



DATELINE USA
 FROM THE AJPress NEWS TEAM ACROSS AMERICA

Pinoy tries out for NBA D League



Japeth Aguilar AJPress photo by Joseph Pimentel

LOS ANGELES—The NBA season may be over but there's plenty of action in the basketball hardwood.

Pinoy basketball player Japeth Aguilar, a former Ateneo Blue Eagles basketball player, is taking his first steps to making it in the NBA.

More than 200 prospects gathered at a pre-draft for the NBA Development league in Hawthorne last weekend including Aguilar, a 22-year-old from Pampanga, Philippines.

"This is really an opportunity for the players to come to one location in front of all our coaches, a lot of our scouts, league office people who'll eventually sign the players to contracts, and an opportunity for them to showcase their skills to show what they can possibly do in the NBA D-League level," said Chris Alpert, vice president of Basketball

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Pres. Arroyo lauds overseas Pinoys for RP's resiliency



President Gloria Arroyo shake hands with Fil-Ams who welcomed her at the LAX Gateway Sheraton Hotel on Saturday morning. AJPress Photo by Rene Villaroman

LOS ANGELES—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on Saturday, June 20, told some 500 Filipino-Americans at the Gateway Sheraton Hotel near Los Angeles International Airport, that her government was able to keep recession at bay despite a global economic meltdown.

"We have a resiliency plan to provide short-term relief to all the citizens," Arroyo told cheering guests during a breakfast reception organized by the FIL-USA, a newly-formed association, and other Southern California-based Pampanga community organizations.

Arroyo, who was en route to a South American country, arrived with First

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Lakas-Kampi gives De Castro, Teodoro, others deadline to join

by PAOLO ROMERO
 Philstar.com

MANILA—The Lakas-Kampi-CMD would complete its shortlist of possible presidential candidates on July 31, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Presidential Adviser for Political Affairs Gabriel Claudio said.

Ermita and Claudio also told a news conference that the party would come up with a "selection criteria" for choosing the standard-bearer by the end of next month. Both party officials also called on aspirants for national positions to join the party by July.

"Having established that, we are going to call on the so-called (presidential aspirants), who wish to vie for nomination by the party and who are not yet members of the party to make up their mind and signify their intention to join as member of Lakas-Kampi-CMD," Ermita said. Ermita, as president of Lakas-Kampi-CMD, stressed the need to speed up the selection process, noting the opposition and other non-administration hopefuls have been busy preparing for the big fight next year by making their intentions known and collecting support from local officials.

He said many members of the party's national executive committee have



Vice President Noli De Castro



Defense Sec. Gilbert Teodoro

reported some local officials are leaving the party because they are getting impatient over the delay of Lakas-Kampi-CMD to choose its standard-bearer. Claudio added the move to set timelines for the selection process was upon the suggestion of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, Kampi's former chairman.

Former Surigao del Sur congressman Prospero Pichay, vice president for recruitment and head of the national reconciliation and arbitration committee, would head the selection panel.

Ermita added President Arroyo, as chair of Lakas-Kampi-CMD, would play

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Former President Joseph Estrada

Can Estrada run again?

It's SC's call, says DILG chief

by GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR. & CATHY C. YAMSUN
 Inquirer.net

MANILA—Only the Supreme Court can resolve the question of whether Joseph Estrada can again seek the presidency in 2010, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said on Tuesday, June 23.

Puno, who was instrumental in President Macapagal-Arroyo's pardon of the ex-President and convicted plunderer, told Inquirer editors and reporters over dinner that arguments for and against Estrada seeking reelection were "strong," and that it would take a ruling from the high court to settle the issue.

It was the first time a member of the Arroyo Cabinet admitted the possibility that Estrada, who was ousted from power in 2001, could return to Malacañang.

Puno, who also served as Estrada's interior secretary, had facilitated the pardon initiated by then Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor and prepared by the Department of Justice.

The Supreme Court is now being viewed as the final arbiter in thorny political issues.

Aside from Estrada's possible run for reelection, lawmakers are looking to the tribunal to decide whether a Senate-less constituent assembly, as espoused by House Resolution No. 1109, would be an acceptable mode to amend the Constitution.

No longer qualified
 The hurried passage of HR 1109 is seen as a move by Ms Arroyo's allies to extend her stay in power beyond 2010.

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1st interactive TV proudly Pinoy-made



by RAINIER ALLAN RONDA
 Philstar.com

MANILA—A group of young Filipino engineers and designers bidding to make the world's first interactive television unveiled the improved prototype of their dream computer-TV.

Brian Quebengco, founder of Inovent Electronics Inc., launched the "beta" version of their Illumina LCD Interactive Television (iTV).

Quebengco presented a 32-inch LCD television enhanced with the functions of a personal computer with interactive Internet capability.

With their production of the beta unit, Quebengco said they are coming close to finishing a final prototype that will be mass-produced in the country and sent on a path toward attempting to be the first Filipino electronic product that can challenge the con-

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Manila airport remains on alert for H1N1

by JEROME ANING
 Inquirer.net

MANILA—Airport personnel in Manila were told to "stay alert" to prevent the spread of the Influenza A(H1N1) virus, which has infected over 600 people in the country.

"No cause for alarm, but let's stay alert and prepared," Alfonso Cusi, general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority told airport workers and travelers.

Cusi also appealed for understanding of new restrictions imposed by the agency related to A(H1N1), saying the risk of catching the disease at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, the country's premiere international gateway, was "high."

"I appeal to airport workers to continue with their work responsibilities and

passengers to go on with their planned activities unperturbed," he said in a statement.

"As gateway keepers, all we must do is continue observing safety guidelines issued by the DoH [Department of Health], through the Bureau of Quarantine, to remain protected from acquiring the virus in the course of doing our jobs here at the NAIA," he added.

Donations from private companies have boosted the airport's supply of soap and hand sanitizers, said MIAA assistant general manager for airport development and corporate affairs Tirso Serrano.

At the onset of the flu scare, Cusi issued directives to limit the presence

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No Filipino in Washington train accident—DFA

by CYNTHIA BALANA
 Inquirer.net

MANILA—No Filipino was killed or hurt in the June 22 train collision in Washington DC which killed at least seven passengers and injured over 70 others, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Wednesday, June 24.

"As of morning of June 24, there was no Filipino mentioned among the injured passengers. I was talking to the consul general in Washington and he said so far, none. But the embassy will continue to follow up and re-check," DFA spokesman Ed Malaya said.

The two subway trains on the red line crashed between the Takoma and Fort Totten stations. As the investigation into the cause of the crash continued there on June 23, parts of the Red Line and MARC's Brunswick line were shut down.

Investigators looking into the crash focused on why a computerized system failed to halt an oncoming train, even though there is evidence that the operator tried to slow it down.

Reports said that at the time of the crash, the train was also operating in automatic mode, meaning it was controlled primarily by computer. In that mode, the operator's main job is to open and close the doors and respond to emergencies.

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