



INTEGRITY WATCH *new*

January 2016 - June 2016



12 pages



Vol. 16 No. 1



ISSN 1909-112X



website: <http://www.ombudsman.gov.ph>

U.P. confers Doctor of Laws degree on Ombudsman Morales

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales comes full circle as her alma mater, the University of the Philippines, bestows on her an accolade that not only resonates emotionally but also sums up the wide breadth of her contributions to government service

“With utmost humility, I accept this distinguished recognition bestowed by the country’s premiere institution of higher learning. Forty eight years ago today, I was sitting there anxious and fretful just like you—not knowing what life would bring and what destiny had store for me” said Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales, resplendent on stage when she delivered her keynote address

to the graduating class of the University of the Philippines (UP) College of Law.

She continued: “Yet, like you—a graduate of the UP College of Law—I was confident that no matter what curveballs would be thrown along the way, I was ready, willing and able to take on the journey.”

And she did ... with aplomb.

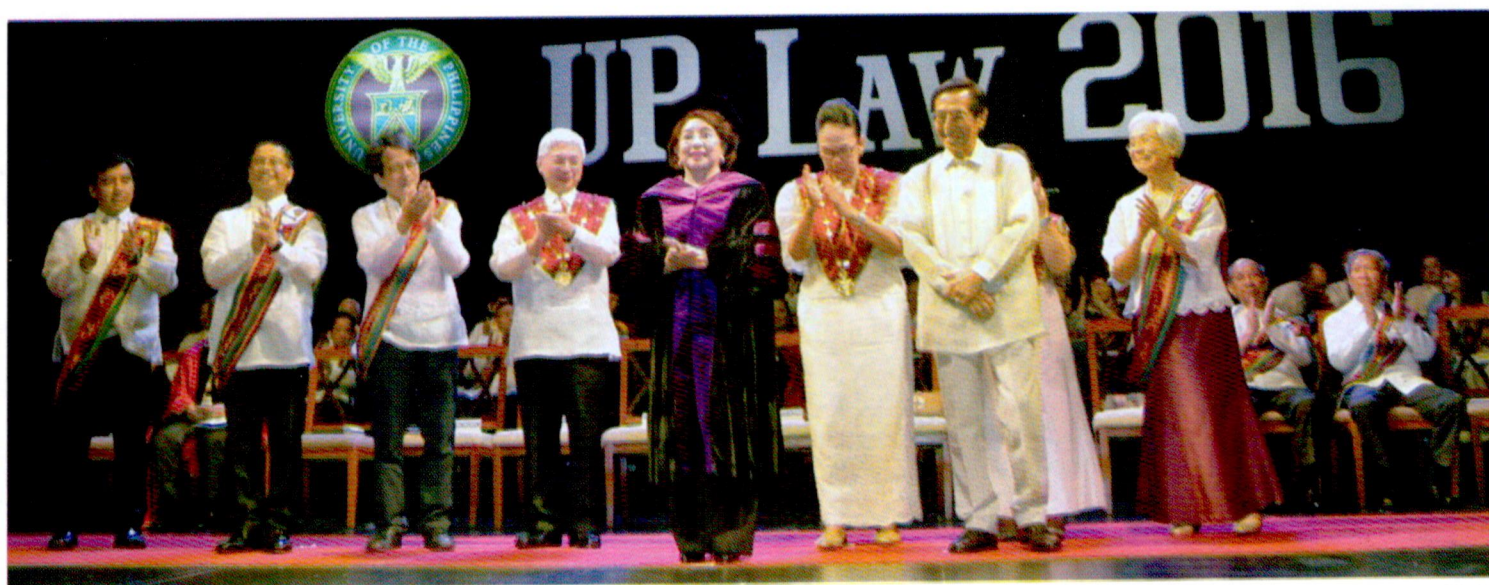
That afternoon, on June 27,

2016, on the cusp of receiving the honorary doctor of laws degree from the University of the Philippines, Ombudsman’s Morales basked in the glow of her humble and inspiring story as she marched down the aisle of the UP University Theater with the Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education and UP Board of Regents (UP-BOR) Dr. Patricia Licuanan, UP President Dr.

Alfredo Pascual, UP Diliman Chancellor Dr. Michael Tan and UP College of Law Dean Danilo Concepcion.

“I share this singular honor with my family, friends, mentors and colleagues who have been part of my sublime journey. I have come a long way from my native town of Paoay, Ilocos Norte because of their unstinting love, support

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Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales is applauded by the members of the U.P. Board of Regents, U.P. Diliman and U.P. College of Law officials.

U.P. Law

and belief in my capacities” said the woman who as a precocious child—in the school town of her youth—used to don a judge’s robe as part of a Monday program. Not surprisingly, she saw that dream come into fruition through scholarly discipline, hard work and the enduring influence of her father.

“No other mentor had such profound influence on me as a lawyer than my father, who, as a judge at the then Court of First Instance of Digos, Davao del Sur, constantly nagged me to join the Judiciary” recalled Ombudsman Morales.

Her father was right after all: it is a profession right up her alley.

The award

The doctor of laws *honoris causa* award comes 48 years after OMB Carpio Morales received her bachelor of

laws degree from the UP College of Law in 1968.

It was in the judiciary where Ombudsman Morales found her calling. A woman of intellectual fortitude and moral gravitas, her rise through the judicial ranks was propelled by her strict adherence to her role as a judge or justice: fealty to the supreme law, keeping decisions on an even keel, impassioned reason and when the times called for it, coming up with her stirring voice of dissent. Inarguably, she has blazed a trail of professional excellence in the judiciary until her retirement from the Supreme Court in 2011 – a remarkable journey that is not lost on the UP-BOR.

The UP-BOR—the highest ranking body in the UP system—said it succinctly in its Board Resolution: “[Justice Conchita Carpio Morales] *ponencias* have enriched Philippine Jurisprudence with her passion for scholastic instructions that make for a more en-

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Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales shares snippets of wisdom to the graduating class of 2016 of the UP College of Law drawn up from her extensive years in the judiciary as an RTC (Regional Trial Court) judge and Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

BOI commends Investment Ombudsman

The Investment Ombudsman (IO) received a certificate of appreciation from the Board of Investments (BOI) during the Annual Investment Promotion Unit Network meeting held on February 4, 2016 on account of the public assistance extended to Steel Asia Manufacturing Corporation (Steel Asia).

In October 2015, Steel Asia filed a request for assistance concerning the unreasonable delay in the release of its Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) application

from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). The application for the ECC, which was made in February 2014 was intended for the construction of its 7th modern steel rolling mill plant in Plaridel, Bulacan. Despite compliance with all the technical, procedural, documentary and legal requirements and repeated follow-ups, its application remained pending for two years.

Immediately, the Public Assistance Bureau inquired into the reasons for the delay

and cited the timelines provided under Republic Act No. 6713 (Code of Conduct and Ethical Standard for Public Officials and Employees).

On January 4, 2016, the IO invited Steel Asia to participate in the focus group discussion together with local and foreign investors and heads of government offices in charge of granting licenses and permits. During the forum, Steel Asia echoed its grievance on the failure of the DENR to act on its application.

On January 25, 2016, the Office of the Ombudsman was furnished with a copy of the approved ECC issued in favor of Steel Asia.

The Investment Ombudsman was created under Sections 15 (2) and (3) of R.A. No. 6770 to prioritize and take cognizance of trade investment related concerns of investors through prompt action and speedy resolutions on grievances and complaints. It is presently headed by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Melchor Arthur Carandang.

Ombudsman: Ex-PNP Chief Purisima and Napeñas charged for Mamasapano massacre

The Office of the Ombudsman has found probable cause to file charges before the Sandiganbayan against Alan Purisima, former chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Getulio Napeñas, former PNP-SAF Director, in connection with the 25 January 2015 Mamasapano incident that cost the lives of many, notably those of the members of the 44th Special Action Force (SAF), the biggest loss of a government elite force in history. The police officers are facing charges for Usurpation of Authority or Official Functions (Article 177, Revised Penal Code) and violation of Section 3(a) of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (Republic Act No. 3019).

Documents and evidence reviewed by the panel of investigators reveal that in November 2014, the PNP-SAF submitted to Purisima the concept of operations for Oplan Terminator I and II, targeting bomb expert Marwan. In December 2014, the Office of the Ombudsman issued an order directing Purisima's preventive suspension effective from 09 December to 10 June 2015 relative to the WERFAST courier service contract anomaly.

Despite his preventive suspension, Purisima and Napeñas coordinated a top level meeting with officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines relative to Oplan Exodus. The planning proper started on 23 December 2014. In January 2015,

Napeñas sent a text message to Purisima requesting a meeting to discuss the report on operations. On 09 January 2015, Purisima and Napeñas proceeded to Malacañang to provide the president with mission updates and a new concept of operations. Four days later, on 13 January 2015, Napeñas sought Purisima's approval of the secondary date for the conduct of operations scheduled from 23 to 26 January.

Based on the complaints filed by the Field Investigation Office, Purisima was charged for usurping official functions and for violating the chain of command when he actively participated in the mission planning and execution of Oplan Exodus despite the Ombudsman's preventive suspension order. Napeñas, on the other hand, was considered as Purisima's cohort for taking orders from a suspended PNP chief, without the knowledge and approval of OIC-PNP Leonardo Espina. In the 40-page Joint Resolution, Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales ruled that "during the period of Purisima's suspension, he had no authority to perform the duties and functions, much less supervise and/or participate in the conceptualization, mission planning, and execution of a high risk police operation."

According to Ombudsman Morales, "in short, Purisima was sending the unwritten yet visible message that he was, albeit he

was not authorized to act and function as Chief PNP." She added that, "if Purisima had an iota of respect for the PNP Chain of Command, he should have informed, at the very least, of the details of the Plan Exodus during the turnover of his duties and functions to OIC-PNP Chief Espina."

Insofar as Napeñas, the Ombudsman ruled that "by taking orders from the suspended Purisima, [it] can be construed as an act in agreement to commit the crime of usurpation of official functions with Purisima." "[Napeñas'] justification to heed such order—that Purisima was the Commander-in-Chief's most trusted man and was allowed by the President to participate in the planning and execution of the Oplan—does not lie," said Ombudsman Morales.

Aside from criminal indictment, Purisima and Napeñas were also found administratively liable for Grave Misconduct, Gross Neglect of Duty and Conduct Prejudicial to the Best Interest of the Service. However, since Purisima was ordered dismissed from the service in June 2015 and Napeñas retired in July 2015, the alternative penalty of fine equivalent to their salary of one year was imposed. They were also meted the accessory penalties of perpetual disqualification for re-employment in the government service, forfeiture of retirement benefits and cancellation of eligibility.

Ombudsman turns over IAAGCC leadership to COA

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales passes the leadership baton to Commission on Audit (COA) Michael Aguinaldo as presiding officer of the Inter-Agency Anti-Graft Coordinating Council (IAAGCC) in ceremonial turnover rites held at the COA-Commission Proper Boardroom on 02 March 2016. Representatives from principal agencies, namely: the Office of the President, Department of Finance, Department of Budget and Management, Department of Justice, National Bureau of Investigation and

the Civil Service Commission also graced the affair.

During her five-year stint, Ombudsman Morales started projects such as the creation of the Special Inter-Agency Task Force which conducted joint investigations on the misuse of the Priority Development Assistance Fund, capacity-building initiatives and the launching of the revised IAAGCC Guidelines of Cooperation in March 2014.

In her speech, Ombudsman Morales said that she is happy to relinquish the post and that COA Chairman Aguinaldo,

who is known for his integrity, competence and dedication, is more than fit for the job. For his part, Aguinaldo welcomed the trust reposed on him by IAAGCC members and solicited proposals to enhance further the programs of the IAAGCC.

The IAAGCC was established on July 28, 1999 through Administrative Order No. 79. Voluntary in nature, it is an alliance of government agencies designed to develop techniques and strategies in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of graft cases.

Ombudsman investigates local officials for illegal dumpsites

The Office of the Ombudsman is set to investigate close to 600 local government executives in the 13 administrative regions for violations of Republic Act No. 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000).

In 50 complaints filed by Romeo Hidalgo of the National Solid Waste Management Commission, it was reported that “field investigations reveal that the officials committed violations of RA 9003 and its implementing rules and regulations.”

According to the complainant, mayors, vice-mayors and Sanggunian members have “the mandate to establish policies and have control over the funds of the city” and that “they conspired in committing the violations of R.A. No. 9003 within their jurisdiction.”

Under R.A. No. 9003, “no open dump sites shall be established and operated, nor

any practice or disposal of solid waste by any person, including LGUs, which constitutes the use of open dumps for solid wastes, be allowed after the effectivity of this Act, every LGU shall convert its open dumps to controlled dumps.”

It will be recalled that in 2013, the Environmental Ombudsman program, in collaboration with the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), launched a three-year nationwide campaign to increase awareness of, and promote voluntary compliance with R.A. No. 9003.

Under this program, the local government units were directed to conduct their respective self-assessment as to their compliance status and to voluntarily implement corrective actions. Two years after implementation, tracer results show that R.A.

No. 9003 remains to be the least prioritized local government program.

The DENR-EMB has identified and submitted the list of 350 LGUs with recurring and blatant violations of open dump sites to the Ombudsman.

Phase two of the project aims to improve compliance through the submission by the LGUs of their respective Priority Corrective Action Plan (PCAP) to be implemented within a six-month period and/or the submission of a 10-year Solid Waste Management Plan.

Under its mandate, the Environmental Ombudsman Team headed by Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon Gerard Mosquera, shall handle complaints filed against any public official, employee, office or agency mandated to protect the environment and conserve natural resources where the act

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Environmental Ombudsman Team closes down illegal dumpsites



Senator Loren Legarda makes her case for a greener environment in the Environmental Forum at the Leyte Normal University. Meanwhile, a series of public clarificatory hearings on the status of the implementation of RA 9003 followed where identified local government units presented Safe Closure and Rehabilitation Plans (SCRPs) of their open dumpsites.

The Environmental Ombudsman Team of investigators and prosecutors, in an open public hearing held at the Leyte Normal University in Tacloban City, successfully caused the closure of three open dumpsites in the municipalities of Hindang & Bato in Leyte, and the municipality of Catarman in Northern Samar. Close to 40 officials from Leyte and Catarman attended the investigation for violation of the National Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (Republic Act No. 9003).

The public hearing highlighted the weeklong activities of the Environmental Ombudsman Team capped by the public forum to assess the compliance of local governments with the Solid Waste Management Law.

The event was spearheaded by the Office of the Ombudsman, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and civil society organizations,

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complained of appears to be illegal, unjust, improper or inefficient.

The Environmental Ombudsman Team also acts on any malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance committed by any public officer or employee, including conspiring private individuals, if said act or omission involves any violation of environmental laws or concerns or relates to environmental protection or conservation.

Ombudsman Team

with Senator Loren Legarda as keynote speaker. The team also participated in an experiential training for environmental action organized by Ramon Magsaysay Awardee and world-renowned environmental lawyer Antonio Oposa Jr. in Bantayan Island, Cebu.

Participants included officials from the Ombudsman, DENR, international environmental lawyers, NGO workers, green architects, environmental planners and student interns under the auspices of Sea and Earth Advocates of Culture, Arts and Music for the Planet (SEA CAMP) headed by Oposa.

Coinciding with the celebration of Earth Day, participants witnessed the filing of a petition proposing to divide all roads in Sta. Fe town in Bantayan by half – one half for motor vehicles and the other half for walkways and bike lanes. Officials also assisted in installing “fish condominiums” made of used fish nets and cement into the sea to provide shelter for fish and other marine life and replace the corals that were damaged by cyanide fishing and explosives, aggravated by Typhoon Yolanda. Attendees also closed-off from all human entry a freshwater wetland dedicated as a strictly protected bird sanctuary.

The Environmental Ombudsman Team will monitor post-closure activities of the LGUs concerned and ensure that the provisions of Republic Act No. 9003 and other environmental laws are fully implemented.

OMB-VIS hosts environmental public hearing in Tacloban City

In support of the efforts of the Environmental Ombudsman to hold government officials and employees accountable for the non-implementation of environmental laws, the Office of the Ombudsman (Visayas) led by Deputy Ombudsman for the Visayas Paul Elmer Clemente hosted the first public hearing on the status of implementation of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 (Republic Act No. 9003).

The event was preceded by the radio guesting of Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon and concurrent Environmental Ombudsman Gerard Mosquera in Bombo Radyo Tacloban where he discussed the rationale behind and legal processes involved in the public hearings set to happen later that day. Senator Loren Legarda later joined DO Mosquera in the radio program where she expressed support for the public hearings. She also renewed her call for a more aggressive environmental protection.

Immediately after the media engagements, Senator Legarda and DO Mosquera went to the Leyte Normal University for an environmental forum.

The environmental forum was designed to show the current picture of the global and local environments. It was also a venue for affirming the collective goal and mindset of strictly adhering to environmental laws. Lawyer and environmental advocate Antonio Oposa, Jr., representatives of the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural resources and Commissioner Romeo Hidalgo of the National Solid Waste Management Commission, members of the Zero waste Coalition and Mother Earth Foundation, Inc. joined the senator and the deputy ombudsmen in the said forum. The forum was also participated in by local environmental groups and stakeholders who were able to ventilate their concerns on issues in the local setting.

Later that day, mayors, vice mayors, town councilors and environment officers of Catarman, Northern Samar, Bato, Leyte, and Hindang, Leyte attended the public hearings presided by a panel of investigators from the Office of the Ombudsman-Visayas.



The Environmental Forum in Tacloban City draws participants from the government sector, non-government organizations, media partners and other stakeholders.

OMB, CHR chair grace youth leadership seminar



Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales poses with the 26 graduates of *ARISE: Youth Leaders Integrity Development Camp* and the sectoral office-in-charge of the activity – the Public Assistance and Corruption Prevention Office (PACPO) of the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon.

The Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Hon. Chito Gascon, served as guest of honor and speaker in the *ARISE: Youth Leaders Integrity Development Camp (YLIDC)* organized by the Public Assistance and Corruption Prevention Office of the Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon in Rosales, Pangasinan on May 24, 2016 with no less than Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales as the keynote speaker on the ‘graduation day’ of the YLIDC participants on May 27, 2016.

The ARISE Youth Camp is designed to instill the value of social awareness and develop the leadership potentials of the youth grounded on the core values of accountability, honesty, integrity and transparency.

The first of its kind, the youth camp drew together the best and brightest high school students from the province of

Pangasinan. Undergoing a stringent selection process, the 26 students participated in a five-day leadership and values workshop. One of the salient features of the workshop module is to invite a person of well-known probity to lend a personal perspective to the abstract concepts of leadership and value formation. For its initial year, the YLIDC organizers saw it fit to invite CHR chairperson Chito Gascon.

Chairperson Gascon took his role to heart by speaking on his experiences during the heady days of the so-called ‘parliament of the streets’. His experiences as a student leader (he was a former Chairperson of the UP Student Council) and student activist during the martial law years served as the fulcrum of his engagement with the students.

Serving as a culminating activity, the student participants were brought to the Office of the Ombudsman Central Office

in Agham Road, Quezon City for their ‘graduation day’. The closing program was graced by the presence of the nation’s chief graft buster: Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales. As guest of honor and speaker, the Ombudsman urged the participants to harness their potentials to the fullest.

“Just like anybody else in this room, your time is limited so don’t waste it by living someone else’s dream. Do not be limited by dogma which is living by the result of what other people think of you. So do not let the noise or thoughts of others drown your own voice. Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. Find your purpose in life and pursue it. Don’t let anyone tell you that it can’t be done and most importantly, be your own source of motivation,” said Ombudsman Morales.

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lightened administration of justice and study of laws; who has restlessly exhorted that the Constitution is obligatory no matter the cost or consequence – and that the law is solicitous of every individual's rights irrespective of one's station in life."

All told, the judiciary became her oyster. In it was a treasure-trove of experience, steered by a moral compass and capped by a body of work steeped in brilliance.

In conferring the honorary degree, the BOR—as articulated by UP President Alfredo Pascual—also recognized Justice Carpio Morales' sterling stewardship of the Office of the Ombudsman, a post she has dutifully served since her appointment in July 2011 by former president Benigno Simeon Aquino III.

"With extraordinary courage and tenacity, she exposed and prosecuted the corrupt, among the high ranking and the untouchables, to the delight of an entire nation that has long yearned for the accountability of the unscrupulous. She exposed the shameful thievery in government, and ordered public officials sus-

pended or dismissed when evidence warranted, oblivious to political pressure or affiliation, defying risk to self" said the Board of Regents.

"Not only then has she established a level of credibility not once before enjoyed by the Office of the Ombudsman. She has herself become the measure of integrity in government service, the face of courage and daring determination, of competence and independence, and of one resolutely intolerant of corruption," said President Pascual as basis for the conferment of the honorary doctor of laws degree.

The exhortations

Nominated by the UP Law Class 2016 for the award on account of her professional track record, Ombudsman Morales lost no time in exhorting the graduating class – the group she fondly called 'batchmates'—with her generous dose of wisdom.

On the UP tradition of excellence, she reminded the soon-to-be lawyers with the all-important guideposts: "Then and now, being a UP Law graduate presupposes that you have imbibed the twin virtues of Honor and Excellence not only in your academic pursuits but in your daily, ordi-

nary tasks as well. You are distinguished because you were taught the law in the grand manner—the UP way, if you will."

But she's also quick to add that it is every individual's duty to rein in that urge of stepping on others for the sake of personal gain. "A UP diploma, however, should never be about self-entitlement. I have come across UP graduates who have nothing to show but their diplomas."

The Ombudsman also tackled technology and social media and their ramifications on the field of law: "The practice of law has adapted to the changing times and embraced technological advancement in this esoteric field. Indeed, technology has leveled the playing field, so to speak, by empowering small firms or sole practitioners to establish a larger presence online via social media sites such as *Facebook*, *Twitter* and *Linkedin*."

The Ombudsman pushed her technological argument further to include how the Office of the Ombudsman fights corruption in the context of the changing communications landscape. "Social media should empower our citizenry to be proactive partners in good governance and advocacy."

"This is to make anti-corruption and transparency work not as the exclusive mandate of the Ombudsman and other law enforcement agencies, but of every Filipino. People from all walks of life can now be ombudsmen in their own right and be vanguards against the ugly faces of corruption" she continued emphatically.

As a fitting closing, she said: "My supplication to you, members of the UP Law 2016, is to give someone hope when all hope is lost; not to turn law into an instrument of oppression and to be true to one's ideals. These are our basic responsibilities in nation building, our onus not only as lawyers but as simple citizens. Truth be told, start living your dream. UP has done its part. It is now your turn."



Commission on Human Rights (CHR) chairperson Chito Gascon (seated center) shares a light moment with the ARISE: YLIDC participants. Chair Gascon harked back to his 'student leader' days as a way to hammer out his argument on the need for greater vigilance in safeguarding democracy and shaping a government work force built on integrity.

Ombudsman Morales delivers Metrobank Foundation lecture

As chairholder of the 2016 Metrobank Foundation Professorial Chair for Public Service and Governance, Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales delivered a lecture on “Building a Corruption Intolerant Society and Sustaining an Inter-generational National Anti-Corruption Agenda” at the Ateneo Professional Schools Auditorium in Makati City last 16 February 2016.

Ombudsman Morales discussed the various initiatives of the Office of the Ombudsman to strengthen its institutional capacity and to increase work efficiency, including the rationalization of the functions of various bureaus, the filtering of complaints filed with the Office, and assessment of processes of key government agencies in terms of risks and vulnerability to corruption.

She noted that these efforts resulted in the resolution of 6,707 administrative and criminal cases in 2015. The number of cases awaiting action by the court she added, decreased by 16% despite a 2% increase in new cases filed. The Office of the Ombudsman is targeting to attain zero case backlog by 2018.

“The Ombudsman is concerned not only about the disposition of complaints filed before the Office. It still has to mind cases it filed with the Sandiganbayan and regular courts, as well as its task of promoting awareness on good governance and campaigning for sound public administration,” Ombudsman Morales said.

Recognizing that the most important stakeholder in the battle against corruption is the Filipino public, the Ombudsman has also taken steps to mobilize broader support for its work.

Ombudsman Morales highlighted that “a paradigm shift in people’s perspective is needed to make most effective the reforms installed in various institutions.”

“One does not need to be a member of the civil service or to hold an appointive or elective post in government to be a public servant,” added Ombudsman Morales. She added that one must “bear in mind the best interest of the public, and to put it above one’s own if conflict arises.”

On a final note, Ombudsman Morales said that “for those of us in the public service, we get up for everyone—even for people we don’t even

know” as the Ombudsman came to be to address the need for reliable, effective, inexpensive and honest public service while insulating itself against outside pressure and improper influence.”

Aniceto Sobrepeña, President of Metrobank Foundation, agreed with Morales and highlighted the role of the private sector as a partner in good governance. “You may ask, what is in it for the private sector if it champions governance that is effective, accountable, and upholds the rule of law? For many, the most obvious answer is that good governance creates a stable environment conducive to the pursuit of business goals. But let me add our take at the Metrobank Group—that it is simply our responsibility as citizens. We, who benefit from the freedoms afforded by a democratic society, must ensure that our countrymen

enjoy similar prosperity and happiness,” he said.

A joint undertaking between Metrobank Foundation and Ateneo de Manila University, the professorial chair seeks to give due recognition to public servants who are exemplary models of leadership and professionalism. It aims to strengthen the pillars of our government by furthering research and educating the citizenry on public-interest issues.

Since its establishment in 2000, the Professional Chair for Public Service and Governance has been awarded to advocates of good governance including former Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario, Social Work and Development Secretary Corazon “Dinky” Soliman, and Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita “Ging” Deles.



OMB Morales in # RAPPLER TALK



Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales—owing to her strong stance against corruption—has taken on a new sobriquet: a media darling.

While her media engagements are few and far between, Ombudsman Morales is nevertheless sought out by the big guns in journalism and media industry because of her feisty and straight-to-the-point replies, let alone, her crisp one-liners.

For 2016, it was the social media news organization Rappler which was able to snap up the first exclusive interview with the Ombudsman.

Integrity News Watch is reprinting here salient portions of the story written by Katerina Francisco:

From her years in the judiciary to her latest role investigating and prosecuting erring public officials, Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales has sought to stamp out corruption—calling it the “reason” for her life.

“I was probably born to detest corruption, to condemn corruption, because I’m not corrupt myself. I could see that corruption is rearing its ugly head, but I hate corruption and I vowed that I’ll never, ever allow corruption to rule,” Morales said in a Rappler Talk interview.

For the past 4 and 1/2 years, Morales has led the agency mandated to probe and hold public officials accountable. She has gone against prominent officials such as Vice President Jejomar Binay, his son, dismissed Makati Mayor Jejomar Erwin “Junjun” Binay Jr, and Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, among others.

For Morales, the challenge is to minimize—not eradicate—incidents of corruption, adding that it will take “strong and honest men with integrity” to do the job.

“If there are a lot of opportunities for people to commit corruption, and there is no monitoring of the actions of people, then corruption will go on,” she said.

Morales added: “We cannot eradicate it overnight. You have to have the patience to look at the root of corruption, [to know] the cure you’re going to apply.”

Much of the reason why corruption continues to plague the ranks of government service, Morales said, is because of the kind of leaders elected to power.

“If the leaders are corrupt, what will prevent the underlings from committing corruption? You give them greener pastures where there are more opportunities for corruption. If they remain undetected, or uncontrolled, or they’re not checked at all, they will be at liberty to commit corruption,” she said.

“But if the leader is not corrupt, the subordinate officials will have fear, or have difficulty committing corruption,” Morales added.

OMB officials and employees attend media workshop

News writing is a purposive craft – this is the operative concept that was impressed upon officials and employees of the Office of the Ombudsman who attended the workshop organized by the Public Information and Media Relations Bureau (PIMRB) at the Alex III Restaurant in Morato, Quezon City on March 4, 2016.

The first part of the workshop zeroed-in on strengthening a fundamental aspect of the news writing: laying down an effective narrative with particular emphasis on gathering of facts and attention to detail. Facilitated by Mr. Ramon Tuazon, President of the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, the discussion delved into the importance of sifting through a voluminous set of facts to come up with a story that is responsive to the issues or concerns that the Office of the Ombudsman wants to relay to the public.

The workshop also touched on basic media theory and literacy. Handled by Ms. Therese Reyes, former faculty member of the UP College of Mass Communica-

tion and currently an editor at CNN Philippines, the second segment gave participants a working knowledge and overview of the reporting and publication process. She deftly guided the workshop participants on the intricacies of the news writing enterprise and threw in some tricks of the trade which she herself resorted to during her stint on the ground.

On the other hand, Ms. Alma Tuason, a widely known media practitioner who has decades of experience in advertising, crisis management and public relations, discussed the technical aspects of news publication. Among others, Ms. Tuason shared the most effective usage of font and typography, color tonality and selection and the psychology behind the most successful brand campaigns.

Led by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Melchor Arthur Carandang, the workshop drew together officials and employees of the different sectoral offices whose designations and functions have something to do with news writing and media engagements.



Resource person Therese Reyes (CNN Philippines editor) in a group photo with workshop participants, facilitators, and the Public Information and Media Relations Bureau (PIMRB).

Integrity Management Program (IMP) Implementation updates

In May 2015, Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales welcomed ten government agencies into the expanded Integrity Management Program (IMP). A year later, the expanded IMP has also been initiated in volunteer agencies/institutions, such as the Clark International Airport Corporation, Authority of Freeport Area of Bataan, Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Philippine Navy, Maritime Industry Administration, Bureau of Immigration, Bureau of Customs, Presidential Commission on Good Government, Presidential Management Staff, and the Commission on Audit.

The IMP is the government's flagship anti-corruption program which aims to establish integrity-building initiatives across the bureaucracy and ramp up efforts for its sustained implementation. Its framework is dovetailed with the international standards and practices in anti-corruption through the auspices of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

The cascading of the IMP in the regional offices is also now in the works.

INTEGRITY WATCH

ISSN 1909-112X Vol. 16 No. 1

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11 January 2016

The Sandiganbayan rejected Sen. Jinggoy Estrada's petition for bail



The 5th Division said that the "prosecution has presented strong evidence of guilt against (Estrada)."

"We welcome this as good development and I extend my congratulations to our prosecutors."



Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales



Candido Pancrudo, Jr.

06 April 2016

Ex-representative of Bukidnon Candido Pancrudo, Jr. was charged with one count each of Malversation and Malversation through Falsification



Nereus Acosta

12 April 2016

Jose Romeo Nereus Acosta, former 1st district congressman of Bukidnon was convicted by the Sandiganbayan for the illegal utilization of his P5.5M PDAF in 2002.



Teodulo Coquilla

13 January 2016

The Office of the Ombudsman has found probable cause to charge former Eastern Samar representative Coquilla with 2 counts each of malversation and graft.



Ruffy Biazon
(Muntinlupa City)

03 March 2016

Ombudsman charges 5 congressmen for PDAF scam



Marc Douglas Cagas IV
(1st District, Davao del Sur)



Rodolfo Valencia
(1st District, Oriental Mindoro)



Arthur Pingoy
(2nd District, South Cotabato)



Arell Olaño
(1st District, Davao del Norte)

Nereus' mother, former mayor Socorro Acosta was also convicted by the anti-graft court for the same charge.

They were both sentenced to suffer imprisonment ranging from six years and one month to 10 years and the accessory penalties of perpetual disqualification from holding public office



Socorro Acosta



Marc Douglas Cagas IV

21 April 2016

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales affirmed the finding of probable cause against the former Davao del Sur representative for two counts of Malversation and two counts of graft

21 April 2016

Former representative (*1st district, Oriental Mindoro*) was charged with three counts of graft and three counts of Malversation for using his P7M PDAF for "ghosts" projects



Rodolfo Valencia

21 April 2016

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales affirmed the filing of graft and malversation charges against the former representative of the lone district of Malabon and Navotas



Alvin Sandoval

28 April 2016

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales affirmed the indictment of the Davao del Norte ex-representative for Malversation, Graft and Direct Bribery.



Arell Olaño



Arthur Pingoy

06 May 2016

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales affirmed the indictment of South Cotabato ex-representative Pingoy for Malversation Graft and Direct Bribery in connection with his 2007-2008 PDAF totaling P20.91M.

12 May 2016

Ombudsman prosecutors filed a Motion for Reconsideration seeking the reversal of the Sandiganbayan's decision granting bail to former APEC party list representative Edgar Valdez.



Edgar Valdez



20 May 2016

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales axed six government officials for their involvement in the multi-billion peso PDAF scam. Ordered dismissed were Dennis Cunanan, Marivic Jover and Consuelo Lilian Espiritu of TRC, and Maria Ninez Guanizo, Victor Roman Cacal and Rhodora Mendoza of NABCOR.



Thomas Dumpit, Jr.

20 May 2016

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales found probable cause to charge La Union 2nd district representative Thomas Dumpit, Jr. for the anomalous utilization of his 2007-2009 PDAF totaling P66.5M.

17 June 2016

The Office of the Ombudsman affirmed the filing of charges against former Albay 3rd district representative Reno Lim for the anomalous utilization of his 2007 PDAF amounting to P27M.



Rene Lim