

Charter change dead, Arroyo ally says

by LIRA DALANGIN-FERNANDEZ
Inquirer.net

EFFORTS to amend the Constitution at the House of Representatives are dead, one of its lead proponents said, as he conceded that there was not enough time to rewrite the Charter one year before the elections.

House Resolutions 1109 and 737, which seek to convene lawmakers into a constituent assembly and free up restrictions on foreign ownership of business, respectively, are "terminal cases" and should be given a "final political necrological service," Camarines Sur Representative Luis Villafuerte told *Inquirer.net*.

"Both resolutions are terminal cases, we should remove all life support system to these and give them final political necrological service," said Villafuerte, who authored HR 1109.

"There's no more Cha cha [Charter change]," he said. "If the committee approves it and endorses it to plenary, then let them find a sponsor."

Villafuerte conceded that with one year left before the 2010 elections, "*Magtapatan na tayo, wala nang Cha cha* [Let's be honest. There's no more Charter change]."

While HR 1109 has come to be now as the "Villafuerte resolution," he explained that he was only its "draftsman" as Nograles requested him to craft the resolution.

"In fact, I'm only the 27th signatory. Who's the number one signatory—it's the Speaker," he said. Nograles is the author of HR 737, which passed the committee level and was submitted to the floor for debates. Villafuerte's resolution calling for a constituent assembly was being discussed at the committee level.

Nograles and Villafuerte are the presidents of the administration parties Lakas Christian Muslim Democrats and the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi).

Villafuerte did not make it clear, however, if he intended to withdraw his signature from the resolution, but said he would deliver a speech on Monday to express his views on the resolutions.

Members of the committee opposed to a constituent assembly had said that they will try to block discussions about it. Some might put forward a motion to defer discussion of HR 1109.

Villafuerte said he would not attend the hearing on HR 1109 and that if he would, he might support the motion to put it at the backburner.

At the caucus of majority members early this week, Nograles gave marching orders to colleagues to hasten the approval at the committee level of HR 1109 and to send it to floor immediately. ■

Lawmakers eye chief justice as acting president in Charter's succession rule

A BILL filed in the House of Representatives is seeking to name the Chief Justice acting president if the Commission on Elections (Comelec) fails to proclaim the winning candidates for president, vice president, senators, and House members before their terms expire on June 30 next year.

Isabela Rep. Giorgidi Aggabao, House committee on revision of laws chairman, said these officials cannot stay in office in a holdover capacity upon

the expiration of their tenure. "There is no such thing as a holdover president or vice president under the Constitution," he said.

The committee on revision of laws would recommend House approval of the bill authored by Nueva Ecija Rep. Edno Joson before Congress adjourns on June 5.

Joson said he prefers Puno to be the nation's acting or transition president in case of a failure of elections in May next year.

"He's very qualified to lead our country," he told reporters yesterday.

Aggabao said Joson's bill has become "very important and very crucial and has acquired urgency" in view of the "real possibility of a failure of elections" next year.

"The difficulties that the Comelec is encountering in implementing the automation program and the peace and order problem in Mindanao might bring about a failure of elections," he said. (*Philstar.com*)

RP seen to improve anticorruption rating

THE Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) expects an improvement in the Philippines' ranking in international corruption surveys with the implementation of government agencies' moral renewal action plans which started last May 13.

The action plans were formulated according to the results of a national anti-graft workshop held in Malacañang on March 5, and "all manifested sincere and determined government-wide efforts" to promote integrity in public service, PAGC chief Constancia de Guzman said in a statement.

The implementation of the "agency-specific" action plans is in compliance with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Administrative Order No. 255 on moral renewal in government, De

Guzman said.

According to De Guzman, Ms Arroyo's anticorruption campaign began on April 16, 2001, when she formed the PAGC. In 2004, she made the campaign her centerpiece program of governance, as highlighted by the formulation of the Integrity Development Action Plan (IDAP) by the PAGC and civil society groups in accordance with her Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan.

The number of government agencies implementing the IDAP has risen from 39 in 2005 to 156 in 2008, De Guzman said.

She said the number would "definitely increase to cover all government agencies in the executive branch as they implement their respective moral renewal action plans." (*Inquirer.net*)

Another US Marine accused of raping Filipina

Victim shows clear sign of sexual assault—lawyer

ANOTHER United States Marine has been accused of raping another Filipino woman, this time a 22-year-old-university student, whose lawyer described her as having showed "clear signs" having been sexually assaulted.

The woman, identified to the media only as "Vanessa" to protect her real identity, broke down as she read a prepared statement narrating her ordeal with the American soldier.

She said the alleged rape happened last April 19 inside a hotel in Makati City.

Lawyer Evalyn Ursua said there were "clear signs" Vanessa was raped.

"It was very clear she was raped. It was very violent. She had marks on her neck after the incident," Ursua said.

However, the lawyer said that while Vanessa did not intend to pursue the case for now, they were prepared with documents to support a possible case such as medico-legal report.

"She just wants to bring out her pain and hurt. In a way, it's a form of justice," said Ursua.

The victim said she first met the soldier, alias John Jones, on April 10 when he approached her in a club at The Fort in Taguig, where she was going out with several friends.

The militant group said in

statement that they were able to confirm that the man was a US soldier listed in hotel records as "from Joint US Military Assistance Group (Jusmag)/Balikatan."

In 2005, a Filipina identified only as "Nicole" also accused a US Marine, Lance Corporal Daniel Smith, of raping her in Subic.

In 2006, Smith was convicted and sentenced to up to 40 years by a local court, which he appealed before the Court of Appeals.

Earlier this year, "Nicole" recanted her allegation.

Smith was acquitted by the appellate court last month (*Inquirer.net*)



INNOVATIVE FINANCE GROUP



- PURCHASE AND REFINANCE WITH BEST RATES OFFERED
- HELP WITH LOAN MODIFICATION
- PROLONG YOUR LOAN TERMS
- ADVISE ON FUTURE CREDIT CONSEQUENCES

SPECIAL

WE NEGOTIATE WITH LENDER SHORT SALE EXPERT



KEN GO

20 YRS EXPERIENCE

CALL 888-822-5363

- **FHA 3% down loan**
- **Help raise credit score within 3 days**
- **Call now for free consultation**

Pilipino po tayo!

LAW OFFICES OF KENNETH U. REYES, P.C.

ATTORNEY-AT-LAW



Kenneth U. Reyes, Esq.

Law Offices of Kenneth U. Reyes, P.C.
3699 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 700
Los Angeles, CA 90010

IMMIGRATION

- US Citizenship
- Green Card

*Marriage Petitions, Realtive Petitions
Employer Petitions, PERM*

- Visa

*H-1B Temporary Worker
Investor's VISA*

- Deportation Defense

PERSONAL INJURY

- Serious Auto Accidents
- Rear Enders
- Injuries from defective products
- Serious injuries from premises accidents
- Fractures & brain injuries from accidents

FAMILY LAW

- Divorce
- Property Division
- Child Custody and Visitation
- Child and Spousal Support
- Domestic Violence Restraining Order
- Legal Separation

CIVIL LITIGATION

- Business Disputes
- Real Estate Disputes
- Breach of Contract
- Partnership Dissolution
- Business Dissolution

We Pay Special Attention to Your Case

Call for an Appointment

(213)388.1611

website: www.kenreyeslaw.com

email: kureyeslaw@aol.com

JOIN OUR VOCATIONAL NURSING PROGRAM

Approved by CALIFORNIA Board of Vocational Nursing & Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT)

FEDERAL STUDENT AID COMING SOON!

School Offers Scholarships!

Call George Dayrit at (310) 791 9975

How would you like to give yourself a nice raise?



Bring a friend to join with you and get \$250 off!



Must bring this AD to qualify for a FREE LAPTOP

OTHER CLASSES OFFERED:

Nurse Assistant
Medical Assistant
Pharmacy Technician

Special Offer FREE LAPTOP to qualified students!

Call us now to make an appointment!

BENEFITS OF HOMESTEAD:
Computer for each student, Free NCLEX review, Small Classes, Free Tutorials



HOMESTEAD SCHOOLS

23844 Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 200
Torrance, CA 90505

(310) 791-9975 & (800) 253-0088

Please visit our website www.homesteadschools.com for more information