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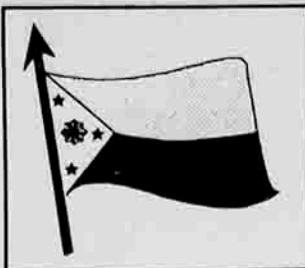


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We Forum

To seek and live the truth and share a vision

VOL. 18 ♦ NO. 9

JUNE 27-JULY 3, 1994

₱3.00



IN METRO MANILA

GETTING RID OF MINDANAO GUNS

AS ABU SAYYAF GROUP LINGERS—PAGE 2

All
about
martyrs
Page 5

Endangered
paradise
Page 6



Wise
energy
use
Page 12



First Lady Amelita M. Ramos, chairperson of the Pasig River Rehabilitation Program, receives from Philippine Navy Vice Admiral and Flag Officer-in-Command Virgilio Marcelo the PN's report on the progress of the Pasig River clean-up at the Navy's Ready Force headquarters in Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila last June 17. Others in photo are (from left) Commodore Dario Fajardo and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay. (Malacanang Photo)

TO LUZONIANS, Basilan is some remote island somewhere in the backwaters of Mindanao. The largely mountainous and forested 1,282-square-kilometer island-province southwest of Mindanao is separated by strait from Zamboanga City of which it was formerly a part.

Progress in the island, lush in valuable woods and soil that grows coconuts, rice, corn and rubber, is hampered by Muslim bandit ransom-kidnappings of foreign and Filipino missionaries, monied businessmen and their families, and school teachers in the last few years.

What lingers in the public mind after 18 public school teachers and two health workers were freed on Monday (June 13) by Moro kidnappers is an incensed retired Bishop Jose Ma. Querexeta fuming at the kidnapping of teachers year in and year out. He deplored that not one national government official visited Basilan because "we here are considered the scum of the earth."

He identified the 16 men abducted with the teachers who were made to turn their backs, then coldbloodedly riddled with bullets merely for being Christians, as mostly indigent ricecake and fish vendors. They braved the highway where bandits preyed on commuters just to peddle their wares.

The mass kidnapping and massacre made the residents tense. A schoolmarm confessed she had to go home before going to the market to change her uniform. But even then she could not tell if the man next to her in the market place was a bandit or kidnapper. People were beginning to mistrust their neighbors.

President Ramos flies the length and breadth of the archipelago to speechify at innocuous provincial events, dispensing checks for farmers, veterans and favored allies in the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao as political largess. But he was conspicuously absent at Basilan at the time of its crisis.

He declared a state of calamity in Patikul, Sulu so that civilians who fled their homes when the military assaulted the Abu Sayyaf lair would be entitled to calamity funds.

But why did he not likewise declare a calamity state

in Basilan where Moro bandits had massacred 15 and wounded one, kidnapped 21, and caused the closure of 42 elementary and high schools attended by 4,000 students?

(As an afterthought, Mr. Ramos finally declared "man-made calamity" in Basilan and released P2 million for the displaced people as in Patikul.)

RANSOM DISPUTED

Interior Sec. Rafael Alunan III and Defense Sec. Renato de Villa, heads of the Army, Marine and PNP contingents, and government officials waited as Basilan Gov. Gerry Salapuddin negotiated the release of the 21 hostages.

There was relief and rejoicing when the barefoot hostages were eventually freed minus their wallets, valuables and shoes. They were only too happy to have survived the ordeal. But Matarlang parish priest Fr. Cirilo Macorda was detained for a P3 million ransom. He had succeeded Fr. Bernardo Blanco, 65, who was also kidnapped and forced to return home to Spain by his captors.

Salapuddin said he had paid the kidnappers P200,000 for "board and lodging" of the hostages for six days. That would add up to P2,000 a day for the rice, fish and vegetables diet and sleeping space for each hostage. He claimed the money was raised by Muslim businessmen and concerned citizens.

Alunan castigated Salapuddin for having violated the government no-ransom policy for kidnappers. But was he disposed to have the hostages slaughtered just to maintain the Ramos no-ransom policy? The kidnappers had already killed 15 men and wounded another. It appeared as if the government was looking for a scapegoat and had picked on Salapuddin who was not a Lakas-NUCD affiliate.

No kidnap victim in Basilan has been freed without "token money" from the government, Salapuddin said.

TOUGH AFP TASK: TO DISARM MUSLIM REBELS ^{BELE}

By ERIC S. GIRON



MUSLIM REBELS: Gov't target.

He charged Alunan paid for the release of Fr. Gerald Fraszczak by Moro kidnappers in 1992, thus setting a "bad precedent." This was promptly denied by the Alunan camp.

Salapuddin pulled out from rescue operations for Fr. Nacorda. He was placed by Basilan Vice Gov. Ping Kasim, said to be a cousin of Barahama Sali, the kidnappers' leader.

PNP, MNLF CLASH

PO2 Rudy Taupa was killed and three members of the PNP Special action Force were wounded in a mis-encounter with the Moro National Liberation Front near the Abu Sayyaf hideout at sitio Fuente Egas, Barangay Spillway in Sampinit where the 20 hostages were freed. (A wounded policeman died during surgery at the hospital.)

The Moros, who had two wounded, captured 29 policemen but released them later when the combatants stopped firing after recognizing each other. MNLF Commander Ustadz Mune Hamili invited the policemen to share their food.

The MNLF had volunteered as a blocking force for Abu Sayyaf men. A joint Government-MNLF committee met to clarify the incident to void a repetition.

Two Marine and Army battalions had moved away farther in Sampinit to give the policemen room to operate against the priest's abductors. Marine Brig. Gen. Guillermo Ruiz believed Barahama Sali's kidnap gang is still in Sampinit.

A Special Force Battalion of the Army was flown in by Hercules C-130, followed by a Marine battalion

from Metro Manila to Andrew Air Base in Zamboanga City and deployed at Basilan.

The Military threw in MG-520 attack helicopters as a Marine landing team engaged mortar-firing Abu Sayyaf men at sitio Matarlang, Sampinit for 15 minutes. Three marines were wounded. An Abu Sayyaf man was captured. Five of about 25 Moro bandits were killed by the 11th Marine Battalion at 4 p.m. Thursday (June 16).

Basilan forces totaled 1,622 soldiers under 82 officers, 500 civilian volunteers and militiamen. Col. Victor Salazar, accused by Catholic and Basilan officials of conniving with the Muslim bandits, was replaced by Col. Edgardo Espinosa as commander of the 3rd Marine Battalion at Tabuk, Isabela. Armed Forces Chief of

Staff Arturo Enrile suspended the offensive June 17 to negotiate for the release of Fr. Nacorda, who had been tied up by his captors for ten days. Enrile said if the priest was not freed by Saturday afternoon (June 18) the siege would resume.

During suspension of operations, masked men hurled a grenade at an Army patrol unit at Barangay Lumbang, Isabela early Sunday. A firefight ensued. Three suspected bandits were killed.

OTHER

DEVELOPMENTS

The government raised to P1.5 million the bounty for Abubakar Abdurajak Janjalani, the Abu Sayyaf chief. The P100,000 reward for Jul Jilang's capture has been augmented with P200,000 by Basilan Rep. Elnorita Tugung. Janjalani (Next page, please)

and Jilang are said to be cousins.

Families of the 15 massacre victims and Delcoremy Avellana, who was also shot and survived, are entitled to P10,000 each under Republic Act 7309 which compensates victims of violent crimes, Justice Sec. Franklin Drilon said. The Zamboanga City council passed a resolution for the budget officer's release of P100,000 as aid to families of the massacre victims. It was an expression of sympathy from people of Zamboanga, which used to have jurisdiction over Basilan.

The consensus among the responsible Muslims was that no religious war existed in Basilan. This was voiced in Manila outside a Muslim mosque, in Davao City by the multisectoral Mindanao Initiative, who appealed to the Abu Sayyaf not to disrupt Christian-Muslim equanimity, and by religious leaders of the Maranaos, Maguindanaos and Muslims of Sirawan district.

Seven people were killed and twelve others were wounded in two ambushes in Basilan. The brother of

Tuburban Mayor Hajji Ajin Pawaki died and three persons were wounded in a jeepney fired upon in Batu Batu, Tuburan.

In a succeeding ambush Sunday morning (June 19) of a jeepney in Lamitan, six Muslim passengers were killed, seven were wounded. Ustadz Hari Iring died on the spot. Insang Tati was pronounced dead on arrival at Lamitan Hospital. Abdul Hamidin survived a gunshot wound only for a few hours. The three other dead were taken by their families. All casualties including seven wounded were from Barangay Tablas, Tuburan.

The 64th Police Mobile Force pursued the ambushers.

DISARM MOROS

President Ramos is dilly-dallying in disarming the armed Moro groups like the MNLF, Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Moro Revolutionary Organization, the Abu Sayyaf, so many "Lost Commands" and brigand groups. Operation *Paglalsang* was an utter failure which netted only token firearms of political warlords and rebel groups.

Will President Ramos give



PRES. RAMOS: Dilly-dallying.

in to Nur Misuari's demand that the MNLF be allowed to maintain its own army in 11 Mindanao provinces and eight cities? That is a formula for disaster incompatible with peace.

It was the general belief that since the 1970s, Libya had been supplying guns and ammunition to the Mindanao Moros. About \$50 trillion worth of firearms was report-

ed to have come from Middle East sources and coursed through the Tablig Islamic fundamentalist group based in the two Davaos to the Abu Sayyaf.

But now there is reported collusion between the military and the bandits in the procurement of firearms. Moros secure their high-powered firearms from the government arsenal which are sold by

soldiers to Zamboanga City traders, according to Isagani Sadik, National Democratic Front spokesman in Western Mindanao.

"Some 60 percent of the arms and ammunition in Abu Sayyaf hands are allegedly properties of the government," said Rep. Tugung when she filed a resolution in the House seeking a probe of Basilan officials and the military in kidnap cases.

Since the Huk campaign in the 1950s, military officers were found vending guns

and ammunition to the dissidents. The Moros today have military contacts who furnish them the weapons. Bishop Querexeta cited witnesses who saw Jul Jilang and other Basilan bandits in the company of military men.

The time has come for Mr. Ramos to assert his duty as commander-in-Chief by stripping Moros of their firearms, to end once and for all their charades.

Or is he thinking of passing on the problem to his successor?

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES REGIONAL TRIAL COURT NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION BRANCH 106, QUEZON CITY

IN RE: PETITION FOR THE ADOPTION
OF THE MINOR ALONZO QUIRIMIT,

SP. PROC. Q-94-20813

VICENTA ORZAL AUNGON
DANILO AUNGON,
Petitioners.

X - - - - - X

ORDER

This is a verified petition filed by Sps. Danilo and Vicenta Aungon through Counsel, praying that after due notice, publication and hearing, the minor Alonzo Quirimit be declared as their child by adoption.

Let this case be set for hearing on July 12, 1994 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning, serving notice upon anyone who may have objections thereto, to file his/her opposition on or before that date.

Let this Order be published, at the expense of the petitioners, once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in the "We Forum," a newspaper of general circulation in Metro Manila pursuant to P.D. No. 1079.

Further, let this Order and the Petition with its annexes, be served upon the Office of the Solicitor General and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The latter is hereby ordered to conduct a case study on the petitioners and the adoptee and to submit to this Court the report thereon, on or before the aforesaid date of hearing, as herein indicated. The duly authorized representatives of the said offices are hereby ordered to be present at the said date and time, as herein specified.

SO ORDERED.

Quezon City, 15 June 1994.

(Sgd.) JULIETO P. TABIOLLO
Judge

WE FORUM
June 27, July 4 & 11, 1994

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late VIRGINIA P. CALLEJA, who died intestate in Quezon City on December 16, 1993 had been the subject of extra judicial settlement among her heirs as evidenced by a public document entitled "Extra Judicial Settlement of the Estate" bearing Doc. No. 201, Page No. 81, Book No. 279, Series of 1994 of Notary Public Atty. Dionilo D. Marfil of Quezon City.

WE FORUM
June 27, July 4 & 11, 1994

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late spouses MAURO FRANCO and ANTONIA ALBARES who died intestate and without a will in Quezon City on October 16, 1981 and September 5, 1991, respectively had been settled extrajudicially among their heirs as evidenced by a public document entitled "Extra-Judicial Settlement Among Heirs With Waiver and Sale" bearing Doc. No. 178, Page No. 33, Book No. 14, Series of 1994 of Notary Public Atty. Hector B. Centeno of Quezon City.

WE FORUM
June 13, 20 & 27, 1994

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES REGIONAL TRIAL COURT FOURTH JUDICIAL REGION BRANCH XVIII TAGAYTAY CITY

Land Reg. Case No. TG-533 LRA Record No. N-64223

NOTICE OF INITIAL HEARING

To the Hon. Solicitor General, office of the Solicitor General, 134 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati, Metro Manila; the Regional Executive Director, Region IV, L & S Bldg., 1515 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, the Hon. Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways, Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, both in Manila; the Hon. Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform, PTA Bldg., Elliptical Road, Diliman, the Director, Forest Management Bureau, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, both in Quezon City, Metro Manila; the Provincial Governor, the Provincial Fiscal, the Provincial Treasurer, the Provincial Engineer, the Public Works and Highways District Engineer, the CENR Officer, CENRO, Land Management Sector, all in Trece Martires City; the Municipal Mayor, the Municipal Council, Silang, Cavite; Emilio Jose, Rosal Angeles, Florante Montegrande, Vicente Montegrande, Balbina J. Maravilla, Lino Javier, all in Brgy. Luksuhin, Silang, Cavite AND TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

An application having been filed in the above entitled case by SPS. VICTOR CASTILLO and CONSORCIA DELA PENA, Iruhin, Tagaytay City thru Atty. Irineo A. Anarna, Alejandro and Anarna Law Office, No. 11 Madlansaray St., Poblacion, Silang, Cavite praying for the registration and confirmation of the title to the following described land.

A parcel of land (Lot 2841 of Cad-452-D, Silang Cadastre as shown on plan, Ap-04-007504, LRC Rec. No.), situated in the Barangay of Lungon, Municipality of Silang, Province of Cavite, Island of Luzon. Bounded on the E., along line 1-2 by Lot 13850, (Balbino J. Maravilla); on the S., along lines 2-3-4 by Lot 2840 (Vicente Montegrande); along lines 4-5-6 by Lot 2839 (Florante Montegrande); on the W., along line 6-7 by Lot 294 (Lino Javier); on the N., along line 7-1 by Lot 2850 (Emilio Jose), all of Cad-452-D, Silang Cadastre. Beginning at a point

marked "1" on plan being S. 86 deg. 16'W., 1206.18 m. from BLLM No. 1, Cad-452-D, Silang Cadastre.

thence S. 02 deg. 08'E., 126.79 m. to point 2;
thence S. 85 deg. 45'W., 19.45 m. to point 3;
thence S. 88 deg. 15'W., 3.95 m. to point 4;
thence S. 88 deg. 15'W., 37.85 m. to point 5;
thence N. 82 deg. 30'W., 10.89 m. to point 6;
thence N. 00 deg. 20'W., 126.03 m. to point 7;
thence N. 88 deg. 21'E., 68.02 m. to the point of beginning, containing an area of EIGHT THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED TWENTY FOUR (8,924) SQUARE METERS. All points referred to are indicated on the plan and are marked on the ground by P.S. cyl. conc. mons. 15x60 cm.; bearings true; date of original survey, by March 15, 1981, date prepared March 10, 1994 and was approved on March 29, 1994.

You are hereby served this notice to appear before this Court at its session to be held at Branch XVIII, Tagaytay City, Philippines on the 4th day of August, 1994 at 8:30 o'clock in the forenoon, then and there to present such claim as you may have to said land or any portion thereof, and to submit evidence in support of such claim and unless you appear at said Court at the time and place aforesaid, your default will be recorded and the title to the land will be adjudicated and determined in accordance with law and the evidence before the Court and thereafter you will forever be barred from contesting said application (or petition) or any decree entered thereon.

Witness: the HON. ELEUTERIO F. GUERRERO, Judge of said Court, the 20th day of April, 1994.

Issued at Quezon City, Philippines, this 5th day of May, 1994.

A T T E S T :

REYNALDO Y. MAULIT
Administrator
Land Registration Authority
By: (Sgd.) SALVADOR L. ORIEL
Chief, Docket Division

WE FORUM
June 27, 1994

An Exposé on PAGCOR

How It Was Then.

Monthly Income

Before the February revolution, the average monthly income was ₱29 million. The highest monthly income declared was ₱55 million.

Remittance to Government

In ten years, from 1976 to June 1986, the total remittance of the old PAGCOR to the government was ₱2.1 billion.

Tax Privileges

PAGCOR, then, was exempted from all kinds of taxes, except the 5% franchise tax.

Audit Procedure

PAGCOR, then, was exempted from audit.

Secrecy vs. Transparency

PAGCOR operations then were veiled in secrecy.

How It Is Now.

Under the new PAGCOR, the average monthly income went up to ₱169 million in 1987, ₱212.5 million in 1988, ₱290 million in 1989, ₱341 million in 1990, ₱428 million in 1991, ₱501 million in 1992, ₱604 million in 1993 and ₱565 million in the first quarter of 1994.

In less than eight years of operation, from July 1986 to March 31, 1994, the new PAGCOR has already remitted a total of ₱23.86 billion to the government.

Since March 1987, all the tax exemption privileges have been withdrawn. Now, PAGCOR is paying the 5% franchise tax, corporate income tax, customs duties for imported equipment and employees' withholding taxes.

Today, all PAGCOR transactions are dutifully recorded, accounted for and audited by the Commission on Audit.

Today, PAGCOR operations are carried out on an open-book policy in keeping with the President's directive of transparency in the government. Pursuant to this, PAGCOR publishes its financial statement quarterly, perhaps the only casino operator in the world who does so.

The difference in the way the casinos are run today has led to a sizeable increase in PAGCOR's income, out of which approximately 75% goes to the government through remittances to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the National Treasury, the National Power Corporation, the Social Fund of the President, cities hosting the casinos, the Philippine Sports Commission, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Board of Claims. Nothing is left with PAGCOR except what it needs for operations. With the substantial amount it remits to the government, PAGCOR has become the third biggest revenue-generating arm of the government. PAGCOR today is considerably different from what it was in the past.



Responding Through Responsible Gaming

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation

PAGCOR House • 1330 ROXAS BOULEVARD, MANILA

'Kulang tayo sa martir'

By MARIO P. CHANCO

FOR NEARLY half a century now, Filipinos have accepted the outrageous notion that given a bit of luck, and recurring dosages of IMF-World Bank advise and dissent, the Philippines would miraculously turn overnight into an Oriental Fairyland.

Every postwar administration since 1945, up to and including the current Philippines 2000 Club, can of course readily explain why things worked out badly instead of well. They will tell anyone willing to listen it was (is) not their fault that our population (and our problems) are multiplying faster than our prosperity. Things would have turned out much better, if only they had not turned out worse.

They could be right, unless of course, in hindsight, they admit they are wrong.

For me, the fundamental reason behind our overdue emergence into the community of progressive nations has been our failure, indeed, our unwillingness, to increase our output of national martyrs.

We have gone for broke trying to develop exciting new vistas in trade, commerce, industry, telecommunications and tourism. We have practiced bizarre and eccentric forms of diplomacy to kick us into the winners' lane. But we have consistently bypassed the one "sure thing" that could have led us out of our adolescent garden. We have failed to design, let alone create, a national program for the conservation and the development of Filipino martyrs.

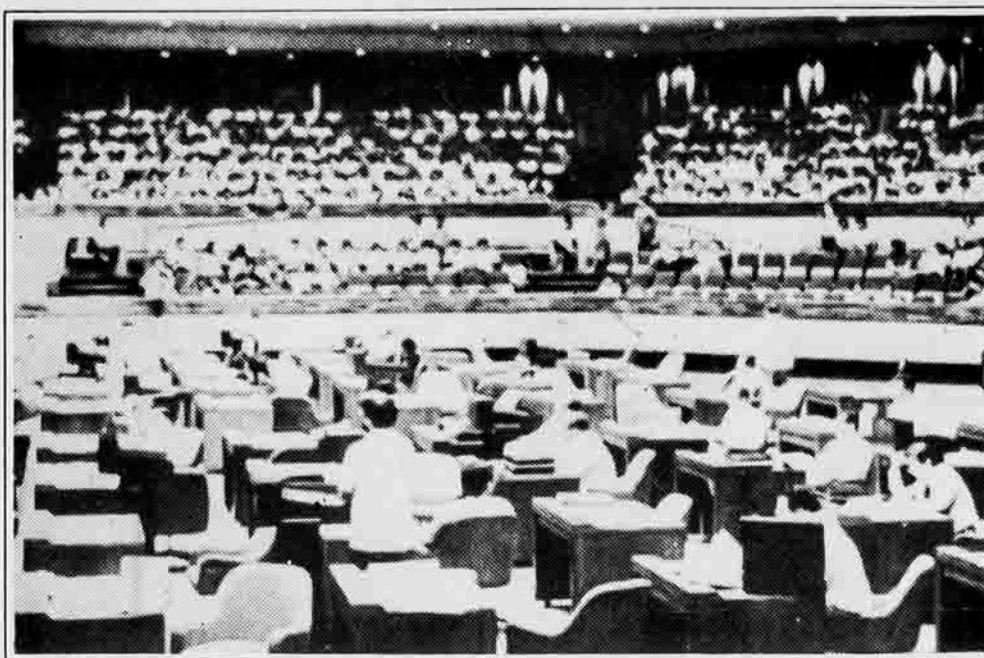
Mark that plainly: *Kulang tayo sa martir*. Look at our sorry record.

For nearly five decades, Filipinos have been obsessed with numbers. The "dumb" guys say the hell with morality, and they enter the "numbers" game, or jueteng. They corrupt everything their hands touch, and make a lot of money in the process.

The "smart" Filipinos enter politics, corrupt even more people than the jueteng lords. They also make a lot of money, but in the process they build and then destroy our illusions. Then they climb to the tops of deforested mountains, from where they announce grandiose plans to create jobs by the hundreds of thousands, housing units by the millions, kilowatt hours by the megabillions.

Other fatheads in line departments test prototypes of certain projects, coerce press agents to balloon the absurd to the ridiculous — and then turn around and demand budgetary outlays in the billions so they can reproduce the same pilot product in triangular, octagonal or hexagonal "growth" zones nationwide, whether they are needed or not.

Pinheads in key government planning and research offices tote up the billions of pesos expended for such one-time investments as



RP POLITICAL LIFE: In need of martyrs.

1000-megawatt coal-burning plants, or new oil refineries. They lump these together, along with the slow, turtle-paced increments gained from small agriculture, the underground economy, or remittances from Filipino overseas workers.

Voila!

Then they proclaim, within ear and eye-shot of TV cameras and reporters: "The GNP has gone up nearly five percent, in just one quarter! Imagine what we could do in a year!"

The physical managers of money at the Department of Finance speak vacantly of "exiting" the International Monetary Fund, within at most three years. They say just enough to make it appear, to anyone stupid enough to believe them, that this so-called "exit" means that the foreign Shylocks who supervise and manage both our money and our sovereignty have forgotten, are kissing away, or at least do not consider relevant, the \$30 odd billion we still owe our foreign creditors.

Basta maka-exit lamang tayo sa labas, hindi na bale kung nakatali pa tayo sa loob.

They also argue, as Secretary of Finance Bobby Ocampo and BIR Commissioner Liwayway Vinzon Chato said the other night, the VAT taxes will "equalize" the tax structure and turn the Philippines into a tiger economy before the year 2000. The reason taxpayers don't appreciate VAT, added the sexy Chato, is because they wear voluntary blinders, and are furiously anti-tax to begin with.

But what makes these exercises in deceit insufferable is that both Filipinos and their leaders have not realized that it will take very little to coldly excise our flawed culture and thrust us into the 21st century. Neither governors nor governed understand that the only way to get this defeatism out of our political system is to double, triple or quadruple the national supply of martyrs.

Once Filipinos can confront the given that only an enlarged capacity for martyrdom can put us back on track, the rest will be easy.

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," says an old proverb.

So why can't martyrdom become the roots, the branches and the fruit of Philippine political life? If it was good enough for Saint Peter, Joan of Arc, Gregorio del Pilar or Andres Bonifacio, why can't it be good enough for Joe de Venecia, Jejomar Binay, Edo Angara, Ernie Maceda or Blas Ople, to name but a few of our heroically-inclined politicians?

Why can't public and private schools integrate martyrdom, or self-sacrifice, into their respective curriculums? Why doesn't the government put a martyrdom component into its operations so all its development plans can be insured from failure?

Why can't big business, which makes provision for depreciation on its balance sheets, set the example by devising a martyrdom book entry that can inspire its owners and stockholders to develop an ordinary, garden variety of martyrdom that can inspire them to great feats of untold glory as First World tycoons with a human

face?

We do not even have to immediately martyring our political ilustrados of the present.

We could pass laws making martyrdom retroactive, for persons already six feet under the ground. We could set attractive criteria for potential martyrs, such as burial in a new version of America's Arlington Cemetery. If the response is good, and the private sector wants to have martyrdom privileges extended to them, the BOI could be persuaded to give their heirs and assigns tax holidays and exemptions. After all — it's only money. Between martyrdom and money, you know what they'll choose.

We could leave to potential martyrs the option to choose the motivations, as well as the means of achieving martyrdom while they are still alive. Electrocution, guillotining, garroting, hanging are permissible options. Dying of old age will of course not be permitted; this would not be martyrdom, it would be standard Philippine political practice.

Among our current crop of politicians, I can see only Vice President Joseph Estrada looting as a man willing to consider martyrdom. Naturally, he would prefer to position himself first from the highest political office, which is just one heartbeat away from his current job.

But an Estrada story I heard only yesterday makes me pause.

Someone asked him, in the wake of the Jackie Onassis TV documentaries, if bringing Camelot to the Philippines after Estrada became President would not hasten the Philippines' grasp for Newly Industrializing Country (NIC) status before the year 2000.

Estrada pondered that before answering, *Payag ako magtabi ng isang lote para sa camels, pare ko. Pero hindi kaya mapapahamak ang mga baka at kalabaw natin kung mag import tayo ng maraming camel — wika nga, "a lot of Camels," kaya Camelot — sa Pilipinas?* (I'm agreeable to establishing Camelot in the Philippines but if we bring a lot of camels to the Philippines, won't our cows and carabaos catch diseases from them?)

Asia-Pacific ...

(From page 6)

great deal of biodiversity without any new investments by stopping or reducing many activities such as logging and indiscriminate road-building in natural habitats.

The recent Conference also suggests the involvement of local communities in environmental decision-making, particularly conservation planning and management, to lower costs of effective protection.

The Conference calls for public educa-

tion and information programmes to raise the level of awareness regarding the values of biodiversity as well as other direct incentives for conservation.

Mr. Strong recommends a massive reorientation of current budgets, subsidies, fiscal tax and economic policies. This is based on the principle of treating biodiversity as "a necessary asset to support a sustainable way of life."

After all, what is required is not totally new funds, he maintains for as the saying goes, "You can't pick money off trees." (DEPTHnews Asia)

'Natural diversity is more threatened now than at any time since the extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago'

Asia-Pacific region: An endangered tropical paradise

By JENNY S. SANTIAGO

MANILA — The Asia-Pacific region, where lie the world's highest mountain system and the second largest expanse of rainforest, may soon cease to be the tropical paradise that it is today.

The loss of the rich species of plants, animals and micro-organisms (or what is known as biological diversity) in the region is faster than in any other part of the globe, says a paper presented by John Mackinnon of the Asian Bureau for Conservation at the recent Regional Conference on Biodiversity Conservation held here.

The Conference, jointly sponsored by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), discussed issues affecting the survival and extinction of species. Government planners from 14 developing countries and biodiversity experts from international agencies and non-government organizations participated in the meeting.

"Natural diversity is more threatened now than at any time since the extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago," reports Jeffrey McNeely, chief biodiversity officer of the IUCN.

Citing estimates of some experts, he says that up to 25 percent of the world's species could become extinct or reduced to tiny remnants by the middle of the next century if present trends continue.

The Asia and Pacific alone have lost over 70 percent of their natural vegetation cover and much of what remain are seriously degraded due to human use.

The region has special significance to humanity because it is generously endowed with various life forms, unmatched anywhere else on earth. It is where many world crops, other plants, and animals origi-

ed.

Samar Singh, secretary-general of the World Wide Fund for Nature in India (WWF-India), aptly describes Southeast Asia as a "living laboratory" for studies in evolution, biogeography and ecology.

Mr. Singh notes that the countries of China, Indonesia, India and Malaysia are among the 12 so-called "megadiversity" countries which, together, account for 60 percent of the world's species.

The WWF official says that several plant species of the Asia-Pacific region have also contributed significantly to modern medicine and drugs developed by multinational pharmaceutical companies in the West.

In Asia, there are at least 6,500 species of plants used for medicinal purposes.

A.Z.M. Obaidullah Khan, assistant director-general of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), remarked that only one percent of all species have been probed for agricultural, industrial and other uses; no more than 15 percent have been scientifically determined; and 85 percent are as yet unknown.

At present, many people as well as government planners still fail to appreciate the value of biodiversity. While they may be concerned about species loss, few see any discernible effects of this on their daily lives. The few benefits perceived from biodiversity may explain the low priority being given to it.

In developing countries with limited national budgets, conservation competes with

other pressing social demands for resources. On the other hand, developed countries are also experiencing severe economic pressures and even recession.

Thus, the most acceptable approach to the problem of financing conservation is "to make biodiversity pay for itself."

To do this, Celso R. Roque of WWF International, suggests that the values derived from biodiversity be translated into revenues, and conservation be made an essential component of the development process.

Many other participants at the Manila Conference recognized the importance of integrating conservation with economic development.

"Integration of conservation and economic development has been considered in new terminology — sustainable development — since conservation of natural resources and biodiversity is (an) essential ingredient for sustainability," according to a paper presented by Herman Haeruman Jr.

It says that the most attractive argument in favor of biodiversity is its enormous direct economic benefits in the form of food, medicines and industrial raw materials, and its potential to generate more.

Maurice Strong, former UN undersecretary-general and secretary-general of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit), cites the experience of Japan and other industrial countries, which has shown that environment is fully compatible with and contributes to good economic performance.



Mr. Strong points out that Japan has had more success than any other nation during recent years in reducing levels of domestic air and water pollution and the amount of energy and raw materials used to produce a unit of GDP (gross domestic product), while leading the world in economic performance.

Integrating conservation with economic development is one way of making biodiversity pay for itself. Other self-financing schemes mentioned at the Conference were: 1) removal of subsidies that encourage habitat destruction and other perverse incentives; 2) recognition, quantification and valuation of the full range of goods and services derived from and associated with biodiversity conservation; and 3) internalization of conservation values by the local population through economic incentives and financing mechanisms.

Another paper, commissioned by the IUCN for presentation at the Conference, observes that biodiversity conservation has traditionally relied on general tax revenues, private voluntary contributions and foreign aid.

Prepared by Theodore

Panayotou and David Glover, it bewails the "meager and the grossly inadequate resources" made available for biodiversity conservation.

At present, the Global Environment Fund (GEF) managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is the single largest source of aid funds for conservation.

Of the US\$2 billion committed by 26 countries last March to replenish the GEF Trust Fund, about one-third or US\$600 million has been allocated for the next three years to biodiversity. But exactly how much would it cost to conserve the world's biodiversity?

Mr. Roque's report cites various figures ranging from US\$1 to US\$5 billion in annual cost. The figures may seem staggering, he says, but actually negligible when compared to the global military expenditures which could reach one trillion annually in year 2000.

He says that an assumed US\$10 billion annual expenditure for global conservation would represent only about one-tenth of one percent of GDP of most middle-income countries (including the total GDP of Asia) and roughly just one percent of that of low-income coun-

tries.

Noting the inadequacy of financial resources for biodiversity conservation the recent Conference recommended additional funding.

"The idea of an additional of funds made available for biodiversity conservation was a central theme of UNCED and the subsequent Convention on Biodiversity Conservation, but these funds are not yet apparent," the Conference concluded.

The convention on biodiversity is one of the two most important products of the Earth Summit. It was signed by representatives of more than 150 nations (18 from the Asia-Pacific region).

Article 20 of this Convention requires developed countries to provide new and additional funding for "agreed full incremental costs" sustained by developing countries in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention. The figure suggested to be provided by the international community for biodiversity is about US\$1.75 billion.

But the response of developed countries to this has been slow and most of them even reduced their Official Development Assistance.

Governments can save a

(Page 5, please)

7-R finally gets it

OVER THE years, a lot has been said about the 7-R Port Services, Inc. It has been changed with large-scale tax evasion (more than P3 billion, in fact.) It has been accused of being a giant monopoly which had cornered practically every waterfront contract without the benefit of public bidding by the Philippine Ports Authority. Sen. Ernesto Maceda has a colorful description of the firm, he calls it an "octopus" for being able to corner every port service in the South Harbor, North Harbor and Pasig River. Cong. Rodolfo Albano has been training his sights on 7-R the last few months for massive fraud and urging a thorough investigation by the low house, without appreciable results.

Not for long, it seems. Harried by the force of public opinion, three committees from both chambers have at least decided to investigate the phenomenon called 7-R. The senate committee on ways and means headed by Sen. Ernesto Herrera, and the joint house committees on ways and means and good government have finally set an inquiry when congress resumes session on July 25. Before this, the Commission on Audit had formed a special team to go over the books of 7-R and had been given 15 working days to finish the job.

Maceda and Albano cannot seem to understand how the waterfront firm could have violated all rules of the game with impunity all these years. Albano has been asking his colleagues in the low house to investigate 7-R for tax evasion and other glaring anomalies these last several months to no avail. If the planned inquiry goes through next month, the first step towards nailing at last this waterfront gargoyle might have been taken. A gargantuan siphon, 7-R rakes it in at the piers and keeps it, the classic case of having its cake and eating it, too. It seems that paying taxes was never contemplated in its operations, as the solons put it.

But Albano might yet be in for a big surprise. He should consider the "expertise" that made possible the cornering of every pier contract without bidding, the "expertise" that made possible the evasion of tax payments, and the "expertise" that will be brought to bear on his colleagues who might just be salivating at this very moment on the bright prospects the investigation offers. After a few months of feigned honest-to-goodness hearings, the committees might just arrive at the conclusion that 7-R has been paying taxes very religiously, that it has won all its present contracts through transparent public bidding conducted by the PPA, that it is alleviating the unemployment problem and helping the government through an enlightened labor program that had all the brawny Tondo stevedores singing psalms on Sundays, that in truth and in fact it should be awarded a medal by the state and the Consumers Union of the Philippines which had advocated its probe.

The elections are less than a year away. The timing is simply too perfect for the 7-R billions to work its wonders on congressional committee investigators who will soon return to their districts to regale their constituents on how hard they are working to protect their interest. The forthcoming probe may yet validate the modern adage about local politicians being the best money can buy.

Olivares may get it

ANY COMMUTER who passes by Parañaque will not fail to notice the giant billboards along the major thoroughfares and street corners proclaiming to all and sundry this and that project being undertaken by Pablo Olivarez, who happened to be the town's mayor. He and/or his wife are into every activity guaranteed to assure the good life for every resident. At the boulevard he is on the throes of a gigantic reclamation project, proclaimed in a huge billboard citing a republic act that purportedly sanctions Olivarez to destroy the pedestrian walk and protecting sea wall and debase Manila Bay. In the process, the young coconut trees that somehow greened and beautified and afforded some shade for the Baclaran church commuters were also uprooted. Churchgoers now have to wait for their rides under a scorching sun and, this coming rainy season, would risk being drenched to the skin when it really pours.

Olivarez seems never to run out of bright ideas that outrage common sense and responsibility, especially the kind that devolves around the person of a public official. To the consternation of airline officials and pilots, Olivarez allegedly built a multi-million, multi-storey commercial building within the runway area of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. The illegal structure is reportedly owned by a corporation he heads.

Parañaque Congressman Roilo Golez, one of the more respectable members of the low house, is understandably concerned about this blatant violation of the town's building code and has summoned for investigation the building official who allowed the construction without securing a prior clearance from the Air Transportation Office. The Olivarez-owned edifice reportedly exceeded prescribed height limits, the shopping mall violates a provision which bans any structure within 300 meters from the end of the runway, and the Airline Pilots Association had expressed dismay about the movie projection system which might distort the signals of the airport's Instrument Landing System.

The granting of a permit to the building is "a criminal action," Golez asserts, "that trifled with the lives of airline passengers." We hope that for the sake of airline commuters that Golez won't be frustrated this time.

He cannot seem to do anything about the desecration of the once beautiful Manila Bay which is now being razed to give way for the construction of another shopping complex. Why the Chief Executive does not stop this orgy in Parañaque has enhanced the stature of Olivarez with the townfolks. They are now beginning to believe and say that he is "malakas" up there and Golez is simply ramming his useless head against a stone wall he will never breach. If this is so, a good part of the historic bay will soon be gone and Golez would have lost the battle. What a pity.



Synonymous with suicide

HAVING WORKED for some years with Planters Products, Inc., the largest chemical fertilizer and pesticide firm during the martial-law years, I can say with some authority that the word *pesticide* not only rhymes with suicide, it is also synonymous with the latter.

Our publisher-editor has written countless articles on the lethal dangers of using inorganic inputs and pesticides. So has WHO. And so have many other reputable agricultural scientists. By farming the "traditional" way, Joe Burgos has, like many others, proven that you don't have to destroy your soil — and the ecology, for that matter — with deadly chemicals to maximize production and/or produce quality grains. (If we're suffering from rice shortage now and then, it's because our ricefields have been shrinking and shrinking, damn our Government which allows indiscriminate conversion of ricefields into subdivisions and so-called industrial estates.)

Yet for all their toxicity, pesticides are even encouraged to be used extensively by our government thru the Pesticide and Fertilizer Authority (FPA). And only when some concerned groups raise hell over the deaths and destruction wrought by pesticides banned in other countries but allowed to be used in ours, does our government act — rather, make the motions of acting — for the public good.

Pesteng yawa, as some Visayans would

ONE'S WORTH



by MAX NOBLE

say.

Recently, the papers reported that a multinational chemical firm had threatened to pull out if two of its lethal products are banned here. Scared out of its wits, the government of Eddie Boy Ramos have gone great lengths appeasing the MNC which, as to be expected now, has promised not to leave beloved Pinas.

With a government like this, us Pinoys don't need a foreign enemy to rain upon us chemical weapons to kill us all.

Not being an economist, I just can't make head or tail of the Bangko Sentral's determined move "to prevent rise of (the) peso," as one daily reported recently. The objective of BSP's move is to "protect" local exporters, who, according to the report, have been complaining of smaller profits since the peso has gained a few centavos vis-a-vis the mighty US dollar.

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We Forum



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JOSE G. BURGOS, JR.
PUBLISHER-EDITOR

Stock market decline continues

LET ME first thank my friends in Iloilo City, especially Provincial Attorney Teofilo Leonidas — former IBP president, Vic de Asis, IBP Guimaras president and Peter Baliao and Aniano Franco for their unstinted support to me when I hosted the round table discussions on the American Constitution with US Court of Appeals Justice Patrick Higginbotham as speaker. The successful meeting held at the Amigo Hotel was made, largely possible because of these kind friends who spent time and efforts to prepare the venue for the affair involving an international legal luminary. On my part I endeavored to bring Justice Higginbotham to Iloilo to give a chance to the legal community in Iloilo to listen to a constitutional expert from the United States which could enrich their perspectives on a legal system upon which Philippine Constitutional Law evolved from.

The stock market in both bourses — Manila and Makati continue to show marked decline for almost a month already. I was told that many speculators have already lost their shirts in a market that has not shown any indicators for recovery soon. I cannot read the significance of this decline in the overall picture of the national economy but logic

tells me that things do not augur well as regards public confidence in the administration. I hope, of course that the situation may yet perk up but the lesson to be learned here is don't speculate too much with your hard earned cash and don't make gambling a disease.

Speaking about gambling as a disease, I have a client whose wife came rushing to me, asking that I file a case for separation of properties against her husband whose casino habits appear unsatiable and has lost some P3 million in just two months. The wife almost had a nervous breakdown.

Now they are complaining about the Duty Free shops in Subic (SBMA) of Dick Gordon. They think there is too much proliferation of duty free shops which seems to be the only attraction inside the base, other than going to the Ginting Highlands Casino. So far not much when it comes to foreign investments. Now they are even suspecting that some items being passed for imported goods are locally produced in the duty free shops. Question is: Is there anyone raking in the dollars which are required for purchases in these shops? *Kumikita kaya ang gobyerno dito?*

"79 Quezon City cops - bakla" — headline in an afternoon paper. Anyway *kahit bakla basta hindi lang corrupt; hindi lang mangingikil, hindi lang mamatay tao, ok lang.* Actually even the US military admits gays soon after Bill Clinton assumed the presidency. *79 lang ba ang gays diyan? Baka mas marami pa.* How about in Manila, how about in Iloilo City?

Why are newspapers again glamorizing Nur Misuari? *Pati ang pagpakasal ni Misuari to a 20-year-old Tausog girl merited front-page write up in the Philippine Daily Inquirer.* Does getting married anew add to Misuari's "mystic"?

"Winning odds in lotto is 1 in 2.5 million" — news item. What about in jueteng? What about in "masiao"?

"Pasig now safe for swimming" — Secretary Alcala. What about for dumping salvage victims?

Another tragedy took its toll on Filipino seamen when two tankers collided in the Bosphorus near the strait of the Dardanelles near Turkey. One of the tankers was manned totally by Filipino crewmen. Luckily only

IN MY CORNER...



by RAUL M. GONZALEZ

one fatality was reported and the rest were plucked to safety and were taken to hospitals for treatment. These past months have seen several major sea tragedies which has orphaned many Filipino families and all these bring home the reality that our countrymen have to risk danger away from homes because the homeland cannot offer enough work for decent life for many among us. We must pray that one day the country can be spared of these situations because in the homeland there is enough to go by.

The Department of Health has been holding its so-called "Alis disease" programs. *Okey 'yan.* I think President Ramos should also have a program called "alis diyan" directed against corrupt and incompetent officials. Then the voters, come 1995 should also work in unison and shout "alis diyan" against corrupt elective officials and non-performing assets — who are the real "NPAs". . .

Nations buy arms while people die of hunger, disease

By IAN STEELE

NEW YORK — Malnutrition and preventable diseases are 33 times more likely to kill a person from one of the world's poorest nations than a war between his country and another.

And yet there are about 20 soldiers for every physician in the developing world while spending for arms sometimes outstrips national health and education budgets combined.

According to the *Human Development Report 1994*, published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India and Pakistan together account for 18 percent of global arms imports — almost twice as much as Saudi Arabia's. Between 1988

and 1992, India led purchasers of conventional weapons in the developing world with imports totaling US\$12.2 billion. And in 1992, India ordered 20 MiG-29 fighter aircraft from Russia at a cost that could have provided basic education for all 15 million of the nation's young girls who were out of school that year.

The annual report has argued for the past five years that developing nations are squandering their opportunities for social and economic advancement by ignoring the need to invest in their human capital.

"The world can never be at peace unless people have security in their daily lives," says James Gustave "Gus" Speth, the UNDP

administrator, who notes that of the 82 armed conflicts in the world between 1989 and 1992, only three were between countries. The rest were the result of internal tensions, often fueled by poverty, social inequalities and ethnic strife.

The report argues that it is far cheaper to address the source of these tensions "upstream" than "downstream."

"In the final analysis, human security is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, a job that was not cut, an ethnic tension that did not explode in violence, a dissident who was not silenced," the report states. "Human security is not a concern with weapons, it is a concern with human life and dignity."

Ironically, it is the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council who are making the largest profits from weapons sales, and developing countries in Asia are among their biggest customers. The top five exporting countries, which sell 86 percent of the conventional weapons shipped to developing countries, in descending order are: the former Soviet Union, the United States, France, China and the United Kingdom.

According to the report, data for 1992 show that:

- * China purchased 26 combat aircraft from Russia at a cost that could have provided safe drinking water for a year to 140 million of the country's 200 million people who are without it.

- * The Republic of Korea bought 28 missiles from the United States for a sum that could have protected all 120,000 of the country's unimmunized children and pro-

vided safe water for 3.5 million people who need it.

Pakistan ordered 40 Mirage 2000E fighters and three Tripartite aircraft from France with money that could have provided safe drinking water supplies for 55 million people, family planning services for 20 million couples, essential medicines for 13 million people who lack health care, and basic education for 12 million children who did not attend primary school.

The report observes that the end of the Cold War has had less impact on arms expenditures in the developing world than in the industrial countries.

The report recommends the establishment of a UN "Economic Security Council" to deal with rising social tensions and a "20:20 global compact for human development" by which donors would earmark 20 percent of their development assistance budgets to basic education, primary health care, the provision of safe drinking water and family planning. Developing countries would, in turn, give the same level of priority to their domestic spending.

These and other proposals will be discussed at length early next year at a United Nations "Social Summit" to be held in Copenhagen.

"These proposals may at first sight seem to demand a great deal from the international community," says Mahbub ul Haq, the principal architect of the annual report and a former finance minister in Pakistan. "But many heresies of yesterday have become the conventional wisdom of today." (DEPTHnews)



Digmaan sa Mindanao?

HABANG ISINUSULAT ito, wala pang makasagot sa tanong kung buhay pa o patay na si Father Cerilo Nacorda. Ang pinuno ng mga militar ay waring umiiwas o hindi alam kung tinamaan na ng mga mortar na itinudla nila sa umano'y kampo ng Abu Sayyaf. May mga nakapagsabi na libong tahanan na ang sinalanta ng pagsugod ng militar laban sa Abu Sayyaf.

Tinawag ko nang digmaan ang nagaganap ngayon sa Mindanao dahil may bilangan na kung ilan ang namatay sa panig ng militar at sa panig ng Abu Sayyaf. Laging marami ang bilang ng mga namamatay sa Abu Sayyaf kaysa mga sundalo. Subalit walang nakikita maging sa pahayagan o telebisyon hinggil sa sinasabing mga napatay na mga bandido at sundalo.

Nakapagtataka lamang na matagal nang umiiral ang sinasabing pagkakasangkot sa mga kidnapping, pagnanakaw, ng mga kasapi ng

Abu Sayyaf. Matagal na itong nababanggit sa media. Ngunit bakit waring ngayon lang na gkaroon ng "malay" ang pamahalaan upang tugisin ng tuloy-tuloy ang mga sinasabi nilang bandido.

Kaawa-awa si Father Nacorda. Hindi siya nakasama sa negosasyong nakapagpalaya sa maraming guro na kinidnap ng Abu Sayyaf. Napagsabihan si Governor Salipudin dahil sa pagbabayad niya ng "board and lodging" sa mga nandukot sa mga guro. "No ransom" ang patakaran ng pamahalaang Ramos. Ngunit paano ang pagpapahalaga sa buhay ni Father Nacorda? Dahil ba sa siya'y alagad ng Diyos ay dapat na lang siyang isakripisyo? Tao pa rin si Father Nacorda at hindi dapat bale-walain ang kanyang magagawa pa sa pagsisilbi sa Kristiyanismo. Dapat kumilos ang simbahang Katoliko dito dahil ang hindi pagpapalaya sa paring Katoliko ay isang maliwanag na mensahe

na galit ang Abu Sayyaf sa Katoliko. Masisiyahan silang gawing pananggalang ang pari sa ginagawang pagtugis ng mga sundalo.

Subalit isa pa ring nakakatawa sa panig ng militar ay ang pagtalakay nila ng kanilang mga plano sa media. Marami akong narinig na sinabi nina Gen. Soriano at Ruiz sa mga himpilan ng radyo. Tama si Kalihim Alunan na hindi dapat malaman ng kalaban ang magiging galaw ng kanilang panig. Hiningi niya ang pakikipagtulungan ng media hinggil sa bagay na ito.

Narapat na ingatan ng mga pinuno ng militar ang buhay ni Father Nacorda. Nangangailangang pag-aralan ng militar ang kahilingan ng simbahang katoliko na itigil muna ang opensibang ginagawa ng militar. Higit sigurong mahusay na pag-aralan munang mabuti kung paano mabibihag ang sinasabing "maliit" na bilang na bandidong grupong Abu

KILATISIN
NATIN



ni JOEY PAPA

Sayyaf.

Higit na mahalaga ang buhay ng tao kaysa anumang. Kung hindi maililigtas ng buhay si Father Nacorda, tiyak na matinding galit ang madarama ng mga tao hindi lamang Katoliko kundi maging ibang sekta rin ng relihiyon. Ibig sabihin nito'y walang kakayahang magligtas ng mga "hostages" ang militar ng pamahalaan. Kapag nangyari ito, sinong sekta pa ng relihiyon ang magtitiwala sa kakayahan ng militar?

Family—in vogue but in transition

By SUSANNA GEORGE

KUALA LUMPUR — The concept of family is a universal one. Everyone must and, in fact, in some way does belong to a family.

In its truest sense the family is that unit that provides strength to its members to face the many challenges, economic, social and emotional, that humans face in life.

Violence, crime and moral wrongdoing are all associated with the disintegration of the family, and both the church and the state have mounted intensive campaigns to remind people of the value of family in society and the role of each of its members.

Since the early questioning of structures by the women's movement in Asia, however, the family has been one of the first institutions to come under fire. While recognizing it as a source of strength and security, many women have also understood the family to be oppressive and the very seat of patriarchy at the micro level.

In marrying, women frequently give up their identities to become wife and daughter-in-law in their new home. Many relinquish their freedom of association as individuals, often submitting to the arbitrary dictates of their husbands.

For women who are subjected to violence whether physical, sexual or emotional, the home becomes a place of terror and male kin their most dreaded tormentors.

Society has also developed a system wherein women are "protected" by their family relationships. Fathers and mothers in many Asian

cultures see it as their primary duty to preserve the sexual purity of their daughters. Women with their virginity intact become the bartering commodity to strengthen ties with other families, to secure property and wealth and to gain status within the community.

Women's sexuality is seen as valuable only in relation to their ability to procreate and, in order for families and society to perpetuate themselves, all procreation must take place within the accepted boundaries of marriage. Every option outside this formula is seen as deviant, wrong, sinful. For this reason single women, unmarried mothers, lesbians, divorcees and even widows are viewed with scorn. A woman whose sexuality is not in control (through family) is a dangerous creature.

If church and state were not enough to ensure the perpetuation of traditional family structures, then all of society moves in to pressure erring women to abide by these norms. Mothers, even those who were beaten and abused in their own marital relationships, often coax their daughters into marriage since for many it remains a surer form of economic and social survival.

The media strongly perpetuate heterosexual norms in their imagery, and even educated women have fears of being a "gnarled up old spinster" pitied by many, loved by none. Girls and women are filled with hope by the romantic images that flood our books, television and films, yet few women have actual



examples of these in their lives. Many do not find what they are looking for simply because parallel to these rose-tinted images are those that men live by — of being the master of the household to be served and waited upon, of being the breadwinner, strong and in control.

The complementarity of male-female relationships is often touted by church, society, and the media, and neither men or women have good examples to live differently.

In the West, sharing of housework has become one symbol of equality in relationships. Yet many of our sisters are disappointed to find out that they are married to a dishwashing "he-man." In fact, cultural expectations and gender roles have changed little despite the brave and persistent efforts of the women's movement along with so much talk about gender sensitivity. Women continue even in these societies to experience severe domestic violence, marital rape and incest. Power in actuality has not shifted from the male dominion.

Many women today, whether heterosexual or lesbian, aspire for equal relationships. While they want families, "family" is becoming redefined, reflecting more closely women's stronger sense of self, renewed understanding of their sexuality and greater courage to

seek out equal partnership, sexually, emotionally and otherwise.

Many women have also chosen not to be in committed partnerships, family for them being a close network of friends and lovers who support and respect each other. Although single women who choose to live alone continue to be stigmatized in many societies, more and more who are economically empowered have the privilege to choose being single as a viable option.

Lesbian women in relationships have to be particularly courageous in Asian societies, where there are few examples of such alternative lifestyles and where every symbol, image and event discourages these liaisons from even existing.

Yet there is a growing voice in Asia of women who recognize that the lesbian and gay alternatives can turn to what families were intended to be — supportive, nurturing units of people, where respect and justice are the bases of all interactions within them.

Indeed, many women have taken the brave step to challenge existing norms so that families no longer imprison and shackle people in relationships that cause grief, pain and even mortal danger. Risking societal scorn, many women and men are creating new ways of living that work for them. (Depthnews Asia)

Max NOBLE (From page 7)

"Smaller profits" would mean something like this: Instead of, say, P1 billion, our local millionaire-exporters will just be earning P999,999,999.99.

Does the BSP want our peso to be devalued some more so it becomes as worthless as the Japanese notes after Japan had surrendered in the last World War? As it is, the peso is already almost that worthless. Try marketing and see what I mean.

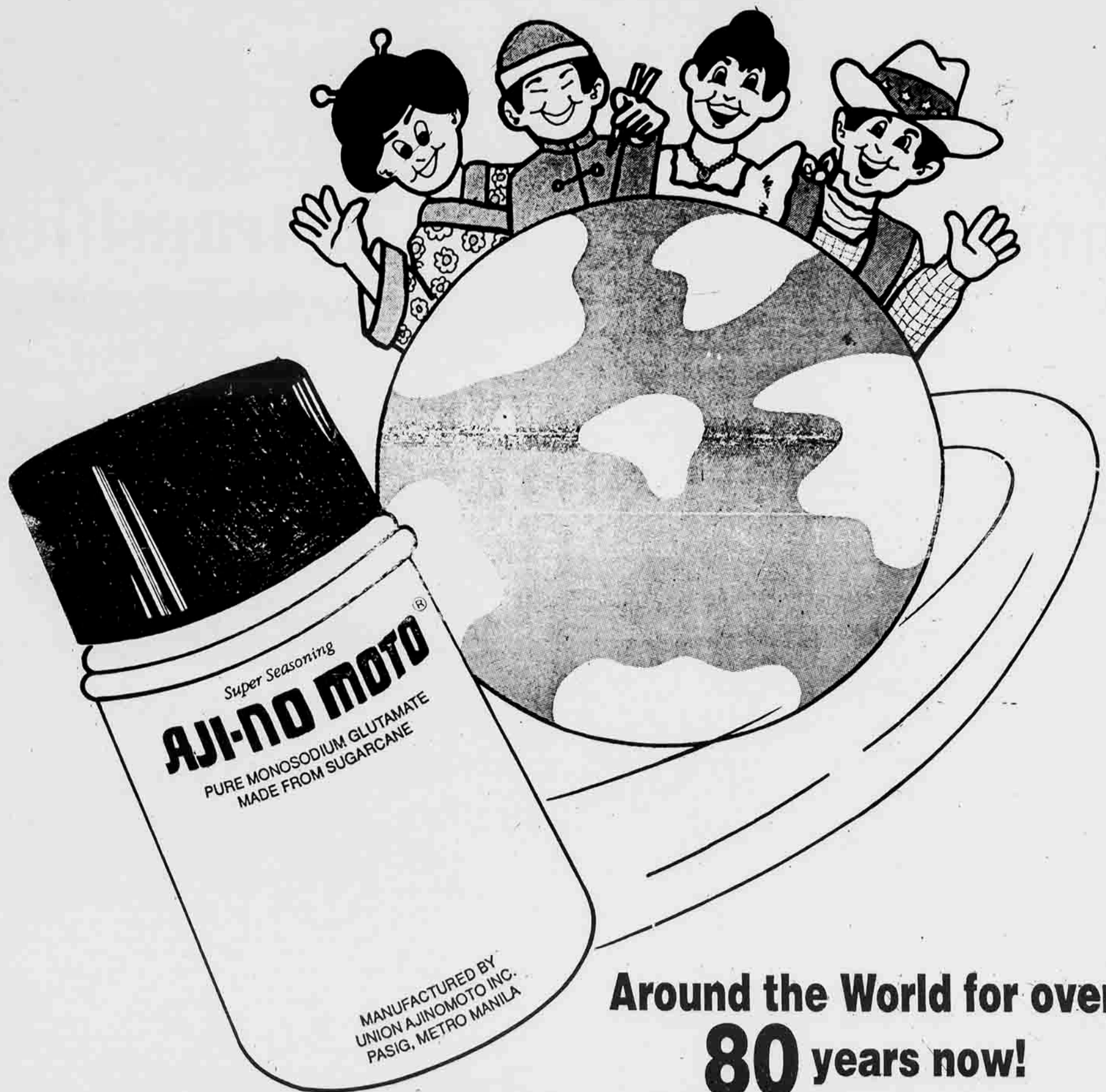
Finance Undersecretary Elmer Ordenez, BIR Commissioner Liwayway Vinzon Chato

and another BIR official looked pathetic as they defended the new bloody VAT law in a TV forum last Sunday. Senator Tolentino, Congressman Arroyo and other anti-VAT leaders were there, of course.

But it's not just the presence of Joker et al. which made VAT-men Ordenez et al. appear pitiful but also, and rather more importantly, the fact that one can't defend the indefensible. Which is what the new VAT law is.

In case you don't know, VAT is value added tax, the additional burden you and I, the poor consumers, are required to bear by the Marcos martial-law implementor, Fidel V. Ramos.

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Asian farmers have one thing in common: they are all poor FAO program helps Asian small farmers

BANGKOK — They are the small farmers of Asia-Pacific — the backbone of the region, as they are sometimes called. They have one thing in common. They are poor, earning only US\$75 a year.

Asian peasants constitute the majority of the world's small farmers. They number one billion, or about one-fifth of the world's total population. They live mainly in the six densely populated nations of the Indian subcontinent, in southeast Asia, and in the islands of the Pacific basin.

"Even with reasonable amounts of fertile land," said a report released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "most face serious obstacles — the lack of appropriate technology and agricultural inputs, inadequate marketing facilities and poor community services such as sanitation, medical care and education."

The result is widespread poverty and malnutrition, and all their attendant miseries. Those without land or who are virtually landless slip into even more abject poverty.

The statistics are staggering. In 1985, between 19 and 37 percent of all agricultural households in Asia had no land at all.

In Thailand, for instance, Penny Levin and Vitoon Panyakul from the Alternative Agricultural Group (AAG) reported that over 500,000 farmers are now landless. In some regions, up to 85 percent of farm households earn too little to survive.

Today, there may be more Asians who have become what Mahatma Gandhi once referred to as "the last, the least, the lowest and the lost."

To help small farmers uplift their standard of living, FAO launched the Small Farmers Development Programme (SFPD) in the mid-70s.

First initiated in Nepal, SFPD became so successful that the approach was also tried in Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

Assessing the impact of SFPD, some say the program has improved living conditions in rural areas and brought about a new awareness and sense of dignity in small farmers.

To others, SFPD has enabled the small farmers to organize at their own levels and to have their voices heard in decision-making processes.

But most agree that the program has greatly helped in increasing productivity and incomes of small farmers in Asia.

SFPD actually started with 16 Asian Survey on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ASARRD) field workshops from 1973 to 1975 in eight countries of the region: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

Among the major findings of these workshops were:

- * The "delivery system" of government departments was not reaching the poorest sector, particularly the small farmers.

- * Only a few of the small farmers were even aware of government programs, while those who did know thought that government extension services were meant only for the more important people in the village.

- * Most of the rural poor needed credit and were heavily indebted to local moneylenders or richer relatives. Only a few had tried to get institutional credit.

- * National banks were under pressure from most governments to increase their loans to the rural poor but found it increasingly difficult to find bankable rural clients.

- * Few development programs were suitable for helping the landless agricultural laborers, the small fishermen, or the women and youth of poor families to gain greater self-reliance and to increase their incomes.

- * Every country had some pilot rural development programs which were successful in the early stages but either collapsed when the original project staff were withdrawn or failed to become self-reliant due to a paternalistic staff.

- * Most rural development programs were concentrating their resources on strengthening the capacity of the different line agencies of government, which form the delivery system, to deliver their inputs and services to the rural people in general. (DEPTHnews)



KABISIG: President Ramos makes the thumbs-up sign after delivering a speech during the 4th anniversary celebration of the Kabisig People's Movement at Malacanang's Heroes Hall last June 15. Seated with the President at the Presidential table are (from left) Deputy Executive Secretary Luis Liwanag, Kabisig Director General and Pampanga Governor Bren Guiao, Kabisig Deputy Director General Marietta Goco, Interior and Local Government Secretary Rafael Alunan, Executive Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. and Presidential Management Staff chief Leonora Vasquez-de Jesus. (Malacanang Photo)

Mindanao farmer gets more income — and protein — from new venture Sheep-raising more profitable than farming?

GENERAL SANTOS CITY — A farmer who has been raising sheep for more than 10 years here has found sheep raising to be highly profitable.

"Sheep raising is one of the lesser known activities in the agricultural sector. This is unfortunate because it has a very high potential for increasing the income of our small farmers," Jose S. Kho told DEPTHnews.

His experience in raising sheep showed that farmers need only a small capital to start a sheep project. Cattle raising is more expensive, he said.

"Sheep raising is simple and profitable. A farmer can engage in it to supplement his income and to add protein to his diet," he said.

According to Kho, most of the so-called "native" breeds of sheep in the country are small and unproductive due to lack of any serious effort to upgrade them.

In the late '70s, Kho decided to do something. He recalled: "In 1978, I bought three rams (male) and 12 ewes (female) of the U.S. Barbados Blackbelly sheep from Rev. Harold R. Watson of the Mindanao Baptist Rural Life Center in Kinuskusan, Bansalan, Davao del Sur."

Kho used these animals as foundation stock. "I crossed them with our native sheep. These crossbreeds, which I call 'Dadiangas sheep' have been steadily increasing in number."

At present, Kho's sheep farm has a population of 800 producing ewes.

He said that his 'Dadiangas sheep' are prolific and hardy. Their short hair, he said, is very well suited to the hot and dry weather and rugged pasture terrain. Their resistance to heat stress allows them to travel long distances to forage for food and water. They breed the whole year round, not seasonally.

The ewes of Kho's crossbreeds are said to be very protective of their young and have excellent milking abilities. They can easily support twin offspring which he considers as one of the best traits of the "Dadiangas sheep."

According to Kho, a Filipino sheep raiser would get most of his income from the sale of fattened lambs. An eight-month-old lamb will weigh from 20 to 25 kilos. It can easily be sold for slaughter at a liveweight of P30 per kilo, giving the farmer an income of at least P600.

Another potential source of income is sheep manure, which the farmer can sell as organic fertilizer. Kho said that sheep manure has a high nutrient content.

The veteran sheep raiser lamented, however, that the technology for wool processing and tanning of sheep hide

in the country has yet to be developed.

"But my more than 10-year experience in raising sheep shows that raising sheep for slaughter is enough to boost any small farmer's income," he pointed out.

The animal has a long history in the Philippines. It was introduced here during the Spanish era. In fact, the "native sheep" were actually from the Spanish Merino brought here during the galleon trade between Mexico and the Philippines by the Spaniards who slaughtered most of the animals for food during their long voyages across the Pacific.

Vic Quirante, a sheep specialist from the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI), said that sheep raising in the Philippines became popular in the mid-1930s. From 1933 to 1936, there were 140,000 sheep in the country. But because the Filipino sheep raisers didn't know how to breed and manage their herds scientifically, sheep raising did not flourish as expected.

Recent records available from the Department of Agriculture placed the sheep population at 7,308. Of this total, 21.8 percent can be found in Eastern Visayas, 17 percent in Central Luzon, 15 percent in Western Visayas, and 11.52 percent in Central Visayas. The remaining 34.68 percent are sparsely distributed in other parts of the country. (DEPTHnews)

Asians devise . . . (From page 12)

F. French, a staffmember of the Washington-based Worldwatch Institute (WWI).

With a total capacity of 894 megawatts, the Philippines is the second largest geothermal producer in the world. The United States is the world's largest geothermal producer with a total capacity of 2,212 megawatts.

Japan, which aggressively promotes geothermal energy, generates 215 megawatts from geothermal power. With a strong research program, the Japanese geothermal industry's output is expected to

grow ten-fold, to about 2,000 megawatts by the year 2000.

Other Asian countries using geothermal power to generate electricity are New Zealand (167 megawatts), Indonesia (142 megawatts) and China (15 megawatts).

Direct conversion of solar energy has been described by most scientists as the "cornerstone of a sustainable world energy system."

"Not only is sunshine available in great quantity, it is more widely distributed than any other energy source," a WWI official said. (DEPTHnews)

*This tiny Nepalese village
discovered early the negative
result of tobacco use*

Do you want benefits from smoking? Ban it!

By HENRYLITO D. TACIO

THE BAN on cigarette smoking is only now being vigorously implemented by many countries of the world but it seems a tiny village in the foothills of the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal has beaten everyone to the punch.

It banned smoking completely more than seven years ago.

Golmatar, a village of about 200 extremely poor farmers and porters, ordered tobacco banned within its territorial limits to help its inhabitants stop wasting money on smoking and use the savings to enhance their lives and their community.

"Ecstatic with the success of that ban, Golmatar then outlawed liquor," says World Neighbors, a US-based non-profit organization working to eliminate hunger, disease and poverty in developing countries.

Part of the savings from the banning went into a community fund which was recently used for a drinking water system developed with the help of World Neighbors.

"The system is a boon to village women who have been making the difficult one-hour trip to the previous water source many times a day," reports a World Neighbors official.

The self-imposed bans on smoking and drinking were discovered when Nepali development extensionists working with World Neighbors started talking with villagers about ways they could improve their lives, according to Jagdish Ghimire.

Ghimire heads the Nepali organization Tamakoshi Sewa Samiti (TSS) through which World Neighbors works in Golmatar and other area villages.

Ghimire said he was told the smoking ban came after residents commenced looking for reasons why they had so little spending money. The culprits, they found out, were

"All tobacco use was banned," Ghimire recalled. "Warning signs were posted. Part of each villager's savings was contributed to a community fund."

Distillation and drinking of spirits, a "part of the deep-rooted culture and tradition" of the Magar ethnic group in Nepal, was banned later.

When TSS extension workers observed the village savings account was idle, they showed the villagers how to use it much as a credit union does and make low-interest loans for seed purchase and home improvements, among many other needs.

At 12 percent, the interest rate is much lower than what loan sharks charged — 24 percent for long term and 36 percent for short term loans, Ghimire said.

"Now, Golmatar is not only involved in drinking water system management, adult literacy, community-based health and agroforestry with TSS/World Neighbors assistance, but also is providing itself as a model for demonstration of community organization and rural development which is self-induced, financially self-supporting and technically and environmentally sustainable," Ghimire said.

Golmatar now plays host to study tours organized by TSS and other Nepali non-profit groups for communities interested in beginning management, water, agricultural, health and other development programs.

Nepal is just one of the several countries being assisted by World Neighbors. Aside from Asia, it has projects in Africa and Latin America.

"World Neighbors affirms the determination, ingenuity and inherent dignity of all people," a World Neighbors official says. "By strengthening these primary resources, people are helped to analyze and solve their own problems."



WITH EDITORS: President Ramos greets publishers and editors invited to attend a luncheon meeting hosted by the President at Malacanang recently. Shown in photo (from left) are Ely Lopez, Times Journal business editor; Rosario Galang, Malay business editor; Butch del Castillo, Manila Standard business editor; Roman Floresca, Philippine Star business editor; Joe Galang, Today business editor, and Executive Secretary Teofisto Guingona. (Malacanang Photo)

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IN METRO MANILA

Asians devise ways for wise energy use

BANGKOK — Several Asian countries are putting their heads together to develop a program which would enable them to make the best use of scarce energy resources.

Several United Nations agencies and bilateral donors are supporting the long-term effort to promote and enhance regional cooperation in the area of energy use. A joint program has been launched to help 23 countries in Asia identify and solve energy and environmental problems.

The program was sponsored by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Asia-Pacific Development Center (APDC). Funding will come from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the governments of Australia and France.

"This regional undertaking will provide the 23 countries in Asia with tools to produce and use energy in environmentally and economically sound ways," according to a UNDP report.

Rapid industrialization and urbanization have forced developing countries to increase their use of oil, coal and other alternative sources of energy.

Since 1970, energy consumption in these nations has nearly trebled — a rate of increase 15 times that of industrial countries. It has grown faster than their economies, not to mention their population.

The joint program will support the establishment of energy and environmental data bases. It will also include courses on assessing environmental degradation, as well as rehabilitating areas damaged by petroleum and natural gas exploration.

Leading scientists say natural gas can replace nearly any

in India and at the World Bank showed that compressed natural gas is a cost-effective replacement for diesel and gasoline as motor vehicle fuel.

These experts say natural gas can supplant oil or coal in industrial processes and can be used for cooking, boiling water, and space heating in buildings. Propane and other gas liquids, often found with natural gas, can help reduce urban use of charcoal, wood and kerosene for cooking.

One Asian country that is eyeing natural gas as part of its effort to slow the growth in oil and coal use in China. In 1986, the government formed a gas research institute, and in early 1992, the government decided to build a pipeline from a large offshore gas field discovered during an unsuccessful quest for oil in 1983.

Thailand also hopes to build a gas grid with neighboring Malaysia and Myanmar (Burma).

Many developing countries have abundant supplies of renewable energy resources that are economical but have yet to be fully utilized.

Hydropower, for instance, supplies nearly a fifth of the world's electricity. In developing countries, hydropower has an ample growth potential but environmental constraints will likely limit such development.

Geothermal power plays a major role in some countries; it produced 21 percent of the electricity in the Philippines, 18 percent in El Salvador, and 11 percent in Kenya in 1990. This resource is abundant but still largely untapped in India and Thailand and even in Bolivia, Costa Rica and Ethiopia.

In the Philippines, geothermal energy currently provides roughly one-quarter of the nation's electricity, says Dr. Hilary