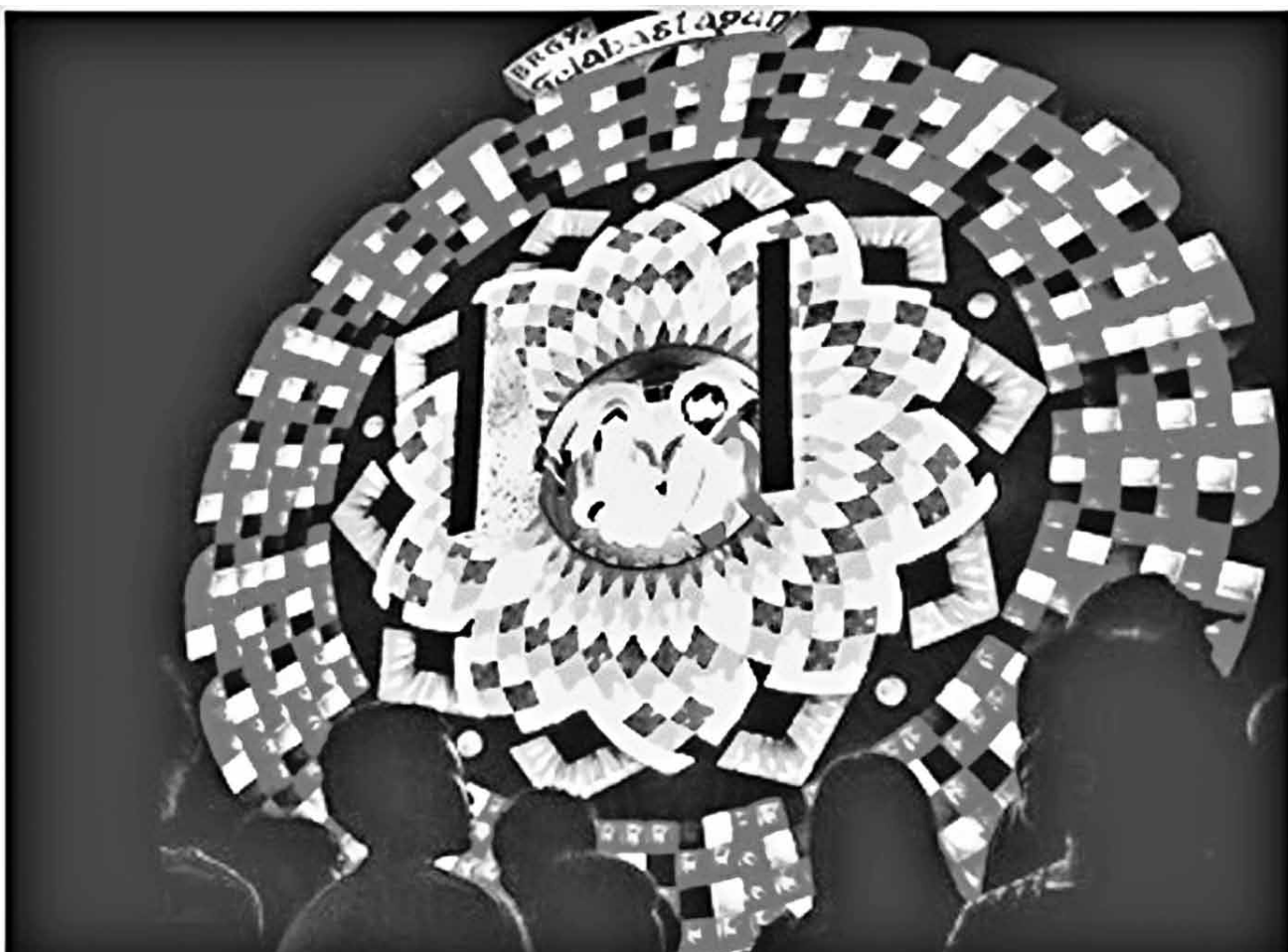
Thus, the demand for local furniture abroad has plunged down and this has led them to focus on the local market, he said.

"Our production used to be 70 percent for the foreign market and 30 percent for local buyers. Now, the ratio is 60% for the local market and 40% for export," he added.

According to him, they do furniture collections including complete home furnishings, accessories, lightings and the like.

With the support of the provincial government, the CFIP is optimistic that they could boost the local market and bounce back from their losses.

Pasko sa Clark to showcase Kapampangan culinary, handicraft skills



THE much-awaited "Pasko sa Clark" of the Clark Development Corporation (CDC) is expected to showcase the culinary and handicraft-making skills of the Kapampangan people.

Noemi Garcia, manager of the CDC Tourism Promotions Department, said among the grand activities included in "Pasko sa Clark" is the "Apag Pasku - The Suman Making Challenge."

Garcia noted that Pampanga is known for its "suman" or rice cake, which is a popular "kakanin" or snack during the Yuletide Season. She said Apag Pasku will be held on Friday, Dec. 17, 4 p.m. at the Clark Parade Grounds.

Also, Garcia said "Pasko sa Clark"

will also feature a Belen-making Contest and a colorful and lively Giant Lantern Exhibition courtesy of artisans from the City of San Fernando.

Judging night for the Belen-making contest, Garcia said is set on Dec. 16 during "Pasko sa Clark's" opening program while the lantern exhibition will be held on Sunday, Dec. 19.

All events for "Pasko sa Clark" will be held at the Parade Grounds, Garcia said.

She added that the other activities for this Christmas event include a chorale competition, launching of the "Pasko sa Clark Super Sale," lighting of the Clark Freeport Giant Christmas Tree, fireworks display,

and live band performances, all to be held on Dec. 16.

December 17 will also be highlighted by a jobs fair starting 10 a.m., modern dance competition at 6 p.m., whole day Christmas bazaar, live band, and a grand fireworks display in the evening.

Saturday, Dec. 18, will feature a car and motor bike show at 10 a.m., Clark Idol Quest finals night, whole day Christmas bazaar, live bands, and fireworks.

The culmination of the event will be highlighted by the awarding rites for the car and motor bike show, finals night for the modern dance competition, live bands, whole day Christmas bazaar, and fireworks display. **PIA**

Petron's coal plant gets tax incentives

PETRON Corp.'s planned P11-billion power plant in Limay, Bataan has bagged tax perks from the Board of Investments (BoI), the state agency said.

The petroleum firm will be spending P10.84 billion to construct the 70-megawatt power plant which will supply electricity to its oil refinery, also in Bataan, by July 2012, the BoI said.

Sixty-one percent of the output will provide power to the refinery while the balance will be sold to Manila Electric Co. and electric cooperatives.

Under the 2010 Investment Priorities Plan, energy infrastructure projects are among business activities eligible for incentives such as income tax holidays and the duty-free importation of equipment.

"The plant will use coal as its primary fuel, to be substituted by petroleum coke depending on the market price of both fuels," the BoI said.

Seventy-nine new jobs will be generated by the project.

So far, Petron has enjoyed a 50% increase in first-half sales to P115.354 billion over year-ago levels. Income, meanwhile, stood at P2.960 billion as of end-June, nearly two-thirds higher than the same period last year.

In a related development, the BoI also granted tax perks to Phoenix Petroleum Philippines, Inc.'s P123-million petroleum storage facility.

The facility in Talisayan, Zamboanga City will start operations next month and be manned by 12 workers. It can handle up to 4.9 million liters of oil products, the BoI said.

Pampanga bioethanol project eyes improved feedstock

HYDERABAD, India—A Filipino-led consortium is seeking assistance from India-based International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Topics to develop better-yielding sweet sorghum varieties for a \$100-million bioethanol project in Pampanga, Institute director-general William Dar said.

"We're developing new hybrids from the traditional sweet sorghum varieties we have. This will have greater yields per hectare and possibly higher sugar content. The First Pampanga Biofuels Corp. is now in the advance stage of planning. They sought technical help from us while they look for financing," Dar said.

Dar, a former Agriculture secretary, stressed the importance of sweet sorghum as feedstock for ethanol production as it will not compete with the country's food requirement.

"It is the way of the future. In fact, its diversified uses will help the Philippines in its food security program in as much as it will release the country's dependence on other food crops for ethanol use. Sugarcane

will remain a mainstay but we need to build up the commercial viability of sweet sorghum in the future," he said.

The Philippines could still catch up with China which is now investing heavily on sweet sorghum propagation for bioethanol production.

According to the Philippine Fuel Ethanol Alliance, the use of ethanol in gasoline will help the government save as much as \$825 million from fuel importation in over 10 years.

Sweet sorghum has more sugar content than sugarcane, maize or any other sorghum varieties. Its grains is good as food, while the stillage and leaves can be used as fodder for power generation as biomass.

The juice from stalks provides a rich source of sugar for bioethanol distillation.

Compared to other bioethanol feedstock, sweet sorghum has a shorter gestation period of about four months, that increases its viability over sugarcane, which matures for almost a year, and maize, for about four-and-a-half months.

Othel V. Campos

South Korea's Jin Air kicks off regular flights at DMIA

SOUTH Korea's budget carrier Jin Air today officially started its regular international flights at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport (DMIA), plying the Incheon-Clark-Incheon route five times weekly.

Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) President and CEO Victor Jose Luciano said that a total of 170 passengers bound to Incheon, Korea boarded the 1am flight of Boeing 737-800 at the DMIA Terminal signaling the start of Jin Air's regular flights, here.

Luciano along with CIAC Vice President for Administration and Finance Lauro Ortile welcomed Jin Air's President and CEO Kim Jae Gun who was among the passengers of the Boeing 737-800 aircraft. A simple welcome ceremony was held at the DMIA Terminal initiated by the personnel of the Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC).

Jin Air is the latest budget carrier operating at the 2,367-hectare Clark Civil Aviation Complex in the Clark Freeport Zone after Air Asia of Malaysia and Tiger Airways of Singapore.

"We welcome Jin Air's regular flights at DMIA that would not only bring in more Korean tourists to Clark but also provide Northern



and Central Luzon residents the opportunity to visit the beautiful country Korea," he added.

Jin Air will operate five flights weekly at Clark utilizing the airlines' 180-seater Boeing 737-800 aircraft via Incheon-Clark-Incheon operations.

Jin Air is the sixth and latest addition to the international airlines operating at the DMIA and is the second South Korean commercial airline after Asiana Airlines that started operations in October 2003.

Jin Air is a full subsidiary of Korean Air. Korean Air is the flag carrier and the largest airline of South Korea. Korean Air serves 130 cities in 45 countries around the world while its domestic divisions serve 20 destinations.

Korean Air is among the top 20 airlines in the world in terms of passengers carried and is also top-ranked in international freight carrying. The airlines' international hub is the Incheon International

Airport.

Jin Air began operations in July 2008 with routes to regional destinations in Korea using their Boeing 737-800 and in October 2009, began flights to Guam, Osaka and Bangkok.

"Since 2004, Korean tourists have immensely contributed to the local economy of Angeles City and the communities in the Metro Clark area as well as the rest of Central Luzon. There are an estimated 20,000

Korean tourists in the Clark and Subic areas," Luciano said.

"The Korean tourists have contributed to the growth and development of Clark which in effect generated businesses and employment for the people in the area," he added.

Luciano also said upon arrival in Incheon, Jin Air passengers can go to other destinations in the world.

"Travelers can go to other destinations in the world when you take Jin Air," he pointed out.

Jin Air has five Boeing 737-800 aircraft in its fleet for their operations in the South East Asian region, including Japan.

Jin Air adds to the host of foreign and local carriers operating international and domestic flights at the DMIA that include Asiana Airlines that flies daily to Incheon; Tiger Airways that flies daily to Singapore; and, Air Asia that flies daily to Kuala Lumpur and Kota Kinabalu.

Also operating flights at the DMIA is local carrier Cebu Pacific Air flies to Hong Kong, Singapore, Macau and Bangkok as well as domestically to Cebu, the Spirit of Manila Airlines that flies to Taipei, and South East Asian Airlines (Seair) that flies via to Caticlan. **Rey Garcia**

Clark employment on the rebound



JOB FAIR. Officials of various government agencies including the Clark Development Corporation, in partnership with the Clark Investors and Locators Association come together to promote jobs inside Clark Freeport during the 2nd Clark Freeport Jobs Fair held at SM City Clark. From L to R are: Bernardo F. Angeles Jr. – AVP, Investment Promotions, Adelina Deocales – PESO Manager, Joselito Mercado – CILA President, Benigno Ricafort, CDC President, Ana Datu – SM Clark Mall Manager, Benhur Banigued – TESDA Provincial Director, Precy Aguilar – CILA Vice Chairman/ Clark HR Council Vice President, and, Prof. Ariel Felix Ortilla – CHRC President

SOME 44 companies from the Clark Freeport Zone joined the 2nd Clark Freeport Jobs Fair 2010 held recently at the SM Event Center.

Applicants from all over the region and from other provinces lined up as early as 9:00am to take advantage of the numerous job opportunities inside the Freeport.

A total of 3,032 applications were received by the various participating companies, the bulk of whom came from Angeles City, Mabalacat, the City of San Fernando in Pampanga.

CDC's Customer Services Department has in its data bank a total of 4,238 various job openings as of November 4, 2010. This includes vacancies numbering 1,000 and 1,500 for skilled sewers and production workers in semi-conductor

manufacturing, respectively.

The event was jointly sponsored by the Clark Development Corporation (CDC) and the Clark Investors and Locators Association (CILA).

CDC President Benigno Ricafort and CILA President Joselito Mercado were pleased with the huge turnout of jobseekers and both expressed optimism for future job fair partnerships.

"The program enables CDC and CILA to reach out to qualified applicants who are interested in joining the huge workforce currently employed in the Freeport," Ricafort said.

Ricafort also said that the current employment in the Clark Freeport Zone is expected to reach the 60,000 mark before the year end, an all-time high for the former military base.

Problems bug expressway construction

RIGHT-OF-WAY problems continue to bug the construction of the P19-billion Tarlac-Pangasinan-La Union Expressway for months now, an official of the DM Consunji Inc. told reporters.

"The construction (of) this project (has) not started yet because of right-of-way issues, like there are emergence of supposed to be 'owners' of lots along the right-of-way areas. The right-of-way acquisition is not entirely complete because of this, putul-putul. So we can't proceed with the normal construction because of this problem," Ronaldo Elepano Jr., DMCI first vice president for business development overseas, said.

A source said other lots along the right-of-way areas are subdivided to different owners, causing documentation problems.

"The amendments for the subdivided lots are the ones taking a lot of time," the source said.

D.M. Consunji Inc. announced in April that it was supposed to start construction of Phase I of the expressway project after the Holy Week this year.

Travel time for motorists will be cut by about two hours between Tarlac and La Union when the expressway is completed.

The TPLEX will start at the end-point of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway in La Paz, Tarlac and end in Rosario, La Union. It will traverse the towns of Victoria, Gerona, Pura, Ramos, Anao, Paniqui, and Moncada in Tarlac; Nampicuan and Cuyapo in Nueva Ecija; and Rosales, Urdaneta City, and Pozorrubio in Pangasinan.

The expressway will be built through a build-operate-transfer scheme by the Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp., a consortium of 10 local contractors.

RICAFORT UNDERSCORES INDUSTRIAL PEACE IN CLARK



CDC President Benigno N. Ricafort delivers a speech during the 2010 General Assembly of Clark HR Professionals spearheaded by the Clark Human Resource Council (CHRC) held on Nov. 10 at the Hotel Stotseberg inside the Clark Freeport. From left are DOLE Provincial Office Officer in Charge Ma. Rima Hernandez, CHRC President Ariel Felix C. Ortilla, Clark Investors and Locators Association (CILA) President Lito Mercado, CHRC Vice President Prescila Aguilar, Hotel Stotseberg HR Manager Racel Maninang, and CHRC Secretary Jefferson Lacsamana.

CDC-PRD PHOTO

THE Clark Development Corporation (CDC) has underscored the efforts of the Clark Human Resource Council (CHRC) in helping maintain industrial peace inside this sprawling Freeport.

At the 2010 Annual Assembly of HR Professionals held at the Hotel Stotseberg, President Benigno N. Ricafort cited the CHRC for promoting healthy competition and complementation among Clark firms and for maintaining industrial peace.

"The CHRC is the end of the rainbow in industrial peace," Ricafort said, adding that the council has been "a big help" to the state-owned corporation.

Also, Ricafort said reaching out to communities through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is both a "worthwhile" effort and "an empowering stance." He added that the CHRC's theme dubbed "Towards A Socially Empowered HR!" for their 2010 annual assembly "apt and timely."

"Included in your program is CSR. I've not heard of many HR practitioners promote Corporate Social Responsibility because your basic approach towards the happy solution is towards doing something

that you don't gain from materially," Ricafort stressed.

During its founding anniversary the CHRC also focused on promoting employee and family welfare, CSR, and empowerment of the HR profession towards enhancing the global competitiveness of Clark industries.

"Corporate social responsibility is when you do a program that will not really benefit your company but will develop your neighbor and the people around you," Ricafort said.

Ricafort added: "What better way and timing also to be made more socially concern than in this season of sharing and giving. We would like to assure you that as you do reach out to people outside of your operations, CDC would always be a partner in helping make people's lives better."

CHRC President Ariel Felix C. Ortilla said the annual assembly brought together corporate and HR executives, managers and professionals in Clark Freeport Zone for a grand colloquium that focused on global labor and HR trends, advocacy for CSR, social welfare help desks, and industrial cooperation for sustainable growth.

Singaporean firm building 2nd hangar

CLARK FREEPORT, Pampanga—SIA Engineering Co., a leading aircraft maintenance company in Asia, will put up its second hangar here costing close to P1 billion to provide services to Boeing 747 and 777 planes.

Clark International Airport Corp. president and chief executive Victor Jose Luciano said the construction of the second hangar would start on the 2,367-hectare Clark Civil Aviation Complex in the middle of this month. The project is expected to directly generate 300 jobs.

"SIAEC will be building a bigger hangar to accommodate wide-bodied aircraft such as the Boeing 747 and 777," Luciano said.

SIAEC and joint venture partner Cebu Pacific Air in November 2008 began construction of the first hangar for the Airbus 320 and 319 series aircraft in the same Clark complex that paved the way for the further development of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport.

The first hangar, costing an estimated P800 million, started

operations in July 2009.

"Now we will see the development of the second, much larger hangar in Clark. This will generate no less than 300 direct jobs and about 200 indirect jobs for our people in Central and Northern Luzon," Luciano said.

He said SIAEC would spend close to P1 billion to build the second hangar and commence operations by the end of 2012.

The SIAEC Group provides extensive services to more than 85 international airlines worldwide. **Rendy Isip**

Spirit of volunteerism lives on in Subic

The volunteers of Subic Bay Freeport are the people who have nothing to give and yet they're giving their full self for this kind of challenge—Dick Gordon

By Raquel F. Dimaano

THOUSANDS of former volunteers, who helped build this freeport from an abandoned military base, gathered in Subic Freeport this week to celebrate the 18th year since the withdrawal of US Military troops from the former Subic Naval Base.

It was on November 24, 1992 that USS Belleau Wood sailed out of Subic Bay with the last contingent of American sailors, a year after the Philippine Senate rejected the RP-US Military Bases Agreement.

"This year's commemoration was dedicated to all those who have sacrificed and rendered unselfish service to help Subic bounce back from the bases pullout," said Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) administrator Armand Arreza.

"From the early volunteer days, the Subic Bay Freeport has gone a long, long way and became one of the fastest growing economic areas in the country," he added.

According to SBMA OIG-deputy administrator for corporate communications Knette Fernando, this year's celebration kicked off with a flag-raising and wreath-laying ceremony in front of Building 229, the head office of the SBMA.

A commemorative photo exhibit titled "Salamat..." was unveiled at the Park & Shop Terminal. The exhibit of photographs taken during the early days of the SBMA will run on November 24-30.

Fernando said the SBMA is putting up the photo exhibit to commemorate "local heroes" who helped transform Subic Bay from a military base into a special economic zone from 1991 to 1994.

The November 24 celebration was highlighted by the reunion of Subic volunteers at the Volunteers' Shrine here, where a thanksgiving program was held along with a "boodle fight", games and some live entertainment.

On the same day, the Subic Bay Workforce Development Foundation Inc. presented winners in the search for The 10 Outstanding Freeport Workers at the Subic Bay Convention & Exhibition Center (SBECC), also as part of the Volunteers' Day celebration.

A healing mass was celebrated by Fr. Jerry Orbos at the San Roque Chapel.

Arreza said that in the 18 years that the Subic Bay Freeport Zone had existed under the management of the SBMA, it has consistently championed the economic uplift of local residents who lost their livelihood when the former Subic Naval Base closed in 1992.

"From providing an alternative jobs and sources of livelihood to those who were displaced by the pullout, the Subic Bay Freeport has clearly went beyond this mandate and kept up with the demand of the times," Arreza said.

He pointed out that in 18 years, the Subic Bay Freeport has recorded a cumulative investment of \$7.16 billion in terms of committed investments by over 1,400 approved investment projects.

On the other hand, the number of workers employed in the Subic Bay Freeport has grown by 194 percent, compared to the workforce hired at the US naval base, he added.

"Now, the Subic Bay Freeport workforce is 88,187 strong. While, tourist arrivals went up to 61.7 million in 18 years," he said. Arreza added that Subic has delivered increasingly bigger amounts of revenue since it was established in 1992.



The Business Paper of the New Economic Corridor

P20 Vol. 3 No. 7 NOVEMBER 15-30, 2010
www.newscentraliste.com



**MIRIAM WAGES
 ALL-OUT WAR
 ON CLARK'S**

TRAJILING