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BHUTAN MEASURES WEALTH BY GROSS NAT'L HAPPINESS

STORY IN PAGE 2

BARANGAY LEADERS: BE AGENTS OF CHANGE

By Clarisse Aquino

Professor Nene Pimentel, Jr. challenged barangay leaders of Aklan to be agents of change because they were elected to serve, and not to be served.

This was the message of Pimentel, Chairman of the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance during a briefing on local governance at the University of Makati participated in by over forty barangay officials of Banga, Madalaga and New

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Word from the Center

LINCOLN: the Message and the Messenger of the Democratic Ideal

[Based on the Remarks of Prof. Nene Pimentel at the Premier Showing of 'Lincoln' on February 22, 2013, Rockwell, Makati]

The film, 'Lincoln' highlights the great man's take on the basic meaning of life and liberty in a democratic State.

For those who are into history or even historical fiction, the film's subject matter breathes

a life of urgent relevance into our country's democratic experiment today.

For while our democracy is indeed alive, it is still being threatened by armed insurgencies in certain areas of the country. In fact, on the morning of the day the film was premiered media broadcast the unsettling news that a band of armed men, presumably rebels, had attacked a

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EXPERTS DIAGNOSE RP GOVERNANCE

By Jay Dejaresco

Experts from the government and the academe gathered to assess the state of governance in the Philippines, identifying the flaws that need to be corrected, systems that need improvement, in order to make it more viable, and responsive to the needs of a the people in the future.

In attendance in the roundtable dialogue last February 28 at the Pimentel Center for Leadership and Governance, were Prof. Nene Pimentel Jr., former President of the Senate who welcomed the distinguished guests who have held significant government positions.

The discussion was facilitated by PILG senior fellow

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BHUTAN

From Page 1

Fourteen delegates from the Kingdom of Bhutan came to the Philippines to introduce the unique way by which wealth is measured in their nation: Gross National Happiness (GNH).

While most countries measure wealth by orthodox economic indicators like Gross National Product, or Gross Domestic Product, the Kingdom of Bhutan gauges true wealth on the happiness of its people.

The delegation from the Kingdom of Bhutan visited the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance to exchange views on decentralization of government powers to local governments.

Heading the Bhutan delegation was Karma Weezer, a leader of a district in Bhutan which they named Dzongdag, meaning chief, of Samtse Dzongkhag.

"Dzongkhag" means a district where an official governs.

The other members of the Bhutan delegation were Mr. Karma Drukpa (Dzongdag, Zhemgang Dzongkhag), Mr. Karma Rinchen (Drungpa, Sibs, Samtse Dzongkhag), Mr. Pema Wangdi (Drungpa, Gelephu, Sarpang Dzongkhag), Mr. Sonam Norbu (DT Chairperson, Samtse Dzongkhag).



Mr. Karma Weezer, head of the Bhutan delegation to the Philippines, explains the unique way Bhutan measures the wealth of their nation, which is based on what they term as Gross National Happiness, during a roundtable discussion at the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance (PILG). (February 13)

The other members of the delegation were Mr. Dorji Wangchuk (DT Chairperson, Zhemgang Dzongkhag), Mr. Sherab Jamtsho (DT Chairperson, Sarpang Dzongkhag), Mr. Chandra Prasad Phuyel (DT Deputy Chairperson, Samtse Dzongkhag), Mr. Sangay Letho (DT Deputy Chairperson, Zhemgang Dzongkhag), Mr. Karma Galeg (DT Deputy Chairperson, Sarpang Dzongkhag).

Also accompanying the Bhutan group were Mr. Sonam Gyeltshen (Deputy Chief Human Resource Officer, Ministry of Home & Cultural Affairs), Ms. Sonam Deki (Accountant, Ministry of Home & Cultural Affairs), Tsheten Dorji (Programme Officer, Department of Local Governance, Ministry of Home & Cultural Affairs),

Mr. Dorji Tshering (Asst. Programme Officer, Department of Local Governance, Ministry of Home & Cultural Affairs).

The visiting officials explained the concept of Gross National Happiness, which they say is a philosophy that gives premium to the happiness of a people their spiritual, emotional well being, and the general quality of life, over and above the usual material indicators of a nation's wealth.

Gross national Happiness refers to the concept of highlighting a people's level of happiness and well being, instead of their material worth or possessions.

Thus, there is a national consciousness to instill the wellness of a people in terms of their physical, spiritual, men-

tal condition.

Bhutan is a democratic constitutional monarchy, one of a few in the world.

The Kingdom of Bhutan is located in the eastern Himalayas, between Tibet in the north, and the Indian territories to the south and east.

The area of Bhutan is around 47,000 square kilometres, roughly the size of Switzerland.

Right in the heart of the high Himalayan mountain range, Bhutan is a land-locked country.

Bhutan's innovative way of measuring wealth different from the way wealth is measured in other nations, has taken strides and has been recognized by other countries.



Prof. Nene Pimentel Jr. receives a plaque of appreciation from the Local Government Academy for his contributions in promoting local autonomy in the Philippines. Looking on are Karma Weezer of Bhutan, Louisa Bite of LGA, Pastor Hugh Nguyen and Alex Brillantes, PILG Fellows.



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<p>Editorial Director Contributing Writers Artist/Photographer Publisher Editorial Consultant Editorial Staff</p>	<p>Jay Dejaresco Alex Brillantes Roy Carandang Reneliza Ferrer Jaime Ocampo Nene Pimentel Raymund Rosuelo Ed Tapia Cris Uy reyronda Gwen Gana Coylee Gamboa Clarisse Aquino Maelyn Calizo Carla Caringal</p>
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Pimentel Center for Local Governance
 Pimentel Institute for Leadership & Governance
 4th Floor Administration Building, University of Makati,
 JP Rizal Extension, West Rembo, Makati City
 Telephone No.: 882-0678 loc 307
 Email: info@pimentelinstitute.org, rcroffice@yahoo.com.ph
 Website: www.pimentelinstitute.org

WORD*From Page 1*

police detachment in a town in Misamis Oriental.

'Lincoln' demonstrates that even in times of national stress, our leaders must never forget the essence of democratic governance, that is, a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

It was for that basic democratic principle that Abraham Lincoln, as President, insisted that elections must be held as scheduled even if the US was then in the throes of civil war.

And as an added lesson for us, in this time and age when we often hear religious freaks rabble rouse their followers into believing that the Almighty is with their cause, it is good to remember Lincoln's admonition that it is better for us to make certain that we are on God's side than assert the self-serving claim that He is on ours.

Incidentally, critics say that there are some historical flaws in the film. They cite as an example the votes of two Connecticut legislators who allegedly opposed President Lincoln's anti-slavery proclamation. I understand that

an apology has been issued by responsible people for the gaffe with the assurance that the matter would be rectified.

But even if there are historical errors, the film is certainly awesome in tackling a subject matter that is larger than life, appealing in the versatility of its actors, and impressive in the scope of its production and direction.

In fact, it is a leading contender for best picture and other categories in the Oscar Awards for this year.

I have not watched a movie in any theater or on television or through my computer for more than 10

years.

I sat through the screening of Lincoln - failing eyes and all - at the Power Plant cinema in Rockwell last Friday, February 22.

I must add it was worth the swelling ankles and aching hips that followed the show.

Our thanks and congratulations are due to Dr. Alex Brillantes, President of the Philippine Society of Public Administration, and the leaders of the Center for Leadership and Governance for their kind sponsorship of the film.

BARANGAY*From Page 1*

Washington, Aklan province.

"You are agents of change--- for the better--- of your barangays," Pimentel told the visiting local officials.

"That's why you were elected by your people--- to serve them, not to enrich yourself," Pimentel stressed.

"You cannot change the lives of your people and barangay, if you think only of your welfare, not of your people's and your community's advancement," Pimentel added.

He also stressed that as leaders of their barangays, they are the pillars of their city or municipality.

The barangay leaders from Aklan embarked on a three day learning trip to Manila traveling from Caticlan to the island province of Mindoro, to Batangas



Prof. Nene Pimentel, Jr. reminds barangay leaders from Aklan that their principal role as barangay leaders is to be frontline public servants in the delivery of the basic needs of the people as they are government officials who are directly in contact with their constituents. (February 26)

and Metro Manila.

Pimentel briefed the local officials of their powers as barangay leaders.

He said the local government code has given barangay officials certain powers to effect that change in the lives of their people and barangays for the better.

These powers are the same powers possessed

by states, republics, kingdoms, independent countries, which are the power to promote the general welfare, the power to impose taxes, and the power of eminent domain.

In the case of barangays, admittedly these powers are limited, Pimentel said.

Aside from exercising these powers limited in scope, barangay leaders

are also lupon tagapamayapa, or settlers of disputes within their respective barangays.

Barangay leaders are also persons in authority.

Pimentel said it is important that barangay leaders show the people they are deserving of the powers reposed upon them by the law, as duly elected leaders.

EXPERTS

From Page 1

Dr. Alex Brillantes, Jr..

The discussants were Toshiko Tanaka, Country Director of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), former University of the Philippines President Jose Abueva, former Interior and Local Governments Secretary Rafael Alunan III, University of the Philippines Professor and newspaper columnist Randy David, Former Civil Service Chair Corazon De Leon, Civil Service Commissioner May Fernandez.

Toshiko Tanaka, the country director of United Nations Development Program, kicked off the discussions by focusing on certain priority aspects that have a direct impact on governance issues.

These are Accountability, participative governance and anti corruption, poverty reduction, environmental sustainability and climate change, peace and security.

Tanaka emphasized that the dialogue would serve as inputs from experts in governance for United Nations agencies to work on in improving their programs in the country.

Dr. Jose Abueva, a member of the 1971 Constitutional Convention said that since the days of constitutional convention, it was already a consensus that a presidential form of



A roundtable discussion on the future of governance in the Philippines gathers some of the best political minds consisting of members of the academe and former high ranking officials in government at the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance. The forum was convened upon initiative of the UNDP as part of its overall effort to prepare a theme paper on the Future of Governance.(February 28)

government is a system that does not work well for the benefit of the people.

Second, a highly centralized government has posed hindrances in the development of the nation particularly the countryside.

In the present, we are still facing the same issues that were tackled in decades past, he said.

The country still struggles in finding a suitable system that will lead to fulfilling our vision.

He proposed the abolition of very expensive national elections that elect presidential, vice presidential, senatorial candidates.

He suggested the adoption

of a parliamentary system of government, because the presidential system has proven to be prone to political gridlock.

He described the country as being a "soft state."

Soft states are dominated by the power that only serve their own interests, and not the majority of the people.

We need a strong democratized state that is able to withstand pressures of people with vested interests.

Former Secretary Rafael Alunan III emphasized what is important in good governance is synchronicity, making the left hand know what the right hand is doing.

"We remain stuck in a corner of mediocrity where even

simple problems are not addressed," he added.

Prof. Randy David stressed the distinction between politics and governance because failure to make the distinction appears to be the main problem with governance in the country.

There is confusion surrounding the terms governance and politics David said

Politics and Governance belong to a society's political system, as opposed to belonging to a religious and economic system.

Politics proper is a mechanism by which political power is contested and maintained, by which people elect leaders to make collectively binding



Resource Speakers: Dir. Toshiko Tanaka



Dr. Jose Abueva



Prof. Randy David

decisions that is applicable to all, he explained.

Governance on the other hand, refers to the processes and mechanisms by which that political power is used or employed in order to attain the collective goals of a society at large, and not just party goals.

Governance problems can be visible in the long queues for ordinary folks just to get an NBI clearance, and the problem in birth documentations.

David said the main problem of governance is that it is not sufficiently autonomous from politics.

Many bureaucrats are timid and are somewhat afraid to step into the toes of those who wield political power.

For any governance institution to work, it has to enjoy a certain level of autonomy from political forces.

Otherwise the administrative structures will be nothing but playthings of particular regimes, David said

He also reminded that governance occurs within a political sphere.

Technocrats who enter government face problems because they are not able to interlink governance with political realities.

In our country, the main problem is neither populism of government, nor technocracy, but the rather the lack of proper insulation of our governance institutions from politi-



Experts from the academe and former government officials aired their thoughts and sentiments on the future of governance in the Philippines, in the hope of making government responsive and relevant to the needs of the people. (February 28)

cal forces.

He cited the work of the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance in its thrust to train and develop the knowhow of local government leaders in improving their functions as part of the sphere of governance.

These institutions are essential to the professionalization of those who run the government, he said.

Former Chair Corazon De Leon of the Civil Service was reminded by former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher who suggested to her three things to do in area of governance:

First is to streamline the bureaucracy, then fight graft and corruption, and then pay

the civil servants well.

De Leon stressed that for government to be effective, government must be accessible, answerable.

This means that government must answer the queries of the people.

Government must respond truthfully to people's questions, she said.

Government too must be accountable, she added.

She explained Accountability is nothing but the ability to account the funds received

Corazon De Leon said she spent thirty four years in government.

She currently teaches ethics at the Ateneo School of Government.

For his part Nene Pimentel, Jr. emphasized that that speedy delivery of justice, which is a mandate by our Constitution must have

Delivery of justice is an aspect of governance that needs to be given some attention.

He lamented the sad state of our system of justice where it takes many years to resolve a case.

He said he just attended as a witness in the first hearing of a complaint he filed nine years ago, In 2004.

All the inputs of the experts gathered during the roundtable discussion will be processed to be incorporated in a theme paper for the UNDP the Future of Governance.



Resource Speakers: Sec. Rafael Alunan



Comm. May Fernandez



Chair. Cora De Leon

KOKO: OFWS MUST HAVE GREATER VOICE IN OUR ELECTORAL EXERCISES

By Jay Dejaresco

Senator Aquilino Koko Pimentel III has emphasized the need to enable Overseas Filipino Workers to have greater access in participating in the political affairs of the nation so their voices and interests will be heard during political exercises.

Senator Pimentel, who chairs the committee on electoral reforms, have included the welfare of Overseas Filipino Workers, particularly in the aspect of making it easier for Filipinos abroad to vote during elections.

Pimentel is spearheading the passage of amendments of Republic Act No. 9189 otherwise known as Overseas Absentee Voters Act of 2003.

One of the amendments to the overseas absentee voters act is to allow Filipinos those who have retained or reacquired Philippine citizenship under Republic Act no. 9925, to register and vote.

Under the overseas voters absentee voters act, overseas Filipinos who have renounced their Philippine citizenship, or have pledged allegiance to a foreign country are no longer able to register and to vote.

Under Senate Bill No. 3312, applicants who have



Senator Aquilino Koko Pimentel III, speaks during a roundtable discussion on OFW concerns, expressing his views on how to improve the lives of Filipinos working abroad. The welfare of OFW is one of the main advocacies of Senator Pimentel as Senator, where he has sponsored legislative measures protecting and promoting the interests of Filipinos abroad. He has worked to involve overseas Filipinos in the political affairs of governments by making it easier for OFWs to vote during elections. (February 28)

availed themselves of the citizen retention and reacquisition act shall present the original or certified true copy of the order of approval of their application to retain or reacquire their Filipino citizenship to enable them to register and vote.

Many overseas Filipinos will be able to avail themselves of this privilege and be able to participate in the electoral exercises of the country.

Pimentel underscored the importance of the voices of overseas Filipinos who contribute substantial finances to the country through their remittances which are a vital resource in nation-building.

That is why Pimentel said it is important that their voices be heard too, even if they are from far away lands.

Meanwhile, Senator Pimentel also called for a more efficient implementation of the laws against human traf-

ficking.

Many of the young innocent Filipinos are illegally smuggled out of the country by unscrupulous trafficking syndicates only to be exploited and made to work in unfavorable working conditions.

He said those engaged in human trafficking should be dealt with the full force of the law, and be meted the penalties imposed by law so as to deter the proliferation of such criminal syndicates.



Former Sulu Governor Tilah also discusses about the issues on the claim of Sultan of Sulu in North Borneo (Sabah).



Prof. Nene Pimentel Jr. (third from left) gives citations to Jun Aguilar an advocate for OFWs, Victor Barrios, and former Sulu Gov. Al Tilah.

GRAD STUDENTS BRIEFED ON GOOD GOVERNANCE

By Clarisse Aquino

Prof. Nene Pimentel Jr., Chair of the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance (PILG) conducted a briefing on Good Governance and Effective Leadership for National Transformation to graduates students of Pampanga Agricultural College at the University of Makati last February 27.

Pimentel said that in order to transform our nation for the better, we need good citizens and good leaders.

“Transforming communities for the better needs citizens and leaders who believe in it,” Pimentel stressed.

Citizens, as opposed to non-residents



(L-R) UMak VP Dalisay Brawner, President Tom Lopez, Prof. Nene Pimentel and Prof. Raymund John Rosuelo. (February 27).

or transient aliens’ are people living in a country or a State who owe allegiance to it and whose rights and obligations are fixed by its laws.

Meanwhile, leaders, are people who by custom, tradition or law exercise power over the lives of the people in their communities

or countries or States.

“Leaders need not be in public office. Leaders can be in the private sector,” Pimentel said.

There are many descriptions of who are good citizens and good leaders.

Pimentel said in order to be effective,

leaders must have character competence and courage.

He explained that in order to be good citizens, people must obey the law, respect the rights of others, and exercise the rights of citizenship, like paying the correct taxes, or perform public service.



Pictures with the officials and graduate students of Pampanga Agricultural College. (February 27).



Prof. Nene Pimentel speaks on the topic of Good Governance and Effective Leadership for National Transformation to the officials and graduate students of Pampanga Agricultural College during their visit at the Pimentel Center. (February 27)

RECENT PICTORIAL EVENTS



Isabela State University student pay a courtesy call on Prof. Nene Pimentel. (February 6)



Meeting with overseas Filipinos from Australia, the U.S and the Middle East. (February 22)



Visiting barangay officials from Banga, Province of Aklan. (February 26)



Visiting barangay officials from Madalag and New Washington, Province of Aklan. (February 26)



Pastor Roy Carandang receives a birthday cake from PILG Secretary Clarisse Aquino at the Center. (February 27)



Meeting with DILG NCR Director Renato Brim (center). (February 27)