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Japan apologizes for Bataan Death March

Some Filipino vets say it's too late

LOS ANGELES – FILIPINO World War II veteran Faustino “Peping” Bacig is working on his memoirs.

Everyday the 87-year-old jots down his experience in the war on yellow sheets of legal paper but when it comes to the Bataan Death March in which he survived, he can't bear to write anything down.

Thousands of Filipinos and American soldiers have not forgotten the deadly 65-mile Bataan Death March in April 1942.

“I remember the scorching tropical sun, no rest and no food. Many of us were already weakened by malaria and dysentery so it was not wonderful.”

“The suffering was expected because it was war time,” he added.

When Bacig and other Filipino WWII veterans heard that the Japanese Ambassador to the United States, Ichiro Fujisaki, spoke at the 64th reunion of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor in San Antonio on June 1 and offered an apology to veterans and their families, many Filipino veterans felt like it was too late.

“It's too late for me and it's too late for them. That's 67 years ago,” said Franco Arcebal, a Filipino WWII veteran, and vice-president of membership for the American Coalition of Filipino

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New ID rules begin June 1 for Mexico, Canada trips

BLAINE, Wash. – New rules requiring passports or new high-tech documents to cross the United States' northern and southern borders are taking effect Monday, as some rue the tightening of security and others hail it as long overdue.

The rules are being implemented nearly eight years after the Sept. 11 attacks and long after the 9/11 Commission recommended the changes. They were delayed by complaints from state officials who worried the restrictions would hinder the flow of people and commerce and affect border towns dependent on international crossings.

In 2001 a driver's license and an oral declaration of citizenship were enough to cross the Canadian and Mexican borders; Monday's changes are the last step in a gradual ratcheting up of the rules. Now thousands of Americans are preparing by applying for passports or obtaining special driver's licenses that can also be used to cross the border.

US Customs and Border Protection officials say they're confident the transition will be smooth.

Travelers who do not comply with the new requirements will get a warning and be allowed to enter the US after a background check, said Michele James, director of field operations for the northern border that covers Washington state.

Under the new rule, travelers also can use a passport card issued by the

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US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, center, is escorted by Philippine Air Force Commanding General Lt. Gen. Oscar Ravena upon his arrival Monday, June 1, 2009, in Manila, Philippines. Gates is on a one day visit to the Philippines to discuss bilateral issues concerning security and counter-terrorism.

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, center, is introduced by Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro, right, to senior military officers upon his arrival Monday, June 1, 2009, in Manila, Philippines. Gates is on a one day visit to the Philippines to discuss bilateral issues concerning security and counter-terrorism.

Pinay chef feasts on Obamas' healthy diet

by RUBEN V. NEPALES

WASHINGTON, DC—US President Barack Obama likes simple meals with fish, steamed vegetables and brown rice.

This and other interesting details were shared by Cristeta Pasia Comerford, the Filipino executive chef at the White House, in an interview with the Inquirer at the famous address: 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Cris, as she is called by her family and colleagues, has been top toque since 2005 when she was appointed by First Lady Laura Bush. Last

January, the Obamas decided to retain Comerford as their chef and partner for healthy eating.

In a statement announcing that Comerford would stay on as the administration's head chef, Michelle Obama noted that the Filipino, who grew up in Sampaloc, Manila, is “also the mom of a young daughter.” The First Lady stated, “I appreciate our shared perspective on the importance of healthy eating and healthy families.”

Comerford, 46, seated in the Old Family Dining Room, where a few

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LA restricts lawn watering to two days a week

LOS ANGELES – It's now illegal to water lawns in the nation's second-largest city on any day other than Mondays and Tuesdays.

New mandatory water conservation rules went into effect Monday in Los Angeles as the city faces a water supply shortage for a third consecutive year.

The sprinkler ordinance also bans watering of landscaping between 9 am and 4 pm and limits the length of watering.

The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power says the city gets most of its water from elsewhere in the state and those supplies are being limited by drought and regulatory restrictions. (AP)

SWS survey puts Villar on top

by MAILA AGER
 Inquirer.net

MANILA – Embattled Senator Manny Villar has emerged as the leading presidential contender in the latest survey conducted by the Social Weather Station.

Villar, who has been accused of using his position to benefit from the C-5 road extension project, posted a high 22 percent approval rating from 7,000 respondents polled nationwide by the SWS between April 16 and May 6, 2009.

Vice President Noli de Castro followed Villar with 18 percent; Senator Francis Escudero and deposed President Joseph Estrada with 14; Senator Loren Legarda with 10 percent; Senator Manuel Roxas with 9 percent; Senator Panfilo “Ping” Lacson with 6 percent, Makati Jejomar Binay with 2 percent; Metro Manila Development Authority chairman Bayani Fernando with 1 percent.

The survey has a marginal error of 1.2 percent.

In a scenario with five candidates, Villar also topped the list with 27 percent, followed by De Castro with 22 percent; Escudero with 19 percent; Estrada with 16 percent; and Legarda with 13 percent.

Villar retained the top post with 31 percent

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Senator Manny Villar

Filipino in crashed flight identified

MANILA – The Filipino who was among the 228 passengers of Air France Flight 447 which crashed into the Atlantic Ocean has been identified, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Tuesday afternoon.

Quoting the Philippine embassy in Paris, which was notified by the French foreign ministry, the DFA identified the Filipino fatality as Arden Jugueta, a seafarer whose vessel docked in Rio de Janeiro and who was to take a connecting flight from Paris to Manila.

In a statement, the DFA said the fatality's ship manning company also confirmed that Jugueta was on board Air France Flight 447.

The Paris main offices of Air France and the local shipping agency have also communicated with the Filipino seafarer's family.

DATeline PHILIPPINES

DFA Secretary Alberto Romulo has extended the department's deepest condolences to Miguela Jugueta, the wife of Mr. Jugueta, and his family.

The DFA said it will continue to monitor the latest developments in the ongoing search and rescue operations by military and aviation authorities of Brazil, France and Spain near the island of Fernando de Noronha, about 1,500 miles east of Rio de Janeiro.

The department said it will also extend assistance to Jugueta's family.

Air France Flight 447 crashed into the Atlantic Ocean on the evening of May 31 (Brasilia time) en route to Paris, France from the Galeao International Airport in Brazil. (Inquirer.net)

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