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# ASIAN JOURNAL

THE FILIPINO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

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Volume 21 - No. 15 • 2 Sections - 20 Pages

APRIL 9-15, 2009



## Filipinos urged to participate in 2010 census

Undercount costs Fil-Am community political underrepresentation, loss in state and federal funding



LOS ANGELES—Census Bureau officials are urging Filipinos residing in the United States to fill out their 2010 census information.

Filipinos were overwhelmingly undercounted in the last census in 2000 and that has negatively impacted the amount of money community groups helping Filipinos have received, said Tessie Plata of the Census Bureau in Los Angeles.

"Do not take the importance of the Census for granted," said Plata. "This is where the fair share of funding for the community comes from. Without this money, the Federal government will only give a certain amount of money to help our community."

The United States Constitution requires the federal government to count

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## US Bank to look into investing in the Fil-Am community



US Bank CEO Richard Davies  
AJPress Photo by Miko Santos

LOS ANGELES—US Bank representatives took a tour of Historic Filipinotown and met with Search to Involve Pilipino Americans (SIPA) officials to discuss ways the Fortune 500 company can help the Filipino American community.

Richard K. Davis, Current Chairman

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# Puno moral force movement in place

### Eight-man group has met twice in 3 weeks

by NORMAN BORDADORA  
Inquirer.net

**M**ANILA—A Moral Force Movement envisioned by Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno has taken shape and is set to come up with a criteria on who voters should elect in the 2010 balloting—from president down to the local levels.

Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said Puno had chosen highly respected individuals to make up the movement's core group and has attended its two meetings over the past three weeks.

The group is composed of Henrietta De Villa, chair of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting; Msgr. Gerardo Santos, executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines Episcopal Commission; and Marixi Prieto, chair of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*.

Also in the group are Methodist

Bishop Emerito Nacpil; Retired Gen. Jaime Echeverria, president of the Association of Generals and Flag Officers; former Finance Undersecretary Milwida Guevarra; Far Eastern University law dean Andres Bautista; and Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines 2008 awardee Noorain Sabdulla.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone chair Manny V. Pangilinan was among those considered to join. But Marquez said that Pangilinan wanted certain issues first clarified. He said the business tycoon supports the movement.

"In essence, they are focusing on the 2010 elections and trying to define what a transformational leader is," Marquez said.

Puno earlier told law students that transformational leaders induce followers to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization or the greater whole as against "transactional leaders" who motivate followers by appealing to self-interest.

**Moral pariah**  
Marquez's announcement came a day after Puno, in the United

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Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno

# Blacklisting by OECD a wake-up call—Remonde

**P**RESS Secretary Cerge Remonde said the inclusion of the Philippines in the list of countries serving as havens for money launderers and tax evaders is a wake-up call for the Philippines to undertake the necessary legislative measures to ensure compliance with international standards and procedures.

Remonde was referring to recent reports that the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD) has tagged four countries, including the Philippines, for failure adopt new rules on financial openness.

The G20 tackled the issue of money laundering when the G20 met in London to craft measures to mitigate the global financial crisis.

"We are now asking Congress to help us comply with this international requirement by prioritizing laws that will ensure our compliance," Remonde said.

He added that complying with the international moves to reform bank secrecy regulations entails a lot of action, particularly from the legislative, to initiate the appropriate action by way of a law. "The problem is all a matter of legislation," Remonde said.

"It's about time we refocus on the issue and bail

our country out of the blacklisted nations as this is a stigma that we have to live with for a long time," he added.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas claimed that the Anti-Money Laundering Law of 2001 is the proper legislation implementing the country's compliance, particularly with regard to the close scrutiny of deposits or withdrawals of P500,000 or more, Remonde said.

But the G20 group wants stricter compliance and assurances from the Philippines that it will adopt stricter measures to ensure that money launderers are dealt with severely, he said.

# Confidence on RP economy remains

**C**ONFIDENCE on the Philippine economy remains despite the global financial crisis that would likely trim the country's growth to 1.9 percent this year, the World Bank (WB) said in its latest assessment of East Asia and Pacific economies.

Despite external shocks brought by the global financial crisis, the WB noted that East Asian middle-income countries like the Philippines were able to cope well due to their experience dealing with the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis.

"The measures the authorities have taken to counteract the crisis across the region are helping to cushion the impacts on the most vulnerable people," Jim Adams, WB vice president for the East Asia and Pacific region, was quoted in a statement. "With unemployment likely to increase, especially as jobs in manufacturing and construction disappear, social protection efforts will have to expand to meet very real human needs."

The WB noted that the Philippine government's conditional cash transfer (CCT) program has been scaled up to benefit 360,000 at the start of this year, from only 20,000 in 2007 when the CCT was on pilot mode.

A new program to help returning overseas workers who have lost their jobs is also part of the stimulus package, it added.

In its country report on the Philippines, the WB noted that the country's financial sector remains sound although job losses, exports slump and potentially a decline in remittance inflows

and revenues would engage the country's policymakers.

"A key downside risk lies on how vulnerable remittance inflows are to the global recession," according to the WB country update on the Philippines. "Domestic demand, boosted to a large extent by strong remittances since 2001, has been the most important growth driver for the economy."

On a regional basis, the WB said China would drive growth in East Asia and the Pacific although global recovery would still be pinned on how advanced economies like the US perform.

The WB update noted that China could begin to recover this year on account of its huge economic stimulus package. The entire East Asia and Pacific region could stabilize when China's economic recovery takes full hold by next year, it said.

Over the medium term, the WB said growth of East Asian economies would hinge on innovation. "Over the medium term, the countries of developing East Asia can achieve high rates of economic expansion in a slowly growing world economy to the extent they are able to extract more growth from domestic demand, boost competitiveness, penetrate new markets, and further improve the attractiveness of the region as a key destination for foreign investment."

It added: "Convergence to developed countries will depend to an ever greater degree on

DATeline PHILIPPINES

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# SEN. CHIZ ESCUDERO

## Tourism hangs tough despite downturn

**S**EN. Chiz Escudero said over the weekend that the tourism remains one bright spot for the country in the face of layoffs and lean income from several industries.

He noted that tourism arrivals in the Philippines increased by 1.5 percent to a record 3.14 million in 2008 and now accounts for 6.2 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

"Although the global financial crisis continues to wreak havoc on the economies of many countries, I have seen positive developments, especially in Bicol," the opposition senator added, noting that 1,306,792 local and foreign tourists visited the region in 2008.

The Department of Tourism recorded total gross receipts generated by Bicol's tourism industry at P782 million last year, up significantly from P443.5 million in 2007, with at least 499,336 jobs created.

Among the events held recently in Bicol that attracted foreign participation were the 1st Daet International Kite Boarding Competition last February 5 to 8 and the International Wakeboarding Championship in Pili, Camarines Sur last March 25 to 29.

"The fact that two international watersports events were held in the region shows that the Philippines, with its ideal location and natural resources, has the potential to be the site of other sporting competitions," the opposition senator said.

The Bicol region also received international exposure when the French edition of the reality show Survivor was held in the Camarines Peninsula, Camarines Sur.

Other attractions in Bicol include the whale sharks in Donsol, Sorsogon and Mayon volcano in Albay.

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