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DATeline USA
FROM THE APRESS NEWS TEAM ACROSS AMERICA

'RP no longer sick man of Asia'



Sec. Edgardo Pamintuan

LOS ANGELES—The Philippines is no longer the "sick man of Asia," Philippine Cabinet Secretary Edgardo D. Pamintuan declared in a series of dialogues with Filipino-American community leaders in the United States.

"It used to be that when America sneezes, the Philippines is already suffering from pneumonia. But as the US, Japan and many other countries slide deeper into recession, the Philippines has still been registering respectable economic growth," Pamintuan said.

Pamintuan, chair of the Subic-Clark-Alliance for Development, is head of a four-man delegation from the Philippines on a "good news" road show about the economic performance of the country in the face of the global crisis; the developments of key infrastructure projects; as well the progress of the conversion of Clark and Subic from military to economic bases.

With Pamintuan, who is also development champion for the Luzon Urban Beltway super region and presidential adviser for external affairs, are Alexander Cauiguiran, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Clark International Airport Corporation, Undersecretary Danilo de Austria Consumido and Director Leonardo Kirk Galanza of the Office of External Affairs of the Office of the President.

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FIGHTING RECESSION WITH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

by TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO
Inquirer.net



President Gloria Arroyo signs copies of the latest edition of the Go Negosyo book, which honors 55 women entrepreneurs. Right photo shows some of the businesswomen featured in the book during its launch last week at Rockwell in Makati. Photos courtesy of Go Negosyo



If Jose Concepcion III accepted every invitation to speak on entrepreneurship in these times of economic distress, he would have no more time left to supervise the operations of food and beverage conglomerate RFM Corp. and adequately perform his duties as presidential assistant on entrepreneurship.

The chief architect of the Go Negosyo movement, however, is not complaining.

Concepcion says the heightened interest in making a go of entrepreneurship tells him that the entrepreneurship advocacy is taking root and that Filipinos are becoming more emboldened to try their hand at putting up their own business.

In an interview with the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Concepcion talks about the great opportunities just waiting to be turned into opportunities, challenges faced by those brave enough to risk time and resources behind their business idea, how women are naturally equipped to be entrepreneurs, and how being with business leaders from all parts of the country has changed the way he looks at his own business.

Q: Given the global economic crisis, do you think it will be harder for Filipinos to start a business?

Concepcion: No, I don't think so. I think it's not really that difficult because our economy is not as big

as China or Korea. We're very small. If you look at the types of businesses people can get into, to me is very simple. It's really in the basics of service, agriculture. Agriculture is one area that has a lot of potential. To me, agriculture is still huge.

Q: What do you think makes women entrepreneurs different from men?

Concepcion: Women are natural born entrepreneurs because from the day they were born, they've been asked to handle the expenses of the house. So they budget and make sure that there's enough on the table. In that aspect, the money-related skill that they develop is a skill an entrepreneur has to have. So they now add that to a skill that they have. So, there are so many, I mean sewing, clothing, cooking many things that

they can help. That's why I call it a service economy. Eventually, all they need is a mentor to guide them in packaging hopefully help in distribution and capital to be able to take their business from small to medium.

Q: Go Negosyo has been around for three years. Would you say that it has been successful in its mission?

Concepcion: Well to me, if you look at the brand awareness, it's really there. People who look at "negosyo" [business] think it's Go Negosyo. We've

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Meltdown 101

Will Obama's housing plan help me?

by J.W. ELPHINSTONE
AP

PRESIDENT Barack Obama's new mortgage relief plan, launched Wednesday, aims to help up to 9 million borrowers qualify for more affordable mortgages and stay in their homes. Are you one of them?

Obama's "Making Home Affordable" program is designed to work with lenders to modify the loan terms for up to 4 million homeowners and to refinance up to 5 million homeowners into more affordable fixed-rate loans.

Here are some questions and answers about the latest round of aid for homeowners.

A: How do I know if I qualify for the refinancing plan?

Q: Only homeowners in good standing whose loans are held by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac qualify.

The property must be owner-occupied and the borrower must have enough income to make payments on the new mortgage debt.

Borrowers can't owe more than 105 percent of their home's current value on their first mortgage. For example, if your home is worth \$200,000, your first mortgage can't exceed \$210,000. Borrowers with a second mortgage still can qualify as long as their first mortgage isn't more than 105 percent of their home's value.

Homeowners can't take cash out during the refinancing to pay other debt.

Borrowers have until June 2010 to apply for the program.

Q: How do I know if my mortgage is owned by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac?

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11,000 Pinoy veterans applied for \$9,000 lump sum benefit from US

by HELEN FLORES
Philstar.com

MANILA—Over 11,000 Filipino war veterans based in the Philippines have already applied for their \$9,000 lump sum benefit from the United States government, almost a month after the processing of the

claims started, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) reported last March 5.

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said that as of last March 6, the DSWD has assisted a total of 11,278 war

veterans who applied for their benefits from various Fast Track Centers nationwide.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) earlier estimated the number of surviving Filipino

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DATeline PHILIPPINES

Ex-general's wife, 3 sons held in US jails

All are American citizens

by EDSON C. TANDOC JR.
Inquirer.net

MANILA—Ten days after two sons of former military comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia were arrested

in the United States, US lawmen caught up with Garcia's wife and a third son who had been fugitives for more than three years.

Clarita Depacakibo Garcia, 58, and her son Timothy Mark were arrested last March 5 and were scheduled to

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