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 Mechanics on page 8

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Message

The launching of the EU-OMB Corruption Prevention Project on 12 May 2005 signaled the advent of an anti-corruption measure of unrivaled importance and magnitude. This project, to be implemented through the assistance and generosity of European Community, ushers in an era of firm and committed collaboration and cooperation between and among the Office of the Ombudsman, other government agencies, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations in the fight against graft and corruption.

The present launching and publication of the *OMB Integrity Newsletter* is an integral and strategic component of this EU-OMB collaboration. Through the said *OMB Integrity Newsletter*, the Office seeks to reach all sectors of society, inspire positive action and involvement from stakeholders, and embolden those in the fight against graft and corruption. Indeed, the *OMB Integrity Newsletter* itself, which has come to fruition, is a testament to the initiative and productive collaboration between the government and an empowered private citizenry. Thus, despite the lack of resources and seemingly insurmountable odds, the fight against graft and corruption can be won considering that nothing can stand in the way of the rising tide of public and private sector initiatives and cooperative efforts against corruption. A concerned, committed and involved citizenry still spells our country's last best hope for a graft-intolerant culture in the future.

Accordingly, I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations, and the participating and collaborating agencies of the government that met the challenge for a concerted and unified action against graft and corruption with great enthusiasm and commitment. We are also grateful to the international donor community, more particularly the European Union, for its generous gesture of support in assisting us in promoting good governance in the bureaucracy. I would also like to congratulate the women and men of the Office of the Ombudsman for ably rising to the present challenges of promoting and ensuring good governance in the bureaucracy.

Simeon V. Marcelo
SIMEON V. MARCELO
 Tanodbayan



Message

I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the hardworking, dedicated and committed staff of the Office of the Ombudsman in coming out with this maiden issue of the *OMB Integrity Newsletter*.

It is, indeed, very timely that this first issue of the *Integrity Newsletter* comes out on December 9, 2005 which has been declared as United Nations International Anti-Corruption Day. It only goes to show the world-wide concern for combating one of the biggest menaces in the world today which is corruption.

Corruption pervades all levels of society, both the public and the private sectors. Corruption deprives many, particularly the poorer sectors of society to have equal access to basic services such as on health and education. It also affects investors' confidence on any country. It also contributes to moral decay which if not addressed to its very roots will continue to grow unabated.

It is, therefore, very important to pursue a concerted effort in addressing corruption and in promoting good governance as an effective tool in fighting corruption. It is essential that anybody, whether or not he has directly been a victim of corruption, is made aware of the evils of corruption. This is precisely the major objective of the Office of the Ombudsman in coming out with this *Integrity Newsletter*.

The *Integrity Newsletter* aims to reach out to the widest sector of society, the government agencies, civil society organizations and NGOs by informing them of the activities of the Office of the Ombudsman under the Corruption Prevention Project funded by the European Commission hopefully to generate support and cooperation from all.

Considering that the newsletter is of bi-monthly issuance, readers are assured of a newsletter with interesting stories and positive developments and strides in the overall efforts in achieving good governance and combating corruption.

Let us support this *Integrity Newsletter*. Thank you and *Mabuhay!*

Ambassador Eur
 Ambassador Eur

3,156 Contestants Join Multi-Event Competition



Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito P. Gervacio, Jr. congratulates Mr. Carmelito M. Vicente, Jr., first prize winner of the Essay Writing Contest-General Public Category, NCR during the Awarding Ceremony on November 18, 2005 at the CCB Training Room, Ombudsman Building, Quezon City.

108 Regional Winners Vie for 27 Top Awards

By Josephine D. Mojica

Getting a torrent of positive response from all sectors-students, government employees and general public, the six-month multi-event competition will come to its most awaited conclusion on December 9, 2005 with 108 regional winners making an exciting chase for the top three awards in nine event-categories.

Launched last May 12, 2005, the multi-event competition drew a total of 3,156 participants nationwide with the National Capital Region (NCR) registering the largest number at 1,760;

followed by Luzon, 524, Mindanao, 457; and Visayas, 415.

The first three regional winning entries in each category for the Essay and Slogan contests automatically qualified for the national level contest. The top regional winners of the On-the-Spot Poster Making will come to Manila to compete for the national level on December 9, 2005.

The top three winners in each event category will receive cash prizes and plaques of recognition.

Listed on page 3 are the winners for the Regional Level competitions.

Winners P3

Five Public Sector Agencies Undergo Integrity Development Review

By Evelyn A. Baliton

IMPLEMENTATION of the Integrity Development Review (IDR) of five public sector agencies under the European Commission-Office of the Ombudsman (EU-OMB) Corruption Prevention Project officially commenced on October 7, 2005 upon signing of a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (MOA/MOU) by and among the OMB, Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP), and Partner Agencies, namely: the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Presidential Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC), Civil Service Commission (CSC), Commission on Audit (COA) and Department of Education (DepEd). The five participating agencies composed of the DPWH, BIR, BOC, PNP and LTO likewise signed the MOA/MOU.

The IDR Project aims to support the leadership and management of the implementing agencies in providing tools for objective vulnerability assessment and systematic approach to benchmark and monitor agency efforts in corruption preven-

tion. As a corruption prevention measure, IDR aims to build institutional foundations to thwart corruption before it occurs. It entails a systematic diagnosis of the corruption vulnerabilities vis-a-vis the corruption resistance mechanisms in place in the agency. The process is undertaken with the use of two major tools: Corruption Resistance Review (CRR) and Corruption Vulnerability Assessment.

IDR Assessors both internal and external are selected from the OMB (particularly from the Bureau of Resident Ombudsman), DAP, oversight agencies, participating agencies and its stakeholders. A three-day training for the first batch of 25 IDR assessors was held last November 30 to December 2, 2005 at Sunrise Holiday Hotel, Tagaytay Estate, Alfonso, Cavite. A team of assessors will conduct the IDR in each agency and the validated results will be presented to the agency. These will serve as benchmark information and inputs for future anti-corruption and integrity development programs of the agency concerned.



Tanodbayan Trees. The Honorable Tanodbayan Simeon V. Marcelo with the assistance of OMB officials plants Narra and Mahogany Trees in front of the Ombudsman Building, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City after the Flag Raising Ceremony on November 29, 2005 wherein he delivered his Farewell Message exhorting OMB officials and employees to remain steadfast and true to the course laid before this institution.

Honing Advocacy Skills Towards a Dream

By Ma. Hazelina A. Tujan-Militante

Two years ago, the Office of the Ombudsman saw the need to further sharpen the skills of its prosecutors to pit them against the best lawyers of the country. Thus, under the auspices of Jesus F. Guerrero, its in-house consultant and former Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon, and the United States Agency for International Development-Rule of Law Effectiveness (USAID-ROLE), it has conducted several Trial Advocacy Skills Trainings.

I have been with the Office of the Special Prosecutor since February 2003, and I had the privilege to attend three of these trainings. It was a valuable experience for any prosecutor who dreams of improving his/her advocacy skills under the tutelage of the best luminaries from the legal profession. The training included lectures and moot courts.



SPECIAL PROSECUTORS attend the TRIAL ADVOCACY SKILLS TRAINING WORKSHOP—an Ombudsman - USAID-ROLE continuing legal education program for lawyers.

The latter required great preparation as the participants presented their cases before a critique panel composed of incumbent and retired members of the judiciary.

I looked forward to attend such training since it was a time to strengthen bonds with my colleagues. During the training, I observed

various facial expressions of my co-participants, several were interested and attentive, while others were sleepy, those who probably stayed up until the wee hours of the morning to prepare for their moot court presentations.

Moments of laughter, tears, tension, anxiety, embarrass-

ment, blunders, and emotional stress were all part of the training. These prepare prosecutors emotionally and mentally in their daily rigors in court.

Each training gave me something distinct to remember. The first was conducted at the Days Hotel in Tagaytay City in June, 2003.

I realized that each prosecutor has a strong point that makes him unique in court. The second was held at the Holiday Inn Resort, Clarkfield, Pampanga in January, 2004. Dr. Emil Bolongaita, USAID-ROLE facilitator, showed a film entitled "Riles," depicting the life of a family in a squatter colony. It enlightened me of my true purpose in prosecuting grafters and corrupt people. The third was at the Lopez Center, Antipolo City, in December, 2004. It was an advanced level of training where participants were asked to present "difficult witnesses", a role played by the best prosecutors from the Office (Former Deputy Ombudsman Jesus F. Guerrero, Deputy Ombudsman Victor C. Fernandez, Deputy Special Prosecutor Robert Kallos and Acting Deputy Prosecutor Humphrey Monteroso). The Honorable Justice Francisco Villaluz, a known strict Sandiganbayan Justice, presided over the moot proceedings. The said officials successfully gave the participants a glimpse of every prosecutor's nightmare.

In the same training, Atty. Gerardo Mosquera, another facilitator from USAID-ROLE, presented a documentary film entitled "Minsan Ka Lang Maging Bata", a story on child labor and corruption. Children work so much for a society that pays them less. I vowed to give them more by providing them a graft-free society. Do I sound hopeful? Everybody has a right to dream and I work towards that dream.

There is another training coming, and I anticipate further honing of my advocacy skills towards realization of my dream of a graft-less society.

A Retired General on Trial

By Nida Avena-Gruta

"If one speaks or acts with a corrupt mind, misery will follow, as the wheel of a cart follows the foot of the ox."

Is our accused a master of his mind or allows himself to be mastered by his mind? Is his mind pure? Does he have a corrupt mind? Does he practice self-control? Does he live with unguarded senses? Is his appetite immoderate? Is he lazy or weak? Does he know what is good or beneficial? If he does, does he practice it in his life and work?

As prosecutors in the Office of the Special Prosecutor, we are expected to ask questions inside the Court and outside when we interview parties and possible witnesses. Even when alone and studying cases for prosecution, we cannot help but ask silent questions about the personalities involved in the cases. Questions such as, what triggers a public officer to commit a crime? What goes on in his mind before, during, and after the commission of a crime or an offense? Does he even think about the consequences of his criminal act, or how it may affect his own reputation? His loved ones? His relation with people he respects and who respect him back? His career? His future?

Our high profile personality is Major General Carlos F. Garcia who was Comptroller of the Armed Forces of the Philippines when he retired in 2004. We feature him and write about him so that readers may know what the charges against him are all about. This article is not meant to preempt what may be the possible outcome of his cases. This is to motivate our readers to try to answer the questions propounded earlier by relating them to the alleged acts and omissions charged against the accused.

As Comptroller and one of the Joint Staff, Major General Garcia was fourth in the AFP hierarchy where the Chief of Staff occupies the top position. But this designation gave him certain slice of power and authority regarding budget

EC-OMB Corruption Prevention Project on TV

By Mimi S. Ilustre

The European Commission - Office for the Ombudsman [EC-OMB] Corruption Prevention Project will be the highlight of the first OMB Integrity TV Show to be telecast live [nationwide], via NBN Channel 4, on 9 December 2005 from 9:15 pm to 10:45 pm at the Teatro Marikina. The airing of the TV Show also coincides with the United Nations International Anti-Corruption Day.

The TV Show is a key activity to communicate the anti-cor-

ruption reforms and initiatives of the Office in partnership with civil society/non-governmental organizations, wider public, other government agencies, including the media, business and academe. The TV Show also seeks to inspire, encourage and challenge the wider public to join the OMB in its fight towards curbing graft and corruption.

The TV Show will have a variety program to feature, among others, anti-corruption messages via interpretative songs, dances, drama skit and other related activities, in-

cluding the Launching of the Corruption Prevention Theme Song Contest in partnership with the British Council (Philippines), and Inter-Universities Debate Competition with the College of Saint Benilde and Ateneo Debate Societies as debating teams.

The national winners of the Multi-Event Competition on Essay Writing, Slogan Making and On-the-Spot Poster Making will be awarded cash prizes and plaques during the program.

Field Investigators Undergo Advanced Training

By Grace Manalo

IN LINE WITH ITS aggressive capacity building program, the Office of the Ombudsman embarked anew in conducting the Advanced Field Investigators' Course made possible by the support of World Bank-ASEM Fund, from May 30 to June 17, 2005. The project was designed to further enhance the knowledge and skills of investigators in the area of field investigation and intelligence operations.

The training was participated in by 50 investigators of Field Investigation Office (FIO) and 10 from the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission and Civil Service Commission. For three weeks, the Days Hotel located in the City of Tagaytay had been the home of the participants and training staff.

The first week of training, conducted by the able team of Special Agents from the National Bureau of Investigation, was focused on surveillance and entrapment. At the end of the week, a practical examination was held wherein the participants were critiqued based on their performance in a simulated entrapment operation.

Arthur Mendez, Special Agents of the Internal Revenue Service of the United States, spoke about money laundering and financial investigation during the second week.



Exercise on the Network Method of Proof

FIO Investigators enhance their knowledge and hone their skills in handling cases during the Advanced Field Investigators Course on May 30 to June 17, 2005 at the Days Hotel, Tagaytay City.

The Assistant Ombudsman of the FIO, Melchor Arthur Carandang, facilitated an activity at the end of week two wherein the participants were tasked to analyze the Lifestyle Check cases handled by FIO.

Activities for the third week were mostly practical exercises on public speaking and basic self-defense, conducted by the Manila Toastmasters Club and the

National Bureau of Investigation, respectively. A lecture on Leadership and Management was also conducted by Professor Dan Sagui of UP Diliman. During the final three days, the participants were tested on their ability in handling cases. A real case was assigned to each team wherein interviews of witnesses were enacted and an investigation report was required

by the end of the activity.

The Honorable Tanodbayan graced the graduation ceremony on the last day of the three-week training. Indeed the Advanced Field Investigators' Course succeeded not only in enhancing the knowledge and skills of the investigators of FIO but also in improving the communication and camaraderie among the participants.

*Taken from the "Sayings of Buddha" as translated from original Pali by Thomas Cleary

List of Regional Winners

| | ESSAY WRITING | ON-THE-SPOT POSTER MAKING | SLOGAN MAKING |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| NCR | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-DEAN MARK ENOZA, Dela Salle University, St Benilde; 2nd-CASSANDRA VAUDINE G. CUEVAS, UP-Dilliman, Q.C.; 3rd-ENRICO G. CEGUERRA, Manila Science High School</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-MELVIN M. NAVARRO, DepEd Division of Caloocan City; 2nd-MANUEL P. INAANURAN, TUP; 3rd-GIOVANNI S. VILLAFUERTE, Development Academy of the Phils.</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-CARMELITO M. VICENTE, JR., Pasig City; 2nd-MIHL GRACE M. SAMONTEZA, Roxas District, Q.C.; 3rd-ROGELIO DELOS SANTOS, Tondo, Manila</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-PHILIP L. KIONISALA, JR., Eulogio Amang Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology (EARIST); 2nd-MILVEN A. GUZON, University of the East-Caloocan; 3rd-BERNIS L. AURE, EARIST</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-ROMMER FAJARDO, Technological University of the Philippines (TUP); 2nd-EMERSON ROMNEY ABRAHAM, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas; 3rd-ROMMEL NATANAUAU-Department of Tourism</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-ARSENIO ROYALES XI; 2nd-SAMUEL BULAGA, AAP/Artes Indios; 3rd-LYNYRD ARWYN PARAS</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-DHANLIZA A. CELLONA, University of Sto. Tomas; 2nd-ALBERT-XAVIER L. MENDOZA, Sta. Elena High School; 3rd-LIE ZAR L. MONTILLA, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-BENILDA B. NABLO, Civil Service Commission; 2nd - FLORITA G. FERNANDO, Panghulo Nat'l. HS; 3rd-FLORA T. COMBES, Bureau of Agricultural Statistics</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-ROSITA T. ZAMORA; 2nd-MARIPAZ T. ARCILLA; 3rd -CLEMEN C. NATANAUAU</p> |
| LUZON | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-ARNOLD LIM PASILLAS III, Holy Angel University, Angeles City; 2nd-SARGE MILLEN H. PILPIL, PUP, Maragondon, Cavite; 3rd-IVY MAE C. ANDRADA, Urdaneta City National High School</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-CHARISMA LOVE B. GUDO, Phil. Rice Research Inst., Munoz, Nueva Ecija; 2nd-VIVIAN LUZ S. PAGATPATAN, DepEd, Reg. 1, San Fernando, La Union; 3rd-MELCHOR S. SUAREZ, Catanduanes State Colleges, Virac</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-DR. VICTOR M. ARGUELLES, University of Batangas, Batangas City; 2nd-VINCENT M. RAGAY, Bacoor, Cavite; 3rd-EDWINA M. DUNGCA, Dee Hwa Liong College, Mabalacat, Pampanga;</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-MICHAEL JAMES RONQUILLO, Tarlac State University; 2nd-ISRAEL JUDAH V. GONZALES, Jesus Is Lord Colleges Foundation, Bulacan; 3rd-MARVIN M. QUIBUYEN, Tarlac State University</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-EDUARDO DE LA CIRNA, Orani District Hospital, Bataan; 2nd-DON REICH DE DIOS, DENR, Region III; 3rd -OSCAR D. PECSON, Tarlac State University</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-PETRONILO G. DE LEON, Bataan Artist Society; 2nd-ROMMEL L. REYES, Easel & Canvass Art Center, Laguna; 3rd-RICHARD P. CAGAYAT, Pilipintura (Artgroup of Paete, Laguna)</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-EDILBERTO B. CAMPOS, Victoria HS; 2nd-ALLAN A. ORDONES, Phil. Col. of Sci. & Tech.; 3rd-DWIGHT I. PERNES, JR., Benigno Aldana National High School</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-VIVIAN LUZ S. PAGTAPATAN, DepEd, La Union; 2nd -CRESENCIO A. ADRIATICO, Provincial Agriculturist, Abra; 3rd-ROMEO D. RODIL, University of the Philippines-Los Baños</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-VINCENT M. RAGAY; 2nd-ARIENE L. TANIEGRA; 3rd -NORBERTO DENIS</p> |
| VISAYAS | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-KRISTIAN REY G. RUBI, Cebu City Medical Center College of Nursing, Cebu City; 2nd-PHRIXEL GERALD S. PIMENTEL, UP Visayas Cebu College, Lahug, Cebu City; 3rd-JOHN LEON S. MOYA, JR., Fellowship Baptist College, Negros Occidental</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-EARLY SOL A. GADONG, UP - Visayas, Miag-ao, Iloilo; 2nd-ALEX Y. TIEMPO, Cebu Normal University, Cebu City; 3rd-RENELDA B. LACABA, Abellana Nat'l. Sch., Cebu City</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-LEO CICERO V. PELLEJO, Bacolod City; 2nd- FRANCIS ROMULO J. MOYA, Negros Occ.; 3rd-LESTER MARK P. CARNAJE, Lapaz, Iloilo City</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-ALEX P. ORDOYO, Western Visayas College of Science & Technology; 2nd-CLETUS C. DAPATNAPO, Western Institute of Iloilo; 3rd-ALEXIS G. JOVER, Western Visayas College of Science & Technology</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-LEONIEL R. CERBAS, Reg. 6; 2nd-HEIDRUN MILAN, Reg. 7; 3rd-RENE M. PETANCIO, Reg. 8</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-RIC ISIDERIO, Pulso Ilonggo Advertising; 2nd - RONNIE C. GRANJA, Arts Association of the Philippines; 3rd-AL N. CONSTANTINO, Reg. 8</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-ADRIENNE JOY B. CERBO, Fellowship Baptist College; 2nd-LAUREN ANGELIC J. TOLEDO, St. Theresa's College; 3rd-CHARLES RUEL G. NOVABOS, University of San Jose, Recoletos</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-EARLY SOLA. GADONG, UP-Visayas; 2nd-LEONILLO D. LOPIDO, Phil. Info. Agency; 3rd-RENELDAB. LACABA, Abellana Natl. High School</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-TAN THADDEU C. DELA CERNA; 2nd-RODOLFO P. GUMABONG; 3rd-JOEY FRANK AUSAN</p> |
| MINDANAO | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-MARIE LUISE C. CALVERO, Notre Dame of Dadiangas IBED Lagao Campus, Gen. San. City; 2nd-JAPHEH IMPERIO, Holy Cross of Davao College, Davao City; 3rd - MA. ISABELA P. RODRIGUEZ, So. Point Sch., Davao City</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-MICHELLE P. BANAWAN, LGU City Administrator's Office, Davao City; 2nd-SUZZITH M. DELIMA-SORIA, LGU- Prov'l. Govt. of Cotabato, Kidapawan City; 3rd-RAUL G. MOLDEZ, LGU-City Council Office, Cagayan de Oro City</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-REYNALDO M. FLORETA, Casa Peral, Libertad, Butuan City; 2nd-BRIAN CHARLO N. ANG, Ecoland, Davao City; 3rd-GRACELA D. BACOLATING, Sasa, Davao City</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-JAMES ALOCELJA, University of Mindanao, Digos City, Reg. 11; 2nd-DONN MANGUILIMO TAN, University of Southeastern Pili, Davao City, Reg. 11; 3rd-GENEVIEVE H. LAZARTE, Liceo de Cagayan University, Cagayan de Oro City, Reg. 10</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-EDRICK C. CURATO, Zamboanga City HS, Main Zamboanga City, Reg. 9; 2nd-ROBERT P. RASOS, Davao Nat'l. HS, Tagum City, Reg. 11; 3rd-RAY O. MAGHUYOP, Bulua Nat'l. HS, Cag. de Oro City, Reg. 10</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-GILANDRO SUBANG, Tupi, South Cotabato, Reg. 12; 2nd-DOMINADORA. PAMISA, JR., Artisthood, Davao City, Reg. 11; 3rd-REYNANTE AQUINO, St. Joseph Sch., Zamboanga City, Reg. 9</p> | <p>STUDENT CATEGORY: 1st-CHARMAINE MAY C. EGASAN, Special NHS, Davao City; 2nd-JOHN BRYAN LINAZA, Special NHS, Davao City; 3rd-SEYCHELLE JO MEDALLE, Lagao, NHS, Gen. Santos City</p> <p>GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CATEGORY: 1st-GIL G. SUBANG, National High School, Koronadal City; 2nd-EPIFANIA A. LATONERO, Provincial Government of Agusan del Norte; 3rd-MA. CYNTHIA P.A. GELLEGANI, LGU-Compostela Valley, Reg. 13</p> <p>GENERAL PUBLIC CATEGORY: 1st-CARLITA A. ARANCON, Matina, Davao City; 2nd-MILO S. SALDON, Davao Light and Power Corporation, Davao City; 3rd-REYNALDO M. FLORETA, Urios College, Butuan City.</p> |

Strengthening OMB's Resident Ombudsmen

(First of Two Parts)

By Rafael G. Hipolito

AIMED TO STRENGTHEN the pro-active role of the Office of the Ombudsman in preventing corruption in public procurement, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Transparent and Accountable Governance (TAG) Project implemented by The Asia Foundation (TAF), provided a grant for the development of a feedback handling mechanism of procurement monitoring reports submitted by Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) observers to the Office of the Ombudsman. Under Section

13.4 (1) of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (also known as the Government Procurement Reform Act), the Office of the Ombudsman/ Resident Ombudsman is mandated to serve as Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) observer report/feedback centers. Project duration was from September 2004 to September 2005. The output is a uniform BAC observer feedback handling mechanism/operational guidelines to be issued by the Office of the Ombudsman addressed to its close to 600 Resident Ombudsmen (Organic and Non-organic) in various government offices nationwide.

Last November 18 and 19 2004, an awareness building session on the New Procurement Law and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on the draft BAC observer feedback handling guidelines were held in Manila. There were twenty-five (25) Non-Organic Resident Ombudsmen (RO) from LGUs, SUCs and GOCCs who participated. They were from Luzon (Laoag, Ilocos Norte; San Fernando, La Union; Carik, Tuguegarao; Batangas City; Lipa City; Baguio City and Pili, Camarines Sur; NCR; Visayas (Iloilo; Bacolod; Cebu City; Tacloban, and Palo, Leyte; and

Guihuingan, Negros Oriental; and Mindanao (Zamboanga City; Cagayan de Oro City; Tagum, Davao del Norte; Cotabato; Davao City; Butuan City; Bukidnon; and Marawi City). Representatives from the corruption prevention offices of area and sectoral offices of the Office of the Ombudsman were also present.

On February 10-11, 2005, a pre-pilot test training was conducted which involved Resident Ombudsmen of pilot test agencies and their counterpart BAC observers. Both were given sessions on the New Procurement Law and the Draft Feedback Handling. On July

6 and 7, 2005, another pre-pilot test training was conducted for additional pilot test sites. The pilot test sites include: TRANSCO, DPWH and BIR Central Offices (for Luzon); DLR (DAR) Provincial Office-Bacolod, DPWH Region VIII, NFA Region VIII (for the Visayas) and the Provincial Government of Camiguin, City Government of Cagayan de Oro and the Municipal Government of Monkayo, Compostela Valley Province (for Mindanao). The pilot test is on its winding stage. Assessment and the issuance of the BAC observer feedback guidelines will follow.

(To be continued)



On-the-Spot Poster Making Contest at the OMB-Visayas



1st prize On-The-Spot Poster Making Contest winner Alex P. Ordoyo from Iloilo City, receives an award from Deputy Ombudsman for the Visayas Primo C. Miro together with Asst. Ombudsman/Project Director Cyril E. Ramos, Anti-Corruption Chief Adviser Mr. Tony Kwok and EC Head for Economic & Political Affairs Mr. Luc Vandebon during the Multi-Event Competition Awarding Ceremony at the OMB-Visayas on October 6, 2005.



Tanodbayan Simeon V. Marcelo and Task Force while participants of the On-The-Spot Poster September 10 and 17, 2005 at the OMB-Cent



Overall Deputy Ombudsman Margarito P. Gervacio, Jr. poses with the winners of the On-The-Spot Poster Making Contest - Government Category (NCR) and the Slogan Making Contest - Student Category (NCR) together with Acting Asst. Ombudsman for PACPO Evelyn A. Baliton, CCB Director Romeo I. Tan and GIO Josephine D. Mojica during the Awarding Ceremony on November 18, 2005 at the CCB Training Room, OMB-Central Office.

Contestants from San Fernando, Pampanga (C) the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon on August 1

Program Launched to Enhance Integrity of Customs-NAIA

Social Responsibility Projects



THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS-NAIA has launched several projects in line with Bureau of Customs' NAIA IMAGE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM particularly at the Passenger Arrival Area, considering that the frontline service is the show window of the country. It aims to provide transparency and render efficient service to tourists, returning residents, balikbayans and overseas Filipino workers (OFW).

The Image Enhancement Program covers **four major areas**, namely: (1) Image Enhancement; (2) Personnel Service Enhancement; (3) Information/Feedback Program; and (4) Social Responsibility Projects

I. IMAGE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The **Image Enhancement Program** shall project an image of genuine **integrity of the agency** thru courtesy, cordiality and efficiency to create a passenger-friendly atmosphere. It will endeavor to service incoming passengers with well-trained customs frontliners.

1. Use of nameplate in addition to their existing MIAA ID pinned on their Customs uniform highlighting surname and designation for easier identification.

2. Customs Examiners are expected to say the standard - basic greetings to all arriving passengers.

3. Highlight all the positive actions of the Bureau particularly on **HONESTY** to be emulated by others and showcase good deeds of public servants.

4. Customs examiners are also wearing their new "SERVING WITH HONOR" Customs' slogan pin to emphasize their service commitment.

II. PERSONNEL SERVICE

By Carmelita M. Talusan

ENHANCEMENT

The **Personnel Service Enhancement** will focus on the training of Frontliners to be competent and skilled and to practice the Code of Ethics for Public Servants to the fullest.

1. **Continuous screening/evaluation of Frontliners** will be done based on both efficiency and personality. Regular evaluation will be conducted to determine the competency of Frontliners. Corresponding sanctions will be given to erring personnel.

2. **An internal program of personnel training has been developed focusing on skills development – a balance of our dual role as law enforcers and public servants.**

3. The District will invite more resource speakers from other agencies in their monthly "Information Hour with Frontliners" to share their expertise. The District will also give emphasis on **Moral Values** and requested seminars from the Office of the Ombudsman particularly the Ehem!Aha! Anti-Corruption seminar of Father Albert Alejo and continuous seminars on **Public Accountability and Code of Ethics**.

4. Creation of "Frontliners Commitment to Service"

This **new credo** of Customs Frontliners, the latest reinforcement of Customs commitment to the integrity and good governance program in keeping with the Civil Service advocacy on "Public Service", will be recited in all official meetings of Customs Frontliners.

III. INFORMATION / FEEDBACK MECHANISM PROGRAM
The **Feedback/Information**

Program shall provide advance information and guidelines on customs matters to arriving/departing passengers and create a feedback mechanism to evaluate the data and information gathered whether the desired goal is achieved as basis for necessary changes for the improvement of the frontline service and transparency to the public.

1. **Primer for Passengers** will soon be disseminated for both arriving and departing passengers containing relevant rules and regulation and guidelines on customs matters. This will be available soon in both departure and arrival area, and on board the aircraft. Room for disagreement/complaints/discretion are aimed to be reduced.

2. **Passenger Feedback Forms** are now available at the Feedback Form Counters located around conveyor area for passengers to fill up. Passengers can now access forms to evaluate Customs' quality of service with checklist in the area of Courteousness, Promptness, Attitude, Performance of Customs Frontliners. Feedback/Suggestion Drop boxes located in conspicuous areas are now installed for this purpose. Customs personnel will have increased accountability and are expected to show the best of government ethical standards.

3. Arrival office, aside from the website (**E-mail address: arrivalcustoms@hotmail.com**) launched 2 years ago is currently using their DSL facility, which is online daily to check on all incoming e-mails. Passenger concerns particularly feedbacks or complaints on Customs matters will be easier and faster to address.

4. **INFORMERIAL (2-3 CUSTOMS P7**

Covenant From page 8

This tripartite anti-corruption plan signed on March 15, 2004 became the widely known Solana Covenant I.

The joint assessment of the level of compliance with their respective commitments under Solana Covenant I showed the following achievements in 15 areas:

*Asset Disclosure where the Office of the Ombudsman and the CSC both formed their own respective SALN database task force;

*Joint Task Force for Investigations for the purpose of investigating, prosecuting and monitoring high-profile corruption cases;

*Self-cleansing where the three agencies have separately filed cases and/or imposed administrative sanctions on their erring personnel;

*Vetting of select officials where a concept paper was prepared by the Office of the Ombudsman while the draft guidelines were prepared by the CSC;

*Inter-agency Audit (Integrity Development Review or IDR);

*Exchange training for joint corruption investigations;

*Confidentiality of complaints where the Office of the Ombudsman issued an internal policy prohibiting its officials and employees to disclose any confidential information acquired by them in the course of their employment in the office;



Force Project Manager Ador G. Paulino look on Making Contest give their best entries on al Office.

A DIFFICULT TASK: Mr. Jess Abrera, Editorial Cartoonist, Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI), Ms. Charito Bitanga-Peralta, Dean, College of Fine Arts, Philippine Women's University (PWU) and Mr. Noel Escultura, Curator, National Museum judge the regional winners of the On-The-Spot Poster Making Contest in NCR on October 4, 2005.



during the On-The-Spot Poster Making Contest conducted by the Office of 26, 2005.

Deputy Ombudsman for Mindanao Antonio E. Valenzuela, Acting Assistant Ombudsman for PACPO Evelyn A. Baliton and EC Head for Economic and Political Affairs Mr. Luc Vandebon join photo ops with the Mindanao-wide Essay Writing Contest winners after the Awarding Ceremony of the Multi-Event Competition in OMB-Mindanao.

DO Fernandez Leads Anti-Corruption Fight in Luzon

(First of Two Parts)

By Wilbert L. Candelaria

VICTOR C. FERNANDEZ, the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon, used to be a much-sought after and feared litigation lawyer before joining the Office of the Ombudsman on March 3, 2003. In light of this fact, there is ample reason to believe that his approach to carrying out the mandate of his office would be principally, if not entirely, prosecutorial in character.

I have no doubt whatsoever that he believes in the deterrent effect of prosecution and conviction. His zeal in authorizing the filing of criminal cases and/or meting out administrative sanctions against indicted/erring government officials and employees is irrefutable proof of this. But as then Director of OMB-Luzon's Public Assistance and Corruption Prevention Office (PACPO), I find it very inspiring and comforting that Deputy Fernandez is a true believer in corruption prevention as well, as shown by his full and complete support for PACPO-Luzon's Corruption Prevention Team (CPT). In a message delivered to participants in an Ehem! Aha! Seminar, he stated: "One of the most potent weapons of the Office of the Ombudsman in the fight against corruption is graft prevention . . . I have faith in corruption prevention. I know it works. Its effects may not be felt immediately like the shock of prosecution and conviction, but they are more far-reaching and enduring".

In the same message, he mentioned that in a book published by The World Bank in 2004, entitled *Challenging Corruption in Asia*, authors Vinay Bhargava and Emil Bolongaita pointed out that the Office of the Ombudsman has been "criticized for putting too much emphasis on prosecution and lacking a pro-active stance on corruption prevention." With Deputy Victor C. Fernandez as head of OMB-Luzon, that criticism is now completely unfounded.

Some Insights into Corruption Prevention

With my more than two years as the Director of PACPO-Luzon, I have gained some insights into corruption prevention which I'd like to share with others through this article. In a nutshell, these insights can be stated as follows: The main theories of corruption can be divided, for the sake of simplicity into two main categories, namely: (a) the PERSON: the public official or employee; and (b) the SYSTEM: structures, programs and procedures. Accordingly, an effective corruption prevention campaign should address both the PERSON and the SYSTEM.

THE PERSON

1. With respect to this category, I am convinced that *education* in ethics and moral values starting with the very young is the best way to prevent corruption. The Script-ures enjoin us to "teach a child in the way he should go [so that] when he is old, he will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6). For this reason, I put a very high premium on the implementation of the Graft and Corruption Prevention Education Teaching Exemplars.

I now realize it is highly improbable, though not impossible, for a corrupt person to change. Because a person who has gotten accustomed to a high standard of living (by depending on the extra income derived from corruption) will find it very difficult to step down to a lower standard of living, he will most likely resist any force or influence seeking to change him.

2. Persons who have no desire to change will never change, no matter how much education or training you give them. Put differently, there is hope for those who want it, but we cannot force people to accept what they do not desire. I am reminded of a regional office of a governmental agency which requested OMB-Luzon to give them an Ehem! Aha! Seminar. We were only too happy to oblige. But while conducting the Seminar, we noticed how the participating officials and employees, from the very start, insisted that there was no corruption in their office. All they did, up to

the end, was to shift the blame to other governmental agencies. It then dawned on us that they were not sincere in asking for the Seminar and that they merely wanted to use it as a deodorant or a cosmetic to make them smell or look better.

3. What we want to have are public officials and employees who do the right thing for the right reason — not just because of fear of getting caught. We need public officials and employees who — respect and love honesty, know who they are and what they stand for, would never be unethical on purpose, exhibit positive honesty, and cannot be bought for a price. To develop such kind of public officials and employees requires a continuous development of correct moral habits, by way of conditioning and reinforcement, which should include (i) letting fairness and a sense of justice become second nature; (ii) developing and exercising self-control; (iii) understanding and developing

OMB LUZON P7



Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon Victor C. Fernandez delivers his Keynote Address during the Launching and Orientation Seminar on the Use of Graft & Corruption Prevention Education Teaching Exemplars (GCPE).

*Retention of the OMB's and CSC's respective administrative disciplinary jurisdiction over cases against their own officials and employees by virtue of MOA;

*The Inter-Agency Liaison network;

*Report referral system where the Office of the Ombudsman enjoined its officials and employees to strictly adhere to guidelines relating to investigation of COA-initiated cases while the CSC is maintaining the Data of Individuals Barred from Entering Government Service and Taking Civil Service Examinations (DIBAR).

*Whistleblowing Bill;

*Bill on the Waiver of the bank secrecy rights of subjects of corruption investigation filed by Sen. Mar Roxas with the assistance of the Office of the Ombudsman;

*Revisiting of the OMB Resident Ombudsman Program where the BRO was placed under the Public Assistance and Corruption Prevention Office (PACPO);

*Standardization of Schedule of Penalties.

The three agencies have also continued their activities in compliance to the Solana commitments such as the setting-up of an Integrity/Ethics Committee that will be integrated in the IDR.

Now, in their second year of closer partnership, the Solana agencies have once again jointly committed to implement their action plan in corruption deterrence/detection and prevention as they renewed their anti-corruption commitments under the Solana Covenant II on July 15, 2005.

A Fragmented Nation, a Divided People

By Rodolfo M. Elman

"Nothing will remain of me... I die without seeing the sun rise on my country. You who are to see the dawn, welcome it, and do not forget those who fell during the night."

- Jose Rizal

Thus, said by our national hero more than a century past, a man so consumed by his undying love for his people and country. Undoubtedly, he would have fervently wished that those of us who were not there in the struggle for our independence and freedom but are now enjoying the fruits of their ha-ving been there should care for the principles and ideals for which he and the other great Filipino patriots of his time had fought at great odds.

Yes, it is our supreme duty to remember and honor, with pride,

our heroes who so valued dignity and liberty that they unhesitatingly sacrificed their lives to stand up against a much stronger foreign power. Yes, it behooves us to steadfastly keep the light alive, burning in our hearts and minds so that we may never again become slaves and victims.

But what and where are we now? Today, we are still a confused people, without a sense of history and further divided by petty bickering and personal interests. More than a century after Rizal's death, we have not yet attained national unity, nor found our national identity.

Dark clouds continue to hover over our horizon. We are confronted by a more vicious enemy - the insidious forces coming from within - that threaten the spiritual



and moral fibers of our nation. These are our shameless countrymen in government who lie, plunder and are feckless. They put toignomy the name Filipino. The tentacles of evil and corruption press on to wreck havoc on society, making miserable the lives of

our people. Even fundamental state institutions, which are the cornerstones of our democratic system and supposedly the guarantors of basic civil liberties, are not spared, mired deep in controversies and scandals. Public officials in high places are hurling filth and bashing each other. People have grown accustomed to all these maladies that they have become cynical and, worse, apathetic.

The flaw apparently involves a failure of nationalism. We think not in terms of national parameters but in the context of regional divide and affinity. Our loyalty and interests are invariably limited to the family and tribe. The Tagalog expresses dismay and sneers at the Visayan's hard pronunciation of English or Pilipino words. A Boholano is jo-

kingly said to come from the Republic of Bohol. The proud Muslim, unconquered by the Spaniards and the Americans, is looked with suspicion by his Christian brother, and vice-versa. The mugger and the grafter make the convenient excuse that they committed the crime to alleviate the lowly plight of their family. Instead of nurturing national unity, some political leaders exploit the present political quagmire through threats of self-rule and secession if their demands are not met.

We can never hope to achieve greatness as a free nation and realize our aspirations as a Filipino people unless we learn the lessons of our past and transcend the barriers of greed and factionalism. The change must come from within us. Only then will the Filipino prevail.

MOLEO intensifies drive vs. corruption

By Alan Cañares

THE OFFICE of the Deputy Ombudsman for the Military and Other Law Enforcement Offices (MOLEO) instituted various reforms in its organizational structure and mission-critical functions in a renewed bid to make corruption a high risk, low reward activity in government agencies under its jurisdiction.

The Fact-Finding Investigation, Corruption Prevention, and Public Assistance Bureau (FFICPPAB) was divided earlier this year into two separate bureaus: the Fact-Finding Investigation Bureau (FFIB) under Director Marifi P. Chua and the Public Assistance and Community Coordination Bureau (PACCB) headed by Director Rudiger G. Falcis II. The move is in line with the policy of Deputy Ombudsman Orlando C. Casimiro to delineate and render effective the mission-critical functions of the Office.

The PACCB attends to request for assistance from the public, strategizes information dissemination programs, and monitors the status of cases pending with courts and administrative tribunals as well as the implementation of administrative penalties, among other functions. The new bureau kicked off by conducting a total of 26 seminar-workshops on corruption pre-

vention and executive answerability nationwide involving more than 2,700 participants over a period of seven months since its creation, surpassing last year's accomplishment during the same period. The monitoring of the implementation of suspensions, preventive suspensions, and dismissals from the service also took a vigorous stride when the bureau reported a 100% rate of compliance with the decrees of the Office in administrative cases.

OMB-MOLEO investigated and filed Petitions for Forfeiture under R.A. 1379 against M/Gen. Carlos Garcia (Ret.) and LTC. George Rabusa of the AFP Comptrollership before the Sandiganbayan. The Office also probed another ranking official of the AFP, Lt. Gen. Juanito Ligot (Ret.) and his family for alleged Perjury and violation of R.A. 1379 and R.A. 6713.

The Office recently hired additional Graft Investigation and Prosecution Officers (GIPOs), Associate Graft Investigation Officers (AGIOs), and Legal Assistants to strengthen its manpower complement in its desire to intensify the investigation and prosecution of cases, conduct no nonsense lifestyle probes and assets check, and implement proactive strategies as deterrents to the commission of corrupt practices in the uniformed sector.



Director Rudiger G. Falcis II conducts lecture on Public Accountability Seminar to the employees of the Department of Interior and Local Government.

THINK before you hit!

By TG Serrano



THIS IS MY FIRST ARTICLE in this worthy publication of the Office of the Ombudsman, and hopefully not my last invitation to write a piece as guest writer.

It's been quite sometime since I've been into regular features or column writing but I'm truly honored with this invitation. I have had a chance to have pleasant conversations with Atty. Cesar Tirol and Director Rudiger G. Falcis II from the Office of the Ombudsman for quite a few occasions in June and July of this year when they served as resource persons in a series of seminars on corruption prevention and public accountability organized by Manila International Airport Authority's (MIAA) Human Resource Development Division.

And young as they both are, both Director Falcis and Atty. Tirol had both strong and exciting insights on methods of helping curb and address corruption both through institutional processes and social or personal initiatives. Just when our conversations were getting to be even more spirited, if not philosophical, it was always time to adjourn and move on to our respective duties for the day. But we somehow agreed on one basic and fundamental point and that is corruption, like any form of a problem or negative vibes, like a disease, is better solved at the earlier stages. Or better yet, the best way to solve corruption is to prevent it from getting into the picture.

At the institutional level, or applying institutional processes, there are so many ways of helping curb corruption. At the social level or through personal perspectives, like in the case of communities and individuals, again, there are many ways of helping address corruption. Before I mention some specific programs the MIAA has embarked on under the leadership of General Manager Alfonso G. Cusi, let me start off with a small catchword that I used in delivering my Opening Remarks during the seminar series I mentioned above.

I urged the seminar participants to remember something we were taught early in life, and this is to "Look before you leap". I tried to refashion this basic thinking into something usable for the anti-corruption seminar, like "THINK before you hit".

Even going a step further into the Fulghum principle of small lines with big meanings, in Tagalog or Filipino, the age old adage goes, "Bago ka gumawa ng kalokohan, mag-ISIP ka muna". So there, I just Filipinized the great guru's teachings!

For the benefit of the seminar participants, I proceeded with a brief speech, complete with a crisp, sophisticated powerpoint presentation with nothing but the bold words in turn, as follows:

T - Tainted. Any act of wrongdoing most especially involving corruption will certainly taint one's image.

H - Home. Before one even thinks of doing something funny, he must first consider the interest of his family. If he doesn't care much about his personal reputation, he must at least anticipate how a misdemeanor or a corrupt act will affect his family.

I - Institution. Assuming for the sake of argument, that one doesn't care for either himself nor his family, maybe he'll remember that he's part of a larger group whether that be his company, his business partners, his church, his barangay, or whatever his group or community may be. Any well-meaning group or organization will surely not countenance a wrongful act and will most likely pressure the wrongdoer with either rectifying the misdeed, and if the violations are clearly in a large scale, the poor fellow will likely be disliked, detested if not severely ostracized.

N - No escape. There is simply nothing in this world that disappears completely or vanishes into thin air. One may be successful in sweeping the dirt under the rug sometimes but somehow the dirt stays and it's

a matter of time before it is discovered by someone else.

K - Konsensya. If all of the above pleasant reminders fail, how can one forget the favorite cliché of the Filipino - "Konsensya mo na lang." One may escape the authorities for a long time but I doubt it if he won't go nuts soon, what with that mirror image appearing unscheduled during his solitary moments anywhere, everywhere.

At the institutional level, I would have wanted to discuss a basic, albeit often neglected corporate measure to help discourage, if not substantially eradicate, cheating and corrupt practices in the workplace. It has got something to do with the formal Corporate Planning Process that many progressive companies both in the private and public sectors employ, although it is my personal experience that this measure is more common in private organizations like banks and sales oriented manufacturing and real estate companies. It is the periodic monitoring, assessment and planning system that is set up as an integral part of a year round formal corporate planning framework in the organization.

This corporate performance measure is called in many different ways in different settings: Quarterly Sales and Performance Review; Semestral Appraisal and Performance Review; Accomplishment versus Targets Periodic Reporting; Performance or Program Review and Analysis; and so on and so forth. GM Cusi has institutionalized our Performance Review and Analysis (PRA).

There are many deviations in formats and emphasis but the fundamental objective is to strengthen the goal of target setting phase and the project monitoring and assessment of the corporate planning cycle. Through more judicious planning of projects for a given period, complete with the careful and accurate estimation of project costs and manpower responses, the allocation of resources are rationalized right from the start. Commitments are made with respect to planned projects and deliverables and these are assessed on a periodic basis using the parameters set by management such that all accomplishments are reviewed whether variations are justifiable or not.

The key to this corporate performance measure is the periodic verbal and written presentation of the unit heads with the top honcho

THINK P7C2

MOA signed between the Ombudsman and the Diocesan Social Action Centers Group

By Virginia P. Santiago

GRAFT AND CORRUPTION, in any form, and at whatever extent, has deleterious effects on the individual citizens of the nation causing them, especially the poor, untold sufferings and stripping them of dignity. The existence and prevalence of graft and corruption have seriously diminished the efficient, economical and effective operations of the government and the delivery of basic services to the people. The government has scarce resources available in fighting corruption, thus, it has to give strategic and effective focus on ensuring transparency and value-for-money in the disbursement of the IRA of the LGU, government procurement and conduct of lifestyle check as an effective means to detect graft and corruption.

Such a huge task in combating graft and corruption cannot be successfully waged, by government alone. It requires multi-sectoral coalition among businessmen and professionals, church groups and other civil society organizations.

In this endeavor, the different Diocesan Social Action Centers of Capiz, Aklan, San Jose de Antique, Bacolod City, San Carlos City, Kabankalan City, Dumaguete City and Romblon, represented by their Directors, namely: Rev. Fr. Aristides S. Pedrajas, Rev. Fr.



Tanodbayan Simeon V. Marcelo joins the officers of different Diocesan Social Action Centers in a photo ops at the MOA signing between the Ombudsman and the DSACG.

Isauro P. David, Rev. Fr. Edmund G. Gicaraya, Rev. Fr. Aniceto A. Buenafe, Jr., Rev. Fr. Eduardo L. Laude, Rev. Fr. Rolando Nueva, Very Rev. Msgr. Merlin T. Logronio and Rev. Fr. Joraype Amadeo M. Flores entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Office of the Ombudsman, represented by the Honorable Tanodbayan Simeon V. Marcelo on August 4, 2005 at Iloilo City.

In said MOA, the Diocesan Social Action Centers Group pledged to help the Ombudsman to establish, achieve and sustain, good governance. They also pledged to aid the Office of the Ombudsman in the conduct of lifestyle probe, by gathering data and detailed information on properties, perceived to be or apparently, beyond the lawful income of the government official, giving priority to the officials and employees of revenue-generating

offices, namely: Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), Bureau of Customs (BOC) and the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH). They likewise pledged to provide volunteers who will sit as observers in the bidding committees of any government agencies, monitor implementation of awarded contracts/projects of any government agencies. They will also conduct IRA watch.

To be effective partners, the Diocesan Social Action Centers Group and its members shall undergo adequate training-seminars in the conduct of lifestyle checks and investigations, as well as on wealth monitoring, red flags in procurement, monitoring the implementation of awarded contracts and IRA watch. This is voluntary on the part of the Diocesan Social Action Centers Group, with the end in view of achieving good governance.

EC-OMB

from page 8

component are the training of CSO/NGO observers and monitors for the government procurement process as well as lifestyle check training.

Component 2: Winning the Cooperation of the Wider Public This component is intended to establish a mechanism for the continuous flow of corruption prevention information to the public. Through the twelve (12) activities under this component, corruption prevention efforts can be broadcasted to the entire nation and at the same time encourage the public to join the same. Some of the activities under this project are the Text Katiwalian, in which the public may report corrupt activities to the OMB by means of the popular text messaging service; and the Multi-Event Competition, which promotes awareness of the evils of corruption through essay, slogan and poster-making contests.

Component 3: Co-operation with other Government Agencies

As the component title indicates, the activities under it will foster corruption prevention initiatives on select government agencies. For this project, sixteen (16) government agencies have given their commitment to participate in this endeavor. The participating agencies come from three (3) thematic areas identified to be the most vulnerable to corruption: Procurement (i.e. DepEd, DOH, DND, etc.); Public Works/Infrastructure (i.e. DPWH, LRTA, DENR, etc.) and Revenue Generation (BIR,

BOC and LTO).

This component also seeks to improve the capacity of middle managers to reduce the risks of corruption. To realize this objective, the 16 participating agencies will undergo the Integrity Development Review (IDR). The IDR is a tool that will help identify the risk and areas of the agency vulnerable to corruption and determine whether the agency's existing anti-corruption mechanisms have actually reduced corruption on specified areas.

Component 4: Management Requirement of the OMB

This component is aimed to enhance OMB's capacity to meet the objectives of the Corruption Prevention Project and to successfully implement the different activities in the first 3 components. Pursuant to this, a Project Task Force, composed of OMB personnel, has been created to ensure the proper management of the EU grant and to achieve a high degree of success for the project. Some of the activities under this component are the establishment of an Integrity Development Institute and the capacity-building trainings for OMB personnel.

The Corruption Prevention Project is an undertaking not only by the OMB but also in conjunction with CSOs/NGOs, other government agencies and the wider public. The co-operation of each of these partners/stakeholders is essential in attaining the success for the project. Each must do its part to help alleviate the present condition of corruption in the country. The success of the EC-OMB Corruption Prevention Project will undoubtedly entail a step closer to a corrupt-free Philippines.

General

from page 2

allocation, distribution and releases to the Army, Navy, Air Force, and to the different Area Commands. Moreover, he also had a say in the release of funds whenever there were centralized procurements of clothing and uniforms including combat boots, helmets, pins and medals, and other basic paraphernalia.

Centralized procurements would also involve military equipment and weapons, vehicles, and materials for construction of buildings and other military facilities. Now, he is accused of Plunder and several counts of Perjury before the Sandiganbayan, the Anti-Graft Court. Based on the criminal information for Plunder, Major Gen. Garcia was able to "amass, accumulate and acquire ill-gotten wealth in the form of funds, landholdings and other real and personal properties, in the aggregate amount of THREE HUNDRED THREE MILLION TWO HUNDRED SEVENTY-TWO THOUSAND FIVE AND 99/100 Pesos (P303,272,005.99)," in conspiracy with members of his immediate family and other persons. Detained at the Camp Crame like any other detention prisoner, Garcia wants to be transferred to the V. Luna Medical Center allegedly because he suffers from sleep abnormality and needs

a better place to stay. A Motion for this purpose which was filed by his counsel, was denied by the court.

The Perjury cases stemmed from the alleged failure of Garcia to include in his Statements of Assets, Liabilities and Networth (SALN) for the years 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 certain motor vehicles owned by him and his family. A Toyota Previa, a Mitsubishi L-300 Van De Luxe, and a 1997 Honda Civic 1.6 VTI were not declared in Garcia's SALN. His deposits and investments in the Armed Forces and Police Savings and Loan Association, Inc. (AFPSLA), amounting to P12,003,117.70 were not included in his SALN for the year 2000.

Think

from page 6

and key officers of the organization who are able to devote a generous amount of time in scrutinizing results of operations of all units whether they belong to the so-called profit centers or the support and cost centers. Mere submission of periodic reports is not good enough and again, if we go by Mr Fulghum's quotable quotes, he writes "the examined life is no picnic." Professional Filipino managers, like the Japanese, can get very

particular about their reputation in the workplace and would certainly make sure they don't lose face while reporting on behalf of their units.

Basically we learned long before that "An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure". I think I just ran out space, please allow this writer to stop here. If I get lucky I might have an invitation to write another feature. But I don't think so.

Nonetheless, we at MIAA are willing to share some trade secrets for more efficient and effective operations (the Authority registered a Net Income after Tax figure of Php 366 million, which reflects a substantial improvement of Php 52 million or 16% over the same period last year and also produces a hefty favorable variance over the 2005 first semester income target of Php 233 million by 57%). Rest assured that such other preventive measures I may share in the future need not be as restrictive as the proverbial chastity belt of yore that were employed just to make sure that the beloved wife won't cheat on the doubting husband as he hunts for food and new territories and as he probably conquers new communities and tries on other ladies for size. No. Nothing of that sort, dear readers. Thank you for dropping by.

OMB-LUZON

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integrity; and (iv) identifying and emulating positive role models. In this regard, it is important to recognize and prepare for the stresses that can lead an ethical person to commit unethical acts — acts the individual knows to be wrong. Preventing these occurrences should be a priority.

4. I believe in the Ehem! Aha! project. It is an innovative and nationwide anti-corruption partnership between the Office of the Ombudsman and the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus. If people can open their hearts and minds to it, it will give them a renewed zeal to fight corruption. For Christians, I recommend the Purpose Driven Life Seminars (PDL) as a sequel to the Ehem! Aha! Cultural Sensitivity Seminar. PDL enables a person to tap resources other than his own. Through a miracle of God, he can be transformed or regenerated and have power he was not born with. Imagine a leopard hating his spots because he wants to resemble a lion; but alas, he cannot change his skin, and neither can we change our hearts. Only God can do that.

(To be continued)

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The views and opinions in this

Newsletter do not necessarily

reflect those of the European

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Customs

from page 4

minute video) on the rules and regulations to guide arriving passengers.

5. **CCTV monitors** in the examination lanes are regularly upgraded which has 24-hour audio and video recording of the interaction of Customs Officer and passengers. Passengers on queue can also view how his/her clearance is carried out by customs frontliners. This will also deter any acts of infractions.

I V . S O C I A L

R E S P O N S I B I L I T Y P R O J E C T S

1. GAWAD KALINGA, com

munity involvement of BOC

The Bureau of Customs aside from its mandate of revenue collection has now inspired many people nationwide since it has taken on the challenge of reaching out to slum communities thru their deep involvement with a livelihood and community development project-GAWAD KALINGA (GK) spearheaded by former Commissioner Antonio M. Bernardo, which is now being continued by all Commissioners after his term. All the 14 ports nationwide has adopted a Gawad Kalinga community and almost 70%

of BOC employees nationwide have been exposed to GK sites every week-end, interacting with the poor and physically helping them paint and build their houses, organize medical missions and join sports events with the beneficiaries. *BOC personnel, as they become exposed to less privileged families, become more appreciative of simple lifestyles.*

2. **NATIONWIDE CLEANLINESS PROGRAM** All 14 ports, including CUSTOMS- NAIA are encouraged to clean their offices and surroundings on a regular basis, simultaneous in all

ports on announced dates. With the belief "*Ang paglilinis ng kapaligiran, ay paglilinis ng kalooban*". Customs-NAIA now headed by District-Collector Ricardo R. Belmonte and its officials will continue to create more programs and with the leadership of Customs Commissioner Alexander Arevalo, the Bureau is also actively conceptualizing its "CIAP" or the **CUSTOMS INTEGRITY ACTION PLAN** which the Commission will soon implement nationwide, with the intention of bringing out the best of each public servant in the Bureau of Customs who are morally upright and with high ethical standards.



FORGED TIES. Tanodbayan Simeon V. Marcelo, CSC Chair Karina Constantino-David and COA Chairperson Guillermo Carague sign the Solana Covenant II in a joint move to further enhance and expand their collective initiatives toward effective corruption deterrence, detection and prevention. Mr. Tony Kwok and Mr. Roger De Backer of the European Commission witness the signing of Solana Covenant II.

OMB, COA and CSC Forge SOLANA Covenant II

By Bessie Z. Servando

AFTER 15 MONTHS of aggressive implementation of the individual and collective actions embodied in the Solana Covenant I, the heads of the Office of the Ombudsman, Commission on Audit and the Civil Service Commission had collectively resolved to further enhance and expand their joint undertakings toward effective corruption deterrence, detection and prevention by way of forging anew a Memorandum of Agreement dubbed as Solana Covenant II.

The partnership between and among these independent constitu-

tional bodies all started in January 2004 in a far-flung, remote, quiet but beautiful place, they call the SOLANA, a dive spot in Anilao, Batangas. CSC Chair Karina Constantino-David, COA Commissioner Emmanuel Dalman representing Chairperson Guillermo Carague and Tanodbayan Simeon V. Marcelo together with Anti-Corruption Chief Adviser of the EC-OMB Corruption Project Tony Kwok convened a summit to forge a Joint Anti-Corruption Plan thru the technical assistance of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

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CSOs Participate in DepEd's TEXTBOOK COUNT

By Cezar M. Tirol II

ON AUGUST 3, 2005, Acting Assistant Ombudsman for PACPO, Evelyn A. Baliton and Resident Ombudsman for Department of Education (DepEd), Liza Fidelis F. Cañada, witnessed the signing of commitment of the 33 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), namely: the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, Alliance of Volunteer Educators, Association of Ministers and Ministries in Nueva Ecija, Ateneo School of Government, Barug! Pilipino, Boy Scouts of the Philippines, Brotherhood of Destiny, Caucus of Development NGO Networks, Christian Convergence for Good Governance, Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Government, Civil Society Network for Education Reforms, Don Bosco Technical Institute, Makati City, BSP, Fellowship of Christians in Government, Girl Scouts of the Philippines, Kapatiran Kaunlaran Foundation, Konsensyang Pilipino, Naga City People's Council, National Citizens Movement for Free Elections, Negros Center for People Empowerment and Rural Development, Procurement Watch, Inc., Rahma Qur'anic Center and Mosque Foundation, Social Watch Visayas, Student Catholic Action, Ten Outstanding Boy Scouts of the Philippines Association, Transparency and Accountability Network, UP Bannuar, UP Harong, UP Kamayo, Victory Campus Ministry, Volunteers for a Libertarian Society, YES Tejeros, Young Moro Professionals Network, Inc., and Youth Empowering Youth Forum. The Consortium of CSOs has committed to render volunteer service in inspecting textbooks, teacher's manuals and

lesson guides at the printing presses/warehouses and in monitoring the delivery of textbooks at the recipient high schools, districts and elementary schools.

The DepEd has officially recognized the Consortium of CSOs as an external citizens group to undertake the monitoring and inspection of textbooks for the *Textbook Count 3: National Textbook Delivery Program*, a program that aims to ensure the delivery of 1,265,218 instructional materials to 13,245 locations (4,399 high schools, 445 districts and 8,401 elementary schools) through on-the-spot monitoring and inspection with the participation of civil society organizations.

On November 13, 2002, DepEd opened bids of the single largest procurement for the supply and delivery of textbooks and teacher's manuals for forty-two subjects in all ten grade/year levels of elementary and secondary education. This procurement, the largest in the Department of Education history was funded under the Second Social Expenditure Management Project (SEMP 2) and the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) financed by the World Bank (WB). This program is also known as the *Textbook Count I: National Textbook Delivery Program*, managed by the Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS). This program achieved a number of highlights in DepEd's history, as to the reduced price of textbooks, quantity, enhanced quality, delivery sites, and timeliness in delivery and payment. *Textbook Count I* positively resulted to a shorter procurement cycle and more transparent process.



From November 2003 to November 2004, DepEd has undertaken the implementation of the *Textbook Count 2: National Textbook Delivery Program*. This involved the procurement of 13.6 million instructional materials, which cost P660 million. Seven suppliers were able to deliver to 2,158 districts and 5,498 high schools, with 18 civil society organizations helping the department in the monitoring and inspection of the deliveries.

The then Education Secretary Florencio Abad commended the program for providing a model for governance and anti-corruption initiative, which can be replicated by other government agencies. It is also considered a factor for the better public perception of the DepEd, which is now in the Top 5 cleanest government agencies. Tanodbayan Simeon V. Marcelo, in his message during the launching of *Textbook Count II*, considered the program as an inspiration for the anti-corruption drive of the Office of the Ombudsman because it has shown how a programmed participation in governance can actually prevent corruption. He commended the DepEd's effort and the civil society's readiness to help.

MASTHEAD CONTEST

Who may Participate?

- Bonafide High School or College Students
- Employees from the Private and Public Sectors
- The General Public
- OMB officials/employees
- European Commission Staff

Each entry must contain the Ombudsman logo. All text should be in English, not more than three (3) words. Entries shall be submitted in the following format:

- 8.5" x 11" sized paper, landscape orientation
- Electronic data copy in compact disc, along with participant's full name, complete address and contact numbers. Deadline for submission of entries is on January 15, 2006 at the following OMB offices:

NCR Participants:

ATTY. ROMEO I. TAN
Director, Community Coordination Bureau
Office of the Ombudsman, Agham Road,
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 926-87-80, 926-87-81

Luzon Participants:

ATTY. WILBERT L. CANDELARIA
Director, Public Assistance and Corruption Prevention Office, Office of the Ombudsman, 3F, Ombudsman Building, Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Trunkline: 926-9032 to 40 loc. 330 and 334

Visayas Participants:

ATTY. VIRGINIA P. SANTIAGO
Director, Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for the Visayas, Department of Agriculture Compound, M. Velez St., Guadalupe, Cebu City 6000, Tel. No. 255-0977

Mindanao Participants:

ATTY. RODOLFO M. ELMAN
Director, Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Mindanao, 4F, H&C Building, Ramon Magsaysay cor. Alvarez St., Davao City 8000 Tel. Nos. 221-3421 to 33

Participants from the Military,

PNP and other Law

Enforcement Offices (MOLEO):

ATTY. RUDIGER G. FALCIS, II
Director, Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for the MOLEO, 3F OMB Bldg., Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Trunkline Nos.: 926-9032-40 loc. 314

OSP Participants:

ATTY. WENDELL B. SULIT
Acting Deputy Special Prosecutor, Sandiganbayan Bldg., Commonwealth Ave., Quezon City, Tel. No. 951-3155

Participants from Civil Society

Organizations/NGOs

ATTY. RAFAEL G. HIPOLITO
Bureau of Resident Ombudsman, 4F OMB Bldg., Agham Rd., Diliman, QC Tel. Nos. 926-8720/926-9032 loc. 462, 464

Participants from Partner Agencies

ATTY. CEZAR M. TIROL, II
Office of the Resident Ombudsman - NAIA, 3F MIA Bldg., NAIA, Pasay City
Tel. No. 8771107 loc. 4077/78

Criteria:

The executive committee headed by the Honorable Ombudsman will judge the entries according to:

Creativity and Originality50%
Style and Presentation50%
(Harmony, Balance, Emphasis and Proportion) There will be three winners with corresponding cash prizes.

1st place10,000.00PhP
2nd place5,000.00PhP
3rd place3,000.00PhP

The entry of the first prize winner upon evaluation by the executive committee will become the official masthead of the OMB Newsletter in its second issue and onwards.

The EC-OMB Corruption Prevention Project: A step closer to a Corrupt-Free Philippines

By Laurie Layne P. Cristobal

The corruption situation in the Philippines is no secret. Many tolerate its sad state to the extent that it is almost a way of life. In the past, several attempts have been made to combat corruption, but so far no giant step has been made towards a corrupt-free Philippines.

The Office of the Ombudsman (OMB), the country's front-runner in the fight against corruption, has undertaken the execution and implementation of the **European Commission-Office of the Ombudsman (EC-OMB) Corruption Prevention Project**. This project, with funding support from

the European Union (EU) under its Improving Governance to Reduce Poverty programme, stemmed from the idea that prevention is a thousand times better than the cure. The overall objective of the project, as its connotation suggests, is to prevent corruption in the Philippines, through the strengthened cooperative efforts between the OMB and the civil society/non-government organizations (CSOs/NGOs), wider public and participating as well as collaborating government agencies. In addition, the project seeks to ensure that the OMB has the technical expertise to meet this objective.

The Corruption Prevention

Project was launched last May 12, 2005, coinciding with the 17th Anniversary of the OMB, with Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo gracing the occasion. The period of execution will end on February 15, 2009.

The entire project is comprised of forty-five (45) activities grouped into four (4) project components: **Component 1: Collaboration with Civil Society Organizations.**

The activities under this component are aimed to support and build the capacity of the CSOs/NGOs that are collaborating with the OMB to prevent corruption. The collaboration is focused on tapping the specific expertise and wide reach network of the CSOs/NGOs throughout the country. Among the activities lined up under this

EC-OMB P7



The EC-OMB Project Task Force headed by its Project Manager, Ador G. Paulino (standing 1st from right) takes time to pose during their break at the Project Cycle Management Seminar in Fontana Leisure Park Clarkfield, Pampanga on November 30 to December 2, 2005.