



## ARSON CASE CLOSED; SUSPECT UNKNOWN

After AdDU's first arson incident, the Physical Plant Office (PPO) failed to identify a suspect due to lack of evidence, causing it to close the case. **PAGE 5**

## TOFI: PRICE OF EDUCATION

Every year, students face the Tuition and Other Fees Increase, or what is more known as TOFI, corollary to annual inflation rates and the plans of the educational institutions themselves. **PAGE 17**

## IDOLIZING THE DEATH SQUAD

Jessica, not her real name, was still in elementary when she allegedly discovered that her older brother was a member of a secret organization operating in Davao City. Their goal: to eradicate criminals. Their name: Davao Death Squad. **PAGE 29**

## THE CHAINS OF PORNOGRAPHY

We all have our dirty little secrets, be it binge watching a very shallow reality TV show or hiding a forbidden love affair. We all crave that sense of privacy and release from everyday life. **PAGE 42**



His death was thought to be the end of a 46-year revolution, but circumstances may prove otherwise. As the body of the late New People's Army (NPA) commander Leoncio Pitao was carried along the streets of Davao in his funeral wake, the streets were painted red. **PAGE 25**

Supporters parade late Leoncio "Parago" Pitao's body to his final resting place. Photo/Mark Louie Balladares

## STRICT DRESS CODE GATHERS MIXED REACTIONS

Uniformity and order have always been the standard of many universities. However, the stricter implementation of Ateneo de Davao University's school dress code has garnered several mixed responses from its students. **PAGE 8**



# 1 OPINION

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# SORRY SCAPEGOATS

**THE LUMAD situation is intimate and complex. The cruelest thing a civilian could do as a response is to reduce their struggle to an NPA issue.**

Across Mindanao, lumad communities are fleeing their lands as continued militarization and senseless bloodshed violate the lumad's sense of safety in their own homes. In Davao

City alone, around 700 displaced lumad, including women and children, have been taking shelter at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) Haran. It has apparently

become a dangerous circumstance to become, or to even sympathize with, an indigenous person.

This has been a long evident problem, with

recent incidents (including the brutal death of Emerico Samarca, executive director of an alternative lumad learning center in Surigao del Sur) escalating in severity. Calls from

concerned groups for the withdrawal of military and paramilitary groups from lumad lands have fallen on deaf ears.

Claims of violence have been justified by the military as part of their counter-insurgency measures.

Firstly, the most unfortunate victims of lumad-targeted oppression are known for being vocal against human rights abuses or environmental exploitation. Their right to voice out their beliefs or to hold an ideology, especially for protection, should never be a basis for targeted attacks.

Secondly, even if these people are truly rebels, this does not justify the stark violence against them. Families should not even see their loved ones treated like pigs in broad daylight.

Thirdly, many other innocent lumad are forced to suffer because of these incidents. Whole communities are forced on exodus because of the violence.

As civilians, the convenient frame for us to imagine, being free from their struggles, is to believe the military that the killings were targeted toward the NPA. This mentality is toxic and supports the senseless violence and displacement of the communities. Why must so many more lumad families suffer?

This is the reality the lumad face: blame is put on them, and like other scapegoats, they are forced to suffer for the fault of other people.

As a country with heavy and well-defined attachments to the Catholic faith, it is appalling that the government is lenient on this issue. It would appear that violence has become a tool for the state to achieve its goals.

In response to claims of violence to extract information against terrorism, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) had to condemn torture. We hear this sentiment from Archbishop Socrates Villegas, CBCP president.

"Nothing justifies torture, more so when it is part of a scheme of lawlessness and sheer brigandage."

What more for murder?

Yet this "scheme of lawlessness and sheer brigandage" is downplayed and ignored. People in positions of power continue to sweep this under the rug.

As sensible human beings, we condemn the senseless violence against the lumad. We join our lumad brothers and sisters in their struggles.

We call on the AdDU community to participate in the cry for justice, and to participate in discussion toward peace. Let us aim to bring the lumad back home.

## ON ATENEANS AND FIGHTING FOR CHANGE

### LE GRANDE DOLINO 21ST CENTURY MAN



**In contemporary conversations, the word "activist" seems to have been needlessly defaced.**

While it is a term to describe persons involved in advocating for societal change, it has evolved into an insult and an object for blame. Apparently choosing to challenge the status quo is a grave disrespect to harmony, and anyone involved is an enemy.

In the first place, fighting for change in society will be controversial and difficult; we know that from NSTP lectures when we discuss the difference between justice and charity. We are in a university community that emphasizes justice. Fighting for change in a world of inequality must come naturally to Ateneans.

Instead, we flee from problems and rest in the status quo. We choose not to challenge what is presented to us because doing nothing is easier.

If the university's ideology truly resonates with its students, then the passion to help and the love for humanity must manifest themselves in terms of active involvement. Therefore, the immediate call for Ateneans is not to throw themselves headfirst into the pool of society's problems but to rather engage, discuss or refute with whatever the university (or other groups) choose to say about society. Having no opinion at all is a dangerous stance.

The problems of society are ours

too, even if we are not in a position that suffers from them. We do this not for ourselves but because of compassion to those who suffer. We have compassion because ultimately we too are human.

Thus, the culture of demonizing activists is appalling when we acknowledge that they do what they do out of compassion. Perhaps some activists choose to be controversial to be heard; either way societal change will be uncomfortable.

But activists are not restricted to what is conventionally imagined to be activism. Compassion need not restrict you to demonstrate on the streets. At the very least, compassion propels the human person to do everything in his or her power to help. Activism takes the form of education, volunteerism and many more. What is common is that there is a sincere want for societal change. Our education equips us to become activists, just not in how we traditionally think activists are.

Only by recognizing that people at the margins need our help could we sincerely help. And through our help could these people escape the margins.

Fundamentally, the choice to help should be a question every Atenean should come to ask by virtue of the education he or she receives. By not responding we fail not only the university but also the people who need our help.

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# 1 OPINION

## EDUCATING THE LUMAD

KATRINA KATE DIANNE PUNAY/WHAT'S WHAT



WHEN WE hear "indigenous peoples" or IPs, most of us think of the information we read from our textbooks back in elementary and high school. They embody most of any country's rich culture. Yet, as seen across the world, they are not necessarily a priority in today's highly modernized human society.

Indigenous peoples worldwide have always wanted equity in non-indigenous education systems. We can remember that the T'boli Senior High School in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, a joint-project of the Department of Education and the Ateneo de Davao University, was the "first-of-its-kind." With its first year of opening, it had a cultur-

ally sensitive curriculum that upholds, preserves, and promotes the T'boli tribe's culture. It was a good start, indeed, recognizing and acknowledging a diversity of Filipino learners that includes indigenous peoples.

Their education is important to protect. When the lumad from Surigao del Sur made headlines as victims of violence, we go back to how our government handles issues concerning IPs. On the one hand, IP conflicts arise from their protection of their ancestral lands. The connection of indigenous peoples to their land is extremely intimate that they associate their identity with it. Their right to their lands, in turn,

becomes the basis to their right to self-determination that no mining company owner, soldier, or rebel has the right to violate. Education empowers them to protect these rights, and ultimately, themselves.

However, it is a fact that, being far from cities, indigenous peoples do not benefit from the same government services as we do, especially education. It is a challenge to include them in government programs, with laws properly implemented to protect them like any citizen would want to be protected in his/her homeland.

Our education system is not perfect, yes, and there

“ Education empowers them to protect these rights, and ultimately, themselves. ”

are still many rooms for improvement. We have typhoon-prone classrooms becoming a learning environment for children sharing the same seat and book. Still, we have a long way to go, not only for the majority, but also the minority that includes our IPs who best carry our pride and heritage as one Filipino people.

Many lumad children want to be lawyers, teachers, and nurses to help their community. Their dreams are rooted in their value for their people. Now, we see that only when the lumad is educated does he or she have enough strength to stand rightly for their rights.

## A NEW ARENA FOR THE SUPREMACY BATTLE

JOHN PAULO VICENCIO/REMAINS OF A SOCIAL BULLET



GONE ARE the days that social media can be treated as an avenue for freedom of expression. Gone are the days when likes, shares, tweets and posts promote individuality. In our current context, the digital sphere of human life is already tainted, abused, and exploited. Every swipe, tap or click can be interpreted as a ticket of participation in the battle of the supremacy of political candidates, of the dominance of a single religion or sect, of the contest of fame, among others.

Although this may be due to the behavior of us users, I believe this trend in social media is largely caused nowadays by the people in power who aim to capture the social media audience to support their ideals. Television, newspaper, radio and other media that they have already tainted do not seem to satiate them anymore. Social media is

getting bigger by the generation, and they see it as potential business, not just in the economic sense.

Social media can be an important game changer, a secret weapon to win a long-existing stale battle in the other spheres of the world. There is a growing discrepancy between the older generation who watches or reads traditional media and the younger generation who updates on social media, with the latter being more evident. If these persons of power and money want to advance their ideals, the younger, larger, more susceptible social media lurkers are their best targets. Hence, pages supporting a particular candidate, businesses paying for advertisement in social media platforms, media networks promoting their newest shows and stars through hashtags, among

others, are rising in uncontrollable amounts.

This is detrimental to the social media users in a sense that these publishers, with their different hidden agenda, enclose the minds of the former so as to define their social media experience as exclusively for check up on and engagement with the latter. People nowadays log on Facebook out of boredom for example, but log-out liking already multiple pages about presidential candidates, posting multiple posts about their thoughts on politicians, and the like, largely because the environment on the social media platform supports or even promotes so.

This trend of exploitation of social media is not all destructive, however. With social media, advocacy campaigns from social and environmental groups can

“ Social media can be a potential game changer, a secret weapon to win a long-existing stale battle. ”

penetrate a bigger audience for example. News and other information platforms can inform more people, especially the younger generation. It is easier more than ever to support organizations for a cause, charities, among others. In general, the publishers who want to make a difference and not plan on exploiting their audiences still exist. It's just up to us to not make them obsolete.

We always have a choice. It's not easy to ignore the socially irrelevant but entertaining major trends of this generation, but it is possible with enough conviction, discipline and care for the future. It's up to us where to put our swipes, likes and taps to the use. I just hope we use them wisely.

Our gestures are becoming a resource. And resources always get exploited.

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## ARSON CASE CLOSED; SUSPECT UNKNOWN



A burnt trash bin placed outside the male restroom in the fifth floor Finster building serves as an evidence of the arson incidents. Photo/ Reil Benedict Obinque

REIL BENEDICT OBINQUE

AFTER ADDU's first arson incident, the Physical Plant Office (PPO) failed to identify a suspect due to lack of evidence, causing it to close the case.

The small fire incidents hit the male restrooms at the first and second floor Del Rosario Building, and fifth floor Finster building.

Jay Araiz, one of the school guards who responded to the incidents, said that at around 6:18 PM

he was asked to go to the male restroom at the first floor of Del Rosario building as smoke was reported to be coming out of it. When he reached there together with one of the chief security guards, they witnessed the plastic trashcan already on fire.

"Pag-abot namo sa CR sa lalaki, ang trashcan na plastic nagsiga na ug maayo," Araiz said.

An incident report dated July 4 from school guard Dapan, who was stationed near the fifth floor Finster

male restroom where the second incident occurred, indicated that he heard a student complaining that she smelled and witnessed smoke from the restroom. When the guard went to check, he saw a trash bin already burning, and immediately sprayed water to neutralize the fire.

Almost two hours after, Araiz, along with other school guards, responded to the third incident.

When the school guards reached the area, the fire on the wall and the floor of the

restroom was already out.

"Wala nagdugay ang siga kay murag thinner ang gigamit sa pagsunog," Araiz said.

He also mentioned that they tried to look for evidences. They saw burnt matchsticks scattered around the blackened floor.

Araiz said that the high voltage sign on the circuit breaker outside the said area was partly washed out, and thinner was splashed on the floor along with some unused matchsticks.

He suspected that someone might have tried to burn it.

"Murag tinuyuan gyud siya kay parehas ang sistema sa pagsunog," Araiz stressed.

He said that students could easily bring thinner inside the campus because such material is usually used for school projects.

Some people who saw the smoke coming out reported that someone, allegedly a student, entered the restroom and poured something on the wall

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► and floor before the fire occurred.

Due to the said incidents, students were advised to vacate the campus. However, no fire alarm was heard to alert the students.

“Dili man gud ingon ana ka grabe,” Araiz said. “Nabalaka lang mi kay pila ka beses nahitabo.”

No one was reported to be harmed. It also caused no major property damage.

### No lead

Officers from San Pedro and Santa Ana police, and the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) went to the university the morning after the event to conduct an investigation. The incident was also reported immediately to the Physical Plant Office (PPO).

In an interview with Atenews, Physical Plant Supervisor Evtri Tabanguil confirmed that

the occurrence was an arson incident. However, Tabanguil stated that the police and the BFP couldn't identify the suspect, for the crime scene was already “contaminated” when they arrived there.

Tabanguil expressed that even though the school guards immediately responded to the incidents, there were still lapses for they were not able to coordinate with the janitors. By the time the investigators

arrived, the janitors have already cleaned the area. Tabanguil said that this made the investigation even more difficult as some evidences have been possibly wiped out.

Reportedly, there were no CCTV cameras installed to monitor the male rest room on the first and second floors of the Del Rosario building. A CCTV camera was placed near the male rest room at the fifth floor of the Finster building.

However, it cannot monitor who enters the room, as it is oriented towards a different direction.

Tabanguil said that the CCTV cameras could only monitor the hallways and the stairs so they cannot provide footage that will lead them to the suspect of the said arson incident.

It is still uncertain whether thinner was really used to make the small fires.

### Safety measures

Because of the incident, PPO became more vigilant in observing safety measures. Flammable materials such as gas and thinner were prohibited inside the campus.

Tabanguil said that PPO assigned non-uniform personnel and security guards to monitor the campus.

PPO also added several

fire extinguishers and fire alarms that students could easily access in case another emergency occurs. They also installed CCTV cameras near the rest rooms.

### A wake-up call

“This [small fire incident] is a wake-up call sa mga guards at sa PPO,” Tabanguil said.

He stated that this is the first time an arson incident occurred inside

the campus. He described it as a “learning experience” for everyone. Although there are safety measures, Tabanguil reminded that everyone, even the students, should be more vigilant.

“Tayo lahat dapat aware,” he said. “Tulongan dapat tayo.”

Though no one was harmed in the incident, some students expressed that they were alarmed with the occurrence, knowing

that anything could happen anytime inside the campus.

“I am alarmed with what happened kay feeling nako naay kapungot ang tao na naghimo ato, if it is really intentional,” GT Conception, a second year education student, said.

He added that the incident urged the students to be more aware with their surroundings, especially that these events can happen even inside the



LEFT. Advocates protest near the Canadian Embassy against the illegal shipping of wastes from Canada. Photo/Greenpeace

RIGHT. Trashes shipped from Canada are unloaded at the landfill of the Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. Photo/MCWMC

# CANADA DUMPS 50 TRUCKS OF GARBAGE IN PH

MIKEL STEVEN LUY

**THE BUREAU of Customs (BOC) officials have filed several charges against Chronic Plastics, a local firm in Valenzuela responsible for the shipping of almost a hundred 40-footer cargo trucks of heterogenous waste from Canada to Philippine shores.**

The shipper, a private company from the town of Whitby, Ontario, Canada, named Chronic Incorporated, consigned the alleged shipment to the Philippine-based company of nearly identical namesake.

The cargo shipment, which was originally declared as recyclable

plastic and plastic scraps, was found out to be an assortment of household garbage which included adult diapers, broken bottles, used paper, and kitchen waste upon further inspection by the BOC and the Department of Environmental and Natural Resources (DENR).

“Hindi po basurahan ng

ibang bansa ang Pilipinas,” BOC Commissioner John “Sunny” Sevilla reiterated during the course of his segment at an on-air press briefing. “We should never allow our country to be the dumping site of the world’s garbage.”

Adelfa Eduardo, owner of Chronic Plastics, has been charged by the BOC

for violating the Tarriff and Customs Code of the Philippines (TCCP) and the Republic Act 6969 (Toxic Substance and Hazardous Wastes and Nuclear Wastes Control Act of 1990) which vetoes all importations of environmentally hazardous wastes to the Philippines.

The BOC has also filed charges against Leonora

Flores and Sherjun Saldon, Chronic Plastics’ licensed customs brokers.

The said shipments arrived in Manila from Ontario during the course of June to August 2013. They originally arrived in six batches, adding up to almost fifty cargo trucks. Since then, another fifty cargo trucks have been smuggled out of Canada and into the Philippines.

### To make matters worse

Aside from posing numerous hazardous threats to human life, animals, and the environment, these kinds of activities could add up to the already devastating waste

disposal problems that the Philippines is currently facing.

According to reports, population growth and poverty is another deadly combination that has contributed to pollution in the Philippines over the years. Infrastructure construction, company factories, and industrialization have taken their toll on the environment. Numerous informal settlers have made the bays of Manila their homes, all the while negligently throwing their garbage and other wastes in the rivers beside them.

Ariel Nepomuceno, Customs deputy

commissioner for enforcement, has warned that unless disinfected soon enough, the garbage shipment could pose serious biohazard dangers to people living nearby.

### Basel Ban Amendment

The Basel Convention of 1992 is an international treaty in which Canada and the Philippines are both consigned to reduce the import and export of hazardous waste between countries, specifically from developed to less-developed ones.

Ever since the instigation of the Basel Convention, the Philippines has only been processing trash imports

from other countries that have been deemed to be recyclable.

But according to numerous green groups, the Basel Convention hasn't been as effective as everyone expected it to be as waste exporters were still able to ship hazardous garbage under-the-radar by simply labelling them as recyclable.

Filipino environmentalists have called on the DENR to follow up on the ratification of the Basel Ban Amendment, which also bans the shipment of hazardous waste subject for recycling.

DENR chief of environment management Jose Cuna, despite constant pressure from the people, has said that the amendment will come before the end of the year at soonest because even though they would be happy to ratify it on their own, they still need to consult the different industries, parties, and stakeholders involved.

### Owner denies claims

Jon Makris, majority owner of the Canada-based Chronic Industries, has been outspoken in denying the allegations aimed at his company regarding the contents of their shipments. ►

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► “The contents of the cargo trucks that we shipped to the Philippines were 95% plastic and 5% paper and aluminum, which is usual in large sums of recyclables,” he said. “All these talks about this garbage thing is just driving me nuts.”

Furthermore, he added that “anyone with a

brain” could easily see that exporting garbage to foreign countries doesn’t make any sense as it would cost \$40 to dump garbage in Canada but \$80 to do so in the Philippines. “I think everyone was just pulled into a really big misunderstanding,” he explained.

The Canadian

government has also denied the requests of the DFA to return the smuggled garbage to Canada. Instead, they have convinced the Philippines to process the waste locally, provided that they shoulder all the treatment costs.

**‘I will make you eat the trash!’**

While President Aquino

and his colleagues have been mum to the public about their insights regarding the incident, outspoken Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte has made no effort in hiding his contempt towards what Canada has done, even going as far as urging the Aquino administration to launch a diplomatic protest against the Canadian

government and saying that had the incident happened in Davao, he would make Canada eat their own trash.

“I can embrace the bacteria of the Filipino people, but I would never, ever accept a swab of blood from a foreign country,” he said.

“I will rent a boat, take

the trash with me, and dump it straight into British Columbia.”

Duterte also believed that the BOC is responsible for the entire incident and suggested to the Office of the Ombudsman that criminal and administrative charges should be filed against them for approving the entry of the shipments

into our country.

“Bakit naman ganun? Ginagawang dumping grounds ang Pilipinas. Bakit niyo gagawing basurahan ang bayan ko? Everytime you do that, it is a derogation of our national dignity,” Duterte said.

As of July 14, 2015, several tons of garbage trucks have

been sent to a northern Philippine landfill and are set to be disposed in an environmentally sound manner, according to the Philippine government.

This has caused outrage among Filipino people, particularly to environmentalists who have been rallying to make Canada take back their

trash.

“It’s sad that uninvolved local communities will be the ones to suffer from all this fiasco caused by a foreign country. It’s absurd that our government seems to value their relationship with Canada more than the lives of the Filipino people,” said Angelica Carballo, communications manager

for Ban Toxics, a Manila-based green group.

# STRICT DRESS CODE GATHERS MIXED REACTIONS

ANDREA ISABELLE MEJOS

**UNIFORMITY AND order have always been the standard of many universities. However, the stricter implementation of Ateneo de Davao University’s (AdDU) school dress code has garnered several mixed responses from its students.**

Last June 2015, the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) passed a series of memoranda regarding the AdDU pin and ID, PE ID, and practicum ID, which were all implemented starting from the first week of July. Failure to comply bars students from entering the school.

The memo on the AdDU pin requires male students to wear the pin on the right side of the collar, while students are required to wear the prescribed IDs for PE and practicum in order to enter the school wearing the prescribed uniform for their respective classes.

In their Facebook page, SAMAHAN announced

the memorandum with a statement saying the purpose of the memorandum was to “prevent the abuse of the PE uniform.”

SAMAHAN president Michael Zachary Leyson said that recent memoranda were implemented in consistency with the handbook rules, such as the regulated use of the PE uniform.

Section 25.7 of the AdDU student handbook 2015 edition stated “The uniform for Physical Education (PE) is considered the school uniform on the day a student is scheduled to have his PE classes.”

For Geliza Ang, a fourth year AB Mass Communication Student, the new requirements are inconvenient.

“We go to school to learn, so regardless of what we wear, it won’t matter as long as it’s decent. Whatever kind of uniform we wear, it still represents Ateneo,” said Ang.

But for the second semester of SY 2015-2016, the admin issued a

memorandum that replaced the previous PE ID with stickers instead. The PE stickers are color coded according to the day.

Failure to have the corresponding PE sticker will still bar anyone wearing the PE uniform from entering the school premises.

A second year Mechanical Engineering student, who wished to remain anonymous, felt that although the PE sticker is effective in regulating the use of PE uniforms, it is “unfair” for the students who wish to wear their PE uniform at other times of the week.

“For me, sayang. May times na gugustuhin natin as students na PE uniform ang susuotin especially kapag sobrang busy natin at maraming ginagawang projects na active yung body natin, pero hindi pala pwede,” she explained.

“Although I understand their (school administration) point that they want to prevent the abuse of the PE uniform, I feel like I lost the freedom to wear my PE uniform



whenever I want to,” she said.

When asked if she’d prefer to have the rule remain in school, she shook her head no. “They [school admin] should at least let us wear our PE uniform on other days,” she said.

Prior to these memoranda, the university already implemented

a strict dress code, disallowing students to wear pants that reveal skin, shirts and blouses with see-through material. Sleeveless tops and short skirts were also disallowed. Failure to comply the said policies would result to the same consequence.

The wearing of the AdDU ID inside school premises was also strictly

implemented, and failure to comply would cost a fine of P100 while subsequent offenses would be fined at P150.

Even before the new implementations, the school guards were already the primary persons to implement the rule. However, Ang felt that the guards favor other students.

“Some girls wearing backless and other revealing types of clothing can get inside, while those who have slight rips at the pants cannot,” she said.

Fourth Year Mass Communication student Kyle Navarro also felt that the dress code is mainly a mere inconvenience.

“The guards are

inconsistent. Sometimes they choose who they want to let in, even if they obviously violate the dress code,” said Navarro.

For the female Muslim students, the dress code is stricter. Raessa Piang, a third year Education student, started wearing the traditional Muslim garb since she was six years old. The only parts of the body

that can be shown were the face, the palms, and the feet.

Piang said that when she enrolled in Ateneo, she appealed to the OSA if she could lengthen the school uniform, but was denied.

“In other schools, the Muslims are allowed to wear a long-sleeved blouse, but here we are not,” she

lamented.

“The uniform does not necessarily affect learning,” Leyson expressed, “but we need to regulate things to balance them out.”

Leyson advised the students to approach their respective representatives or class presidents should they have any concerns.



LEFT: The wearing of the official Ateneo pins is strictly prescribed by the Office of the Student Affairs to implement equality between male and female Ateneo students as the former frequently do not wear them. New clutch pins are also introduced by the Office of the Student Affairs to cater to the inconvenience brought by the old pins. Photo/Mark Louie Balladares

RIGHT: OJT students are strictly required to wear their Practicum ID as part of the tighter implementation of the dress code. Photo/Ian Derf Salvaña

## 2 NEWS



LEFT. Protesters rally against the Philippine Mining Act of 1992. Photo/Rappler

RIGHT. Mining continues to be a pressing issue especially in Mindanao where mining operations are rampant. Photo/davaoaccountnant.com

# MINING BAN PROMOTES SUSTAINABILITY

RAM MANLATICAN & ANNA SOPHIA TARHATA PIANG

**THROUGHOUT the years, mining has been considered to be a controversial issue concerning the environment, economy, and safety of individuals.**

On one hand, various industries and groups assert that the economic benefits that mining brings contribute to the development of the country.

Yet, many government officials and pro-environment groups still strongly oppose the process due to the dangers and risks it poses.

## City against mining

In Davao City, mining operations have been present for many years especially since Davao has over 200 hectares of natural land with various minerals and other resources. However, there has been disapproval from city government officials since the operations directly affect the ecosystem.

The disapproval became more and more apparent over time until it resulted into the drafting of Item 619, entitled "An Ordinance Closing off the City of Davao to Mining Operations".

Section 5 of the ordinance states, "No approval shall be granted or issued by the city through its Sangguniang

Panglungsod to any person, natural or juridical, to undertake any and all forms of mining operation in any area within the territorial jurisdiction of Davao City, except rocks and mineral substances classified under the quarry."

According to this section, the ordinance explicitly bans any sort of mining activity within Davao City, either small or large-scale mining. Last May 5, it was approved by the city council with nine councilors voting in favor of the passage while two others voting no and five abstaining.

Those who approved of it believe that the ban will protect the environment and keep mining companies

The disapproval became more and more apparent over time.

at bay.

Councilor Leonardo Avila said one of the reasons stated for passing the proposed mining prohibition is City Ordinance No. 03197-07 or the Watershed Code of Davao City.

"The Watershed Code declares portions of Davao City as conservation area, agro-forestry non-tillage, and prime agricultural areas. All these in the national law are closed to mining," he said.

## Ban in line with AddU mission, vision

Many other government officials and pro-environment groups think highly of the ordinance,

reflecting how public leaders and citizens are concerned regarding the environment. Furthermore, institutions think of the ordinance as being in line with their visions and missions.

Atty. January Faye Risonar-Bello, the assistant to the President for Research and Advocacy of Ateneo de Davao University, stated that the ordinance was also in line with the university's goals.

"It's [the ban] a welcome addition to our advocacy. From what I remember, the Ateneo community through the UCEAC office has actively participated in the city council's committee deliberations in finalizing the anti-mining ordinance. And I think that they would be pleased to tell you that this is a step in the positive direction in concretizing our vision and mission that we need to protect our environment," Risonar-Bello said.

She added that the ordinance served as a good projection of Davao City government's stance on environmental protection.

"The mining ordinance passed by the city council is actually a good improvement with regard to the city's measures in protecting our environment. It's an articulation of the general welfare clause that is provided for and under our local government code," she stated.

There are also many young people, specifically students, who commended the ban. Fiona Samantha Ajoc, an Environmental Science student, is one of those pushing for environmental protection.

"The mining ban will be good for the people and for the environment. However, I am not really against mining. I acknowledge the need for the resources and the benefits mining can give us. But it should also be responsible mining, meaning that there should be proper environmental protocols and guidelines to ensure environmental protection and a healthy relationship with the stakeholders. Clearly, that is not what is happening," she emphasized.

The current situation with mining is more exploitative in nature and has been the cause of civil unrest and destruction of nature.

Ajoc also added that the current situation with mining is more exploitative in nature and has been the cause of civil unrest and destruction of nature.

"Mining in the Philippines has become more exploitative than beneficial. The promotion of mining both by the

government and foreign companies has resulted to the increasing unrest and alienation of the indigenous people."

"Aside from the growing encroachment of their ancestral lands, it has also led to extra-judicial killings, destruction of protected areas, pollution, and endangerment of people's health. Most of these mining resources are being sold purely for money-making purposes benefiting the already rich and foreign companies, and it is the local people who suffer. I believe in the utilization of minerals, but it should be for the good of the Filipinos, especially the locals," she added.

Ajoc stated that the Davao City council made a wise choice in passing the ban.

"With this situation, the city made a wise choice in banning mining operations. After all, Mindanao possesses more than half of the wealth [of the] Philippines, in terms of natural resources, including gold and nickel reserves. Mindanao is greatly endowed with rich natural

resources," she stated.

She also expressed that the passing of the ban will enhance Davao's image since its government projects an image of having a green stance.

"This will build trust on the government, which is a very rare phenomenon in Philippine setting," Ajoc said.

## Economy vs safety

An ongoing issue regarding mining is that the economic benefits that it brings clash with the safety concerns that it entails.

With regard to the economy, the Philippine Economic-Environmental and Natural Resources Accounting (PEENRA) stated that the mining industry plays a very important role in the country's economic development.

The industry provides employment opportunities to a significant portion of the population, directly and indirectly. The launching of a mining project spurs local and

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regional economic development as mining firms invest in road infrastructure, utilities, and other facilities within the mine site.

Furthermore, mining also contributes to the country's foreign exchange earnings through exports. The industry provides additional revenue for the government through taxes and fees paid on mining and other related activities.

However, various organizations and individuals have complained that mining has implicated safety issues

especially on the part of miners.

The Institute for Occupational Health and Safety Development (IOHSD) reported that occupational health hazards posed by mining to workers are exposure to intense heat, poor ventilation, vibration, dust, fumes, repetitive stress injury (RSI), intense noise, manual handling (e.g. lifting) of heavy machinery and biological and chemical hazards.

They also said that due to the nature of underground mining,



The promotion of mining both by the government and foreign companies has resulted to the increasing unrest and alienation of the indigenous people.



miners are constantly exposed to intense heat while hydration is very limited. Miners usually have fluid and salt deficiency due to constant sweating, increased stress on the heart, heat stroke, opacity of the lens and reduced fertility due to high heat.

Poor ventilation robs the body of needed oxygen causing the brain to malfunction and leads to many deaths especially in underground operations.

### City ordinance vs national law

While it has received

praise, the passing of the ordinance has been placed under scrutiny because it conflicts Republic Act No. 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

In this law, it is stated that the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) shall have direct charge in the administration and disposition of mineral lands and mineral resources. The director of the bureau shall also recommend to the secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) the granting of mineral agreements to duly qualified persons and shall

monitor the compliance by the contractor of the terms and conditions of the mineral agreements.

With this statement, MBG and DENR have a direct power in running the legal and business affairs of mining with corporations or foreign partners. The city only has the power to convey a message to ban mining activities and send disapproval to mining applications to these offices. Any ordinance made by any local government unit (LGU) must be consistent with the Constitutions and national laws. It cannot overpower any higher

orders.

Alongside the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, another law allows and encourages mining activities—the R.A. No. 7076 or the People's Small-scale Mining Act of 1991. In this law, the Congress may allow small-scale mining of natural resources by Filipino citizens.

Contrary to the city ordinance, the national orders give way to anyone who is interested in mining with legal permission from authorities.

### Success not sure to last

While the ordinance was received positively by Davao City residents, the certainty of its implementation is not assured due to its status. However, due to public support, the ordinance was implemented within the city.

Legal and political issues regarding the ordinance may arise and may lead to conflict between national government and the Davao City Council. Yet, this could also lead to open discussions and debates.

Although, R.A. 7942

encourages mining for the extraction of resources, various parts of the Philippine Constitution prioritize the preservation and development of the environment.

The ban remains currently unchallenged by national authorities and is still implemented by the Davao City council.

# SBG TAKES ON PUBLIC SERVICE THRU BPM

REBEKAH GAIL CELIS

### Background

According to Governance Dept. Chair Dr. Eminent Jane Alvir, the new degree program specializes on developing students for technical and administrative positions in the government, especially for foreign service and civil society.

Alvir mentioned that Ateneo de Davao is the first school in the city to offer the course.

"We [Ateneo SBG] felt the need to be responsive and that we should be having leaders for Mindanao," she said.

### Ateneo values integrated

Aside from serving the public, the course was said to be established in



We want to form leaders, for the Philippine society, we want to promote good governance, and interfaith dialogues.



accordance to the vision and mission of the SBG.

"In relation to our vision [and] mission as a Filipino Catholic and Jesuit University, we want to form leaders for the Philippine society, we want to promote good governance, and interfaith dialogues," Alvir said.

### On poverty

According to Alvir, this program is needed to develop graduates taught with good governance, generation of wealth, and integrity to help the situation of the Philippines and Mindanao.

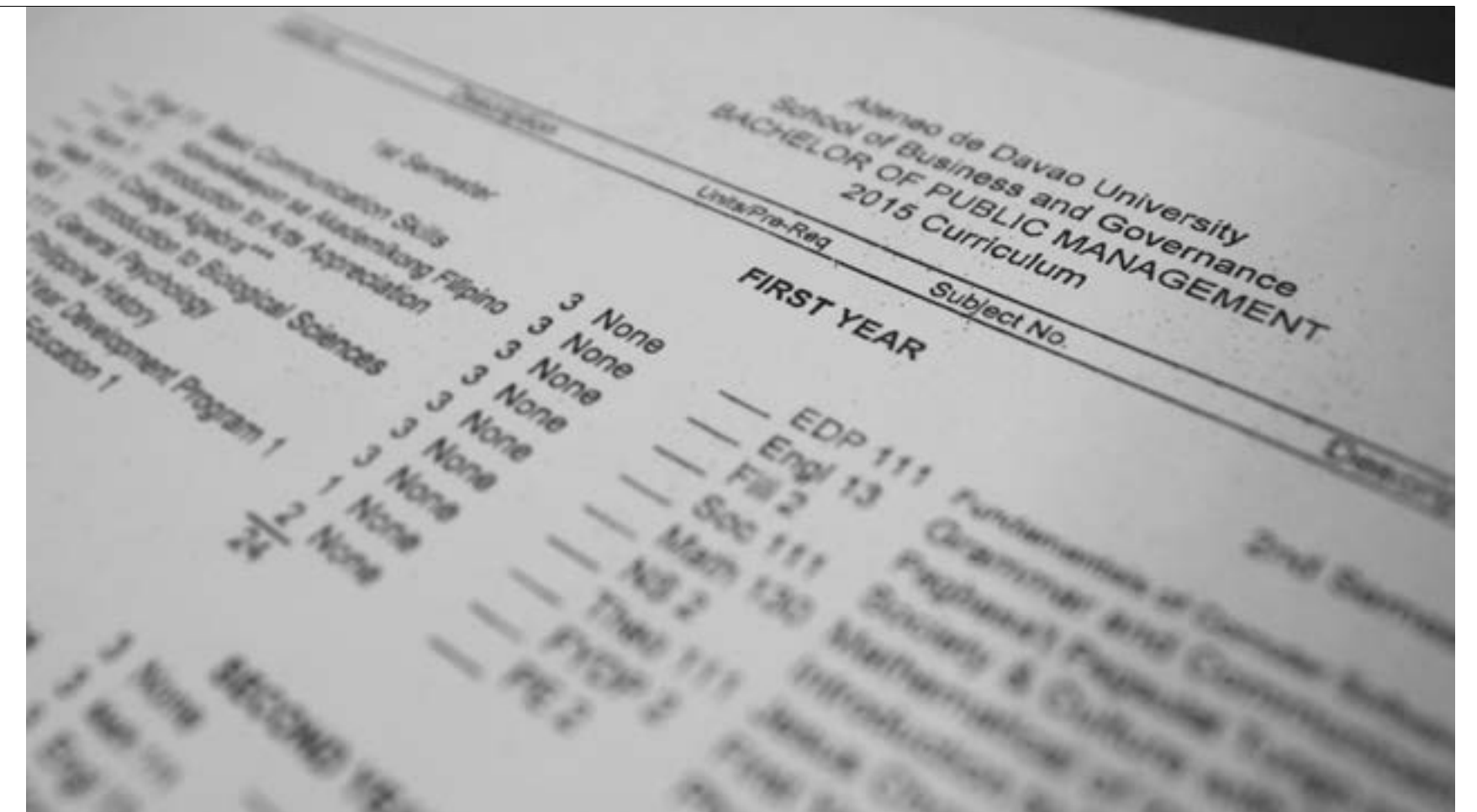
"The Philippines is actually not doing well in the corruption index. We know that in the world governance indicator, we

have a percentile ranking of 56.9. For the corruption index, out of 177 countries, we are the 94th. Among the poorest, we are the 58th based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In Mindanao, we have the poorest region, the ARMM (Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao)," she stressed.

### Opportunities ahead

In the course information sheet, it is said that graduates of the program have career opportunities in store for them. They can be technical assistants, and researchers in the government, civil society, academic institutions, consulates, embassies, and others.

Some advanced positions



The curriculum of the Bachelor of Public Management shows the readiness of the school for the course's implementation. Photo/ Ian Derf Salvaña

include executives in national and local government institutions and organizations, political positions, and other opportunities outside the country.

### Queries and admission

As of today, the program has only one student enrollee due to the late approval, implementation, and lack of exposure. However, Alvir said in spite of the lack of enrollees, the department is ready for the course.

"We have a lot of teachers who are graduates of public administration. We also have practitioners of public administration," she added.

The program is open to those who want to enrol or shift in the next semesters.

Requirements for new students are available at the Office of Admissions at the Jubilee Hall.

The SBG, located at the second floor of the Bellarmine Hall, is open for inquiries about the

degree program. For more inquiries, they can be found online at [www.facebook.com/addusbg](http://www.facebook.com/addusbg) or on Twitter @AddDU\_SBG.

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LEFT. Teachers and students throw Bokashi balls at the Roxas canal as part of the Pakighinabi on Laudato Si' event. Bokashi balls are fermented organic matter used that filter out bad bacteria in dirty water. Photo/Mark Louie Balladares



RIGHT. The Roxas Grounds is being developed into a sunken garden as part of the university's Laudato Si' campaign. Photo/Ian Derf Salvaña

# PAKIGHINABI DISCUSSES LAUDATO SI'

AIVY ROSE VILLARBA

**THE Ateneo de Davao University community engaged into dialogue on the relevance of Pope Francis' encyclical, Laudato Si', during the morning and afternoon Pakighinabi sessions, Friday, July 24, at the Finster Auditorium and satellite venues Martin and Rodriguez Hall.**

Around 9,000 members of the Ateneo community,

including students, faculty, administration, and staff, conversed about the topics of environmental protection, the preservation of biodiversity and promotion of renewable energy, as based from the encyclical.

University President Fr. Joel Tabora said in his opening statement that Pope Francis points the urgency of the environmental realities that need to be addressed not

only from the viewpoint of the physical and biological sciences but also from each person's professional training and interest.

As part of the University's mission and community engagement efforts, "We engage vigorously in environmental protection as it is inseparable from the promotion of faith that does justice, cultural sensitivity and interreligious dialogue," he added.

Meanwhile, Senior High School Director Ricardo Enriquez said that ADDU is the only school in the Philippines which held a university lecture on Laudato Si', making the dialogue as an alternative class for the students.

## 'Praise be to you'

An encyclical is a papal document addressed to the whole community, wherein the Holy Father lays down policy on different topics including religious, moral, political and environmental issues.

The encyclical, Laudato Si', got its name from the invocation of St. Francis of Assisi, "Praise be to you, my Lord." Francis' Canticle of the Creatures reminds the people about the earth and common home is like a sister whom the people share their life with.

Put into context, Laudato Si' encourages the people

to respond to the challenge of protecting "our common home," the earth, as stated by the Vatican.

Furthermore, the Vatican also added that it seeks to spark conversation with the public since the environmental issues affect the people.

Moreover, the encyclical was developed around the concept of integral ecology, showing the fundamental relationship of a person with God, with one's self, with other beings and with creation.

## Environment and science

The keynote speaker of the Pakighinabi session was Father Daniel McNamara, SJ, PhD, an astrogeophysicist and rector of the Davao Jesuit Community. He is also the coordinator of the Environmental Science Program of the University and one of the current

Board Directors of the Manila Observatory.

McNamara emphasized on the importance of human responsibility for nature.

"Human beings, as part of the world, have the duty to cultivate their abilities and a responsibility over nature as a creation of an all-loving God," he said.

He also added that everyone must understand not only nature but also the entire creation, as it is a gift from the outstretched hand of the Creator.

"We must realize that creation is not just something that we could use or we could sell," he said.

McNamara stressed, "The world is more than to be used. Its beauty is to be appreciated. Without nature we are not here."

## Environment and philosophy

Fr. Patrick Riordan, SJ of Heythrop College, University of London also shared his views on the Pope's encyclical, mainly focusing on the theme of the common good and the theme of dialogue.

He also said the people need to work to have a decent life for the dignity of others, and together strive to achieve the common good.

As Riordan stated, it is important to have the capacity to enter into conversation with God.

"We need to call for a dialogue that includes everyone, [and that] honestly discusses environmental degradation, climate change, destruction of the water sources and physical environment essential for sustaining life," he said.

“We must realize that creation is not just something that we could use or we could sell.”

Riordan also challenged the workforce from different industries to get out from the departmentalization and being trapped in one's specialization, as an individual is not able to converse with the other in this manner.

"Dialogue is important. We should use the language of the people and accurately provide reliable information for the common good, the present and future," he said.

## Environmental advocacy for the poor

Bro. Karl Gaspar, CSsR of St. Alphonsius Theological and Mission Institute, and Mindanao environmental advocate Sr. Stella Matutina of Panalipdan Southern Mindanao shared their take on the encyclical using the lens of the preferential option for the poor.

"It's essential to care for indigenous communities. They must be the principal

dialogue partners," Gaspar said.

He also stated that the people must listen to the cry of the poor and respond to the call for the human family to take action in the protection and preservation of mankind's common home.

"May our struggles and our concern for our planet never take away the joy of our home," Gaspar added.

On the other hand, Matutina expressed that the lumads are the protectors of nature.

"They have the organic intelligence, and we cannot separate them from their lands," she said.

The Benedictine nun also said, "We must give voice to the oppressed and take their suffering as our own."

In the end of her speech, Matutina



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► encouraged the students to engage in environmental cultural ecological revolution and to dream dreams that are good for the country, especially Mindanao.

### Business and sustainable development

Dr. Antonio Emberda from the School of Business

and Governance (SBG) discussed the importance of advocating for sustainable development. He reasoned that it would help simultaneously address the need for economic growth and environmental protection.

"We are faced with a problem of the need to preserve the natural

environment and provide everyone economic growth and opportunity. We are not faced with two different crises but one complex crisis- social and environment," he said.

Moreover, he explained that there have been recognizable advancements in sustainable development concepts yet there is

interdependency between environment and economic growth.

"The workability of sustainable development would only be if the world has achieved security in terms of ecological or resource and socio economic security," Emberda said.

"Sustainable development should also be integrated in the curriculum in order to educate the youth, the earth's future," he ended.

### Laws and the environment

Assistant to the President for Research and Advocacy Atty. January Faye Risonar-Bello said in her speech that it cannot be emphasized

enough that everything is interrelated.

"We are part of nature, thus constantly interacting with it. It is essential to seek comprehensive solutions that consider interactions within natural and social systems," she added.

Making it as a blueprint for legislative advocacy,

Laudato Si' sets one specific response. As Bello pointed out, the people should establish a legal framework that could set clear boundaries and ensure the protection of ecosystems recognizing the latter's indispensability.

"We have a plethora of laws that address the issue, including the

Clean Air Act, the Solid Waste Management Act, the Clean Water Act and our fundamental law, the Constitution, which guarantees the right to a healthy and balanced ecology as a legal and enforceable right," she said.

However, Bello said it was one thing to have good laws, it also another thing to

implement them properly.

### Call for a green lifestyle

At the end of the session, Ateneans were challenged to change their own lifestyle.

They were encouraged to put a conscious effort in purchasing green products or lessen the usage of

disposable and convenient non-ecofriendly products.

However, as Bello explained, it would not be done overnight as it would be an everyday struggle to make a conscious choice to say, "Yes, I care about our common home."

# ADDU OPENS PARKING, GARNERS COMPLAINTS

REIL BENEDICT OBINQUE

**THE OFFICE of the Community Center of the First Companions (CCFC) Operations released a memorandum last Oct. 29 on the availability of the University Parking Facility at the 2nd and 3rd Floor of the Martin Hall, garnering complaints from Ateneans.**

Administrators, Teaching, and Non-Teaching Staff may use the 3rd floor parking space with a pre-determined monthly parking fee. Interested employees may fill-out the application at the CCFC Management Office.

According to the released memorandum, students may use the parking space at the 2nd floor with a 100-peso registration per semester. A fee of 25 pesos is required for the first two hours of use and ten pesos per hour for every hour succeeding.

However, Ateneans have raised their concerns on social media regarding the rate of the parking space. A number of Ateneans expressed that the rate is too expensive.

Jomae Balaud, a Third Year student who travels to school using her car, complained about the rate of the use of the parking lot.

"Mahal kaayo ang fee," she expressed. "Sa gawas nalang ko magpark. Sa Jacinto, naay nagbantay, mas mura pa."

Samahan President Mike Leyson said that the CCFC made no final consultation with the Samahan regarding the rate of the parking space before releasing the memorandum. However, on November 11, Samahan and other offices concerned had a dialogue regarding the Parking Facility.

A day after the dialogue, another memorandum from the Community Center Operations indicated that parking fees will not yet be collected. Parking policies, however, will still be enforced.

According to Leyson, last July, Samahan conducted research pertaining to how students could avail the University Parking Facility which included a survey about the preferred parking lot rate by the students. The research was

in preparation for the series of consultations among Samahan and other offices involved in deciding for the parking space rate.

Leyson said that students can e-mail Samahan through ateneosamahan@gmail.com or message them privately on their Facebook page regarding their concerns about the use of the parking lot.

Meanwhile, reservation forms for the parking lot can be acquired from the Management Office at the 9th floor of the Community Center. Registration started last November 4, 2015. Official date of use of the parking facility began on Nov. 16.



Mahal kaayo ang fee. Sa gawas nalang ko magpark. Sa Jacinto, naay nagbantay, mas mura pa.



Illustration/Renneth Ena Ode

# TOFI: PRICE OF EDUCATION

NINA PATRICIA CESAR

**EVERY YEAR, students face the Tuition and Other Fees Increase, or what is more known as TOFI, corollary to annual inflation rates and of the plans of the educational institutions themselves.**

Universities have to increase their fees to pay for quality teachers, improve infrastructures, and for the return of investment of its owners. TOFI is an annual increase stated in the Collective Bargaining Agreement of the teachers.

Amongst all the schools in Davao region, AdDU has the lowest percentage increase of 6%. Nonetheless, it still has the most expensive tuition fee – from P978 last 2013-2014 to about P1,100 per unit.

In the increase, the AdDU administration seeks to augment the salaries and wages of its personnel according to the present economy's rate of inflation. It also aims to heighten the

budget for the teachers' benefits and development.

"We ask, is the salary of the teachers enough to cover for inflationary increases in prices of commodities?" said Jimmy Delgado, University Treasurer, when asked about their basis for the increase.

He stated that the direct recipients of this increase will be the students.

"If we will be able to give good salaries to our masters and doctors faculty, the automatic beneficiary is the students," Delgado said.

### Breakdown of increment allocation

According to CHED Memo 30 of 2008, 70% of the increment has to be allocated for the salaries and wages, 20% for the operating expenses, and 10% for the return of investment. However, since AdDU is a non-stock corporation, the original plan was to allocate 76% of the TOFI increment for the

salaries and wages. This was found to be insufficient to cover for the increases.

For Academic year 2014-2015, the actual tuition increment received by the University was P33,886,924.90, 76% of which or P25,754,062.92 must be set apart for the professors. However, total increase in Salary and Other Benefits reached P31,941,303.06. This was 94.26% of the increment which was poured out onto the teachers' salaries, benefits and the faculty development.

In other words, the original plan was insufficient and was not followed.

### As part, but not the whole

Although teaching is a vocation, the teachers are still practical. Their salaries do not necessarily dictate the totality of their chosen job, but it does have a say.

"Every year naman talaga tumataas ang sweldo ng mga teachers,"

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► said Trish, a teacher for 24 years.

When asked if her salary affects her willingness to teach, she said that it has an implication. "Part siya, pero hindi siya ang nasa sentro," she added.

She explained that the teachers also have to provide for their families and to look after their daily expenses and other necessities.

### Not for all

One part-time teacher, who has been teaching for

the past four years in the university, said that the last time he received an increase was three years ago.

Part-time teachers are not given annual increases as often as regular teaching staff.

He explained that they had limited units and that they are given 134 pesos per hour. A three-unit course would be equivalent to only one hour a day for 134 pesos. However, the rates are different per level.

"Siguro mas maganda talaga kung taasan nila

yang rate ngayon kasi here in Davao City teachers must be given a minimum wage of 317 pesos a day," he added.

According to the National Wages and Productivity Commission by the Department of Labor and Employment, the minimum wage in Region 11 must be 317 pesos, effective last December 1, 2014.

He clamors for the increase of their wages. "Kahit konti lang," he added.

### The usual misconception

Students usually think the purpose of the increase is to pay for the new building. This, however, is a misconception, according to Delgado. He clarified that the increment was allocated solely for the salaries of the teachers.

Additionally, the university has its own Income Generating Projects (IGP) such as the Ateneo Business Center (ABC), the canteen, and other resources such as interests and investments that cover for the cost of the

new Community Center and other developmental projects.

### Alternatives

To aid the students who cannot fully afford the tuition fee, the university provides scholarship programs that have a total budget of P32 million for the current academic year as an alternative.

The university aims to have 20% of the total population as scholars. Last first semester, 12.91% or 1103 students were scholars while 13.76% or

1146 students were scholars during the second semester.

Also, the College Faculty Union (CFU) is looking forward to alter the Tuition Fee economy to Knowledge Based economy where the teachers will earn based on their field of specialty on top of their income. If the Knowledge based economy concept progresses, the students will no longer have to pay for expensive tuition fees. However, this concept will not be easily achieved. Currently, the CFU is still making steps to make this possible.

### A student's perspective

"For me, okay lang sa akin as long as we, the students, can see that the school progresses. Kung makita ng mga students na naga-improve ang school, why not? Pero kung hindi siya naga improve, dun ako mag-reklamo," said Troy Vergara, Humanities and Letters representative.

Nevertheless, some students have reacted negatively to this issue.

"Tuition fee increase is way too heavy especially for students in the middle class.

It is very evident, in Davao City alone, [that] Ateneo has the highest tuition fee. So, if we are going to increase that even more, there will be more additional burden for the students," a BSA student said.

Dennis Coronel, a Sociology professor in the university said, "I think that there are two sides to the issue of the tuition fee increase; it's not just about asking the administration why there is an increase. But more importantly, the other side, which is most of the time that we deal with, is for the students to

be really vigilant, critical, and somehow empowered to raise questions like 'How are we assured that this can benefit us in the end?'"

Tuition fee increase concerns both the students and the teachers. Financially speaking, it has favored the latter and has burdened the former. In essence, the tuition fee increase is necessary, but what the students have to fight for is the reasonability of its amount. While students cannot completely stop the yearly increase, they can, however, set the limit.

As Coronel has implied, students should fight for their right to transparency, and should be empowered to know exactly how TOFI can be beneficial to them.

# NEW BLDGS TO FULLY OPEN

REY ANDREW ALONSAGAY & JULIEN JAME APALE

**ONCE THE construction reaches full completion, Ateneo de Davao's new buildings will feature a 12-storey community center and a seven-storey multi-purpose assembly hall.**

New faculty rooms which will provide more space for the university's teaching staff, a bigger library and study area, a chapel, and a new Jesuit residence are some of the facilities offered by the Community Center.

Community Center Operation Manager Sue Doromal said the building "Community Center of the First Companions" is named after the first companions of St. Ignatius de Loyola.

As the name suggests,

each floor of the building was named after a companion of St. Ignatius. These floors were allocated for events such as conferences, trainings and dialogues. Some are used as faculty workspaces and students' study center. The Jesuit residence and a new chapel are also located in the said building.

On the other hand, the seven-floor multi-purpose assembly hall (located in Zamorra St. corner Jacinto) will feature a 300-capacity parking space on its first two floors for the students, faculty, non-teaching staff, and Jesuits.

Sports facilities such as gym and shower rooms, basketball and volleyball courts, and a jogging track are also to be situated at the hall. It will also house student offices like the SAMAHAN office and the student plaza. The hall's

lobby is named as Arrupe Hall (and is yet to be given a name), while the other floors' names are still for confirmation from the Jesuit Community.

These two new buildings are connected to each other through the Jubilee Hall. The Community Center has its foot bridge (located at the 4th floor) going to the Finster (specifically, its 5th floor).

### Soon to open

"There's no definite date yet, but we are hoping that it will be soon," Doromal said when asked when the building would be officially opened.

Moreover, she said that the people in charge are just addressing areas which only need some finishing touches.

On the other hand, the Miguel Pro Study Center at the 2nd floor of the Community Center is now open for everyone. Students and staff, and even visiting researchers and the university's alumni are encouraged to visit the said study center. The Center is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm and Saturday, 8am to 6pm.

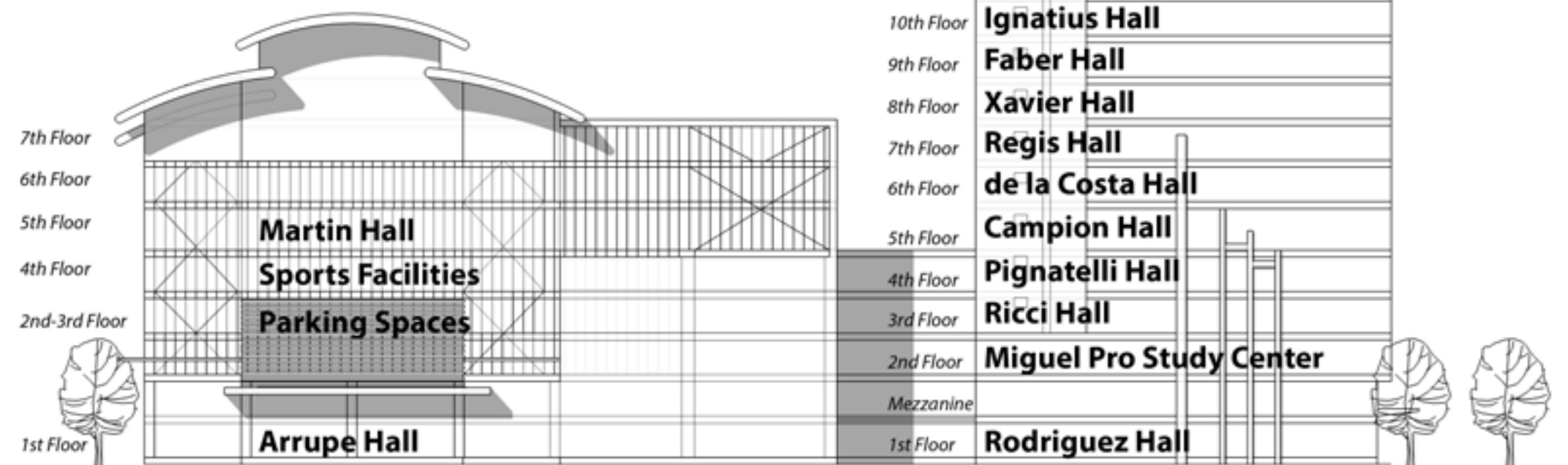
Furthermore, Martin Hall's 2nd and 3rd floor parking areas are now also available for the administration and students' utility. The 2nd floor parking area is mainly for the students' use. The 3rd floor parking space is for the administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff's use.

### For the whole community

"The students are very welcome here. The facilities are for you, and for the stakeholders and

employees, that's why it's called Community Center. It's for all of us", Doromal stated.

"We also extend our invitations to our external partners. The facilities, these are really planned well by the administration, by Fr. Joel, with a vision



puod nga malipay pud ang mga students, employees, faculty, and the non-teaching staff.

You'll have very good facilities here that you can readily use to enhance your studies, to draw out in you the best you can be as students."

Doromal believed that students would be able to enhance their studies if they were provided a conducive place to do schoolwork and that these facilities will be a good complement to the students' academics.

"To provide areas and avenues that may help

you enhance your studies, mao man gyud ang atong purpose," Doromal explained.

She also said that the main goal is to support pro-learning environment facilities for the students.

Doromal shared the same

feeling of excitement for the new buildings, but she then reminded and encouraged everyone to be patient, for everything is still yet to be finalized.

"When everything's done, it will be formally launched to the community and that will be there as one; for these new buildings are intended for AdDU's whole community, and that is us," she concluded.

Infographic/Steely Dhan Caballero

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LEFT: Fishermen led by Pamalakaya protest against Fishing Ban, as it is said to affect their livelihoods. Photo/ Ronalyn Olea/bulatlat.com

RIGHT: Fishing has become the primary livelihood of people living near Davao Gulf, making them the most affected individuals when the fishing ban was implemented. Photo/AP

# FISHING BANS PUT THOUSANDS OF LIVES ON HOLD

MIKEL STEVEN LUY

**FISH, SELL, eat, repeat – such is the pattern of life for fishermen living off of the coasts of Mindanao.**

But for these simple-living people, that pattern could very well change, as municipals and city fishery councils all over Mindanao have moved to push the expansion of the

yearly seasonal fishing ban in an effort to increase fish production and give the fish time to spawn and increase in population.

Several times in the past, three-month long fishing bans were held during the natural spawning period of the fish. Although the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said that the seasonal red

light to fishing is on its last year, various fish canneries and organizations have asserted that the ban be continued in following years.

This is largely because the BFAR has reportedly experienced better harvests ever since implementation of the first ever fishing bans.

Fish species encompassed

by the fishing ban include Big-Eye Tuna, Herring, and several kinds of sardines.

Amongst those that agreed to the fishing ban expansion in Davao Oriental are the city of Mati and the municipalities of Boston, Lupon, Caraga, Mabini, Pantukan, Banaybanay, Manay, Taragona, and Baganga. In Davao del Sur, the city of Digos and the

municipalities of Sulop, Padada, Hagonoy, Sta. Cruz, and Sta. Maria. In Davao del Norte, the cities of Samal, Zamboanga, and the municipality of Sto. Niño all gave the go signal.

Additionally, the expansion of the closed season on fishing will cover commercial vessels and various fishing equipment, too.

The last iteration of the rule stated that any active fishing gear with “gear movement” was prohibited to be used during the fishing ban. This time around, the BFAR plans to take that statement back, thereby also prohibiting the use of bag nets, fine mesh nets, ring nets, and other tools that would catch small pelagic fishes that could grow bigger if undisturbed.

## Fishermen going jobless

On the other side of the coin, thousands of fishermen and factory workers have lost their jobs and have been left wondering about how to feed their families during timeframe of the fishing bans. With their only source of income coming from the fish they sell, they have become desperate on finding an alternative.

Joey Delfin, one of the boat captains who has worked several years for the Amadeo Fishing Corporation of GenSan, said he was willing to accept any job that his employer would offer them.

“Because of the fishing ban, our operations have come to a halt and so has our income,” Delfin said.

## BFAR, DOLE make effort

Statistics have shown that anywhere from 100,000 to 150,000 fishermen and factory workers are projected to lose their jobs during the implementation of the fishing bans.

In response to this, the BFAR has called on the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to help remedy the situation. Since then, DOLE has been distributing livelihood

starter kits to fishermen and their families, factory workers, and other people affected by the fishing ban.

Joel Gonzales, assistant director for DOLE in Central Mindanao, said the number of displaced workers has increased to higher six figures ever since the first implementation of the ban, and could increase even more if more fishing companies will be affected.

This has prompted DOLE to create a worker task force and an emergency assistance center to help remedy the worsening problem.

“Dispatched fishermen and factory workers can go to the DOLE emergency assistance center to seek career advice, ask for financial support from the government, and participate in skills training

in other types of work to lessen the impact of the job dispersion caused by the seasonal fishing ban,” Gonzales explained.

## BFAR tightens grip on security

In response to last year’s problems with regard to controlling the people and preventing them from fishing illegally during the closed season, the BFAR has vowed to tighten the security this time around.

Jose Villanueva, officer-in-charge of the Fishery Management, Regulatory and Enforcement division of BFAR-XI, said in an interview that they would be deploying fleets of patrol boats throughout the affected regions to monitor and apprehend any violators. The regional bureau has seven boats on-hand and ready to use while

two more are coming soon, according to Villanueva.

“We will strictly enforce the ban this time so the fish stocks in the gulf would recover,” Villanueva said.

Punishments for violators of the order, particularly the operator, boat captain/master fisherman or three highest officers of the boat will be issued a fine equivalent to the value of the catch or P100,000, whichever is higher, and imprisonment of six months, forfeiture of the catch and cancellation of fishing boat and gear licenses and other fishing permits.

## 2 NEWS



Delegates from different divisions during the EcoCongress plenary sessions. Photo/Mark Louie Balladares

# ECOCONGRESS PASSES PRO-ENVI LAWS

JULIEN JAME APALE,  
REBEKAH GAIL CELIS  
& RAM MANLATICAN

**“OUR goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it.”**

This was one of the many lines of Pope Francis' second encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*—On the Care of Our Common Home, addressing the need to step up for environmental crises.

In response to this, students from different divisions marked another milestone in the university history as they launched the

first Ateneo EcoCongress last Aug. 31.

## On rationale

After the launching, the congress, which was composed of 99 delegates out of 178 college applicants, formally started last Sept. 2.

With the theme, “Forging towards a better home,” congress members took their pledges in an oath-taking event entitled “Pangako Sa'yo: An Environmental Pledge” during the first day.

In the said event, a talk by the NYC Commissioner representing Luzon Percival Cendeña encouraged the delegates to help ease the problems of the environment.

“In the NYC, we do not see 'pasaway' as something necessarily negative kasi being 'pasaway' is asserting – being 'pasaway' is an expression of hope.

“I hope that tomorrow you have 'pasaway' as your inspiration because in being pasaway, you might actually find meaningful solutions to environmental problems we have today,” Cendeña said.

In its primer, it is said that the EcoCongress aims “to achieve policies about environmental issues with special considerations on fields such as business, health, social sciences, technology, engineering and architecture.”

The said congress was organized by the Pinag-isang Lakas ng

mga Progresibong Atenista (PIGLASAPAT), in partnership with the National Youth Commission (NYC), Climate Change Commission (CCC), United States Agency on International Aid (USAID), and the University Community Engagement and Advocacy Council (UCEAC).

## The need to step up

Even though the university had already established its ground for ecological issues, the involvement of the students still remains a crucial factor in any environmental movement.

The 1st EcoCongress helped in giving potential answers and solutions to rising issues of ecology

through legal actions. While criticizing proposed resolutions, the university-level congress aims to balance the efficiency and effectiveness of resolutions with practicality and social factors.

## Resolutions drafted

The congress drafted resolutions in relation to their goal last Sept. 4. These were sectioned for a university level, city level and national level. On Sept. 5, they went through plenary sessions.

The EcoCongress was composed of five committees which were tasked to formulate resolutions aiding the environment, specifically its ecology, and were sectioned to university level, city

level and national level, the EcoCongress was able to pass eight resolutions out of the proposed 11.

The Committee on Disaster Risk Management made a waste management penalty resolution. According to the committee, the resolution aims to implement a penalty system if caught littering in school premises. However, the resolution was denied.

The Committee on Environment and Social Sciences crafted a resolution institutionalizing the formation of an environment unit for each educational institution, city and national level, and the resolution urging the AdDU Ecoteneo to review, restructure and reinforce the “Clean as You Go” (CLAYGO) campaign.

From ‘encouraging’ to ‘requiring’ the use of paper or biodegradable bags instead of plastics and the recommendation of implementing programs that lessen the use of commercial energy in Davao both resolutions were passed and created by the Committee on

Environment and Science, Health and Technology.

The “Plastic Project ni Tinyong”, which aims to convert plastics to be donated to schools, was authored by the Committee on Environment and Architecture.

Furthermore, a resolution about storing reusable props and making these available for the use of the university was passed by the Committee on Environment and Business and Management.

Cholo Quidangen, a third year Accountancy student and a delegate to the EcoCongress, said the event was meant to rebuild the purpose of the youth in nation-building.

SAMAHAN Sec.-Gen. Amara Abrina, who was also one of the delegates, expressed her high regards on how countless the ideas on preserving and maintaining the environment can be conceptualized by each committee.

## 'Eco-knights'

During the socials night, UCEAC Chair Atty. Romeo Cabarde, Jr. recognized that “EcoCongress partakers were able to survive a week-long of hurdles of parliamentary rules without losing sight of their common goal which is the care of our common home.”

In addition to his praise for the efforts of both participants and organizers, he also acknowledged that this congress somehow broke stereotypes of being Ateneans.

“I am proud because you have proven that you are able to break a lot of stereotypes that are being hurled against students of Ateneo de Davao University,” Cabarde said, pointing out stereotypes like “rich kid's problems” that are being thrown to Atenean students.

While acknowledging that caring for the common home is an inter-generational responsibility, Cabarde also pointed out that the delegates have manifested what the country's foremost

national hero call them “Bella esperanza de la Patria Mia (our fair hope for the motherland).”

“In the course of fighting for climate justice, there will be a lot of barriers—maraming hadlang. Let us not be disappointed. Let us not be dismayed,” Cabarde added.

Having called them as “Eco-knights,” Cabarde also emphasized that the university community had produced “new breed of parliamentarians”.

## Start of advocacy

Cherisse July Ross Adlawan, chair of the university-level EcoCongress, highlighted that the event is just the beginning of the advocacy.

“This is not the end, but this is just the beginning of something that awaits us in the future,” Adlawan said.

Adlawan, as presiding officer during the culmination of the congress, expressed her hopes that the congress and its passed resolutions will thrive and further promote care and

protection to nature.

Meanwhile, Tompson Alonzo, one of the participants from Environment and Business and Management Committee, shared his experience and thoughts after the week-long policy making.

“Here, we are gathered with a single denominator—our love for nature and our love for the next generations. I hope through this congress, we can still promote that love and share it to the [coming] generations,” Alonzo said.

PIGLASAPAT Pres. Jeos Earl Casilac also expressed his hopes not just to the participants but also to the AdDU community as a whole.

“I hope na this will be the start na mag-participate ang mga students, not only as officers from any club or as officers from SAMAHAN, but as students mismo,” Casilac said.

## 2 NEWS

# ADDU GRADS SCORE IN BOARD EXAMS

ANNA SOPHIA  
TARHATA PIANG

**IN LINE with its mission of producing excellent students, Ateneo de Davao University's graduates for academic year 2014-2015 have been ranking well in their respective board exams for the past year.**

Two programs the university is well-known for are the Engineering and Architecture courses. The graduates of these said courses scored well in their respective licensure examinations.

The graduates of the Architecture program had a 70% passing rate in the January 2015 Architect Licensure Examination, with Jankin Daves Y. Go ranking 7th in top ten. Also in the same exam during June 2015, Kathleen Anne Veloso ranked 7th as well with the passing rate of this test being 85.71%.

On the other hand, the different Engineering departments have also performed well in their respective licensure examinations. According to information released by

the School of Engineering and Architecture (SEA) its departments garnered the following over-all performance results in their respective licensure exams :

The Civil Engineering department scored 95.83%, both the Chemical Engineering department and the Mechanical Engineering programs gained 100% each; the Electrical Engineering department got 87.5%, the Electronics Engineering program gained the following results in its two board exams: 42.31% in the Electronics Engineer Licensure Examination and a percentage of 100% in the Electronics Technician Licensure Examination. Also, Vince Jebryl G. Montero place top 2 in the latter test.

Dr. Randell Espina, the Dean of the School of Engineering and Architecture shared that he was pleased with the results of the recent board exams.

"I am very proud of how our graduates continue to strive for academic and professional excellence even after they have completed their degrees,"

Espina said.

Ateneo has also done well in the field of healthcare as the graduates of the school's Nursing division have garnered a total percentage of 74.29% in their over-all performance in the November 2014 licensure exam for nurses.

"I am very thankful about knowing that most of our students passed the recently concluded Board Exam, and not only this, even in the past, we have been garnering high marks in the Board exam," Patria V. Manalaysay, the Dean of the School of Nursing, said.

During the recently concluded September 2015 Chemist Licensure Examination, two of Ateneo's first timers both passed the exam resulting in a 100% passing rate for first timers.

Furthermore, Kenon Gabriel Vinson was the 5th placer in the said exam.

The Social Work department's graduates garnered an over-all passing percentage of 78.95 in the June 29-30 2014 Social Work Licensure Examination in

addition to having one of its takers, Angeli C. Nacorda, place 7th in the top 10.

Furthermore, during the July 29-30, 2015 Social Work Licensure Exams, Ateneo gained a 100 percent passing rate.

The school has also performed well in the field of psychology. During the October 2014 Licensure exam for Psychologists and Psychometricians, the school's alumni gained a total passing rate of 80.00% for the psychologist licensure test, and a percentage of 54.76% for the psychometrician test, as well as have two graduates, Argee Catog Gumafelix and Jurilex Apurado Maglinte place 1st and 10th in the over-all rankings for the latter exam.

Also during the second set of the same licensure test last July 21-24, 2015, the school gained a passing rate of 56.34% for the psychometricians and a rate of 40.00% for the psychologists.

Dr. Rhodora Gail Ilagan, the Psychology Department chair for the school year 2014-2015 said that she

was pleased by the results because they reflect the department's performance.

"The [psychology] department prides itself as being one of the best departments in teaching psychology all over the country. The 2014 QS standing shows us [to be] number five, the only school outside of Metro Manila to figure in the list of universities reputed to have the best programs for undergraduate psychology," she said.

The Education course also proved to be one of the school's strong points. During the 2014 Licensure Examination of Teachers, the graduates of the School of Education gained a passing rate of 95% for the Bachelor of Elementary Education category and a score of 78.75% for the Bachelor of Secondary Education category.

Lastly, ADDU scored a 73.79% passing rate for first timers against the national overall average of 41.06% in the recent CPA Licensure Exams. Sharmaine Mamaed, 2015 Class Valedictorian, placed fourth in the said exam.

## HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY? SUBMIT TO BLUE BLOOD.

Atenews is accepting submissions for Blue Blood, a section that features views and opinions from the student body itself.

Submit your opinions and essays to [atenews@gmail.com](mailto:atenews@gmail.com) with the subject:

"BLUE BLOOD\_LAST NAME\_TITLE" and include personal and contact details.

Be heard and help end the silence of the gagged!

### ERRATA: FIESTA ISSUE

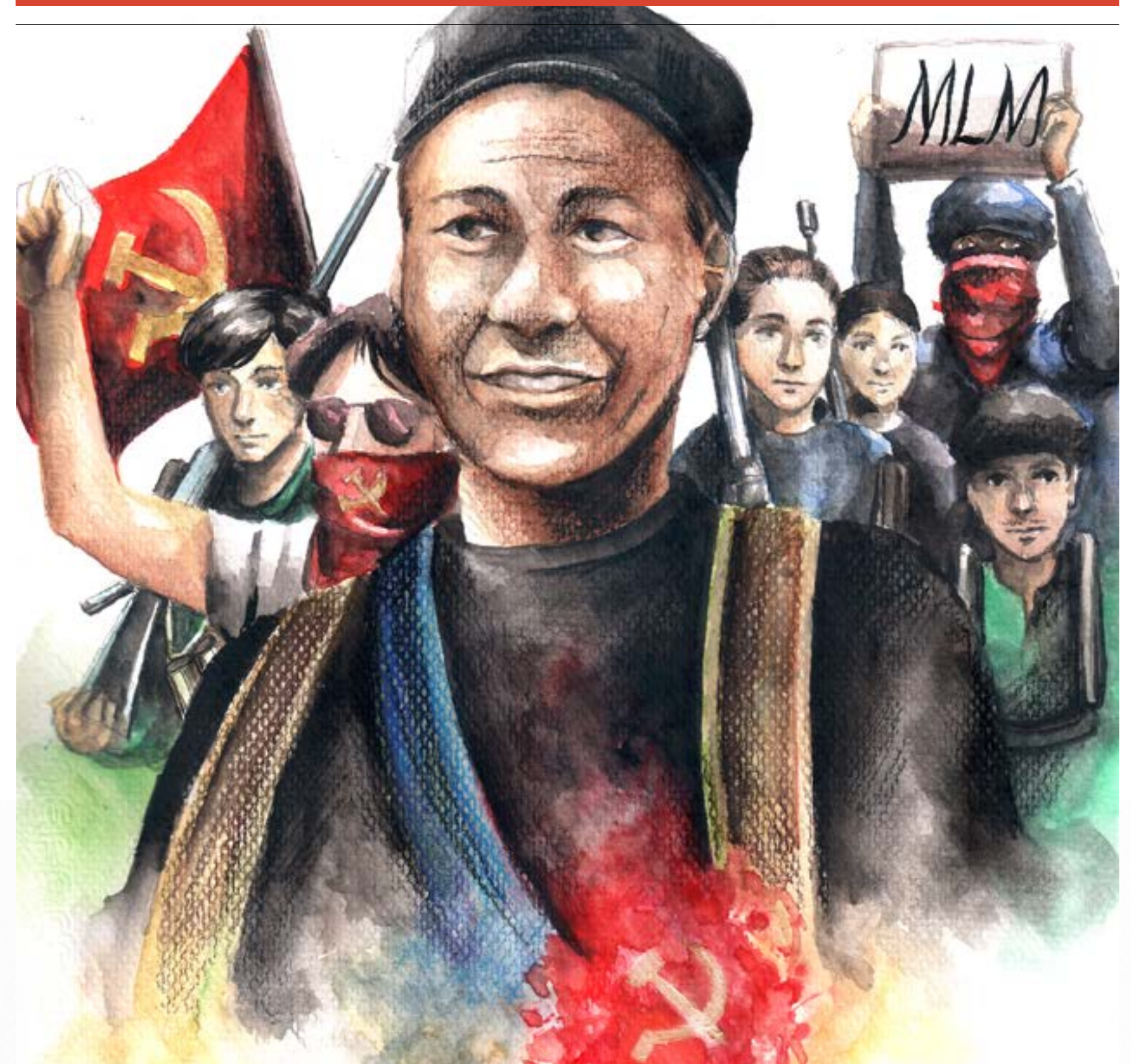
On the second page, Fr. Erwin Rommel Torres was misaffiliated to SJ but was supposed to be DCT.

On the Tale of the Tape, the championship title was attributed to "BSA" when it should have been "ACC" to stand for the Accountancy Cluster. Furthermore, the Business and Management cluster

was abbreviated as "BM" where it should have been "B&M" since the former refers to a program under the cluster.

Atenews apologizes for these errors.

# HIGHLIGHT



## STATE ENEMY, REBEL HERO

### The revolutionary Ka Parago

*His death was thought to be the end of a 46-year revolution, but circumstances may prove otherwise. As the body of the late New People's Army (NPA) commander Leoncio Pitao was carried along the streets of Davao in his funeral wake, the streets were painted red.*

BY ANDREA ISABELLE MEJOS & ANNA SOPHIA TARHATA PIANG  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DOMINIQUE FRANCESCA COSTALES

# HIGHLIGHT

**PITAO, ALSO known as Ka Parago, was one of the most wanted NPA commanders. Pitao was from the front Pulang Bagani and was speculated to have been an NPA commander for around 20 years. His deep commitment to the armed movement has made his name rise to the top of the state's most wanted list.**

It was reported that Pitao was facing 17 warrants of arrest and has been a fugitive of the law for a long period of time. Pitao was killed by members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) last June 28 at a raid in Barangay Panalum, Paquibato District in Davao City.

An unknown source pointed to the rebels' whereabouts, reports said.

The encounter was the fourth encounter instigated by the AFP in just the span of two weeks. There are usually 4-6 encounters with the Philippine Army in a year, said an NPA sympathizer in an interview during the Funeral

Parade of Ka Parago.

It was reported that the series of encounters instigated by the AFP was part of the more strenuous tactics to curb insurgency in the country.

In a press statement released by the NPA, the rebels claimed that Parago was killed in a helpless situation while he was being treated by his medic Vanessa Limpag, alias Kyle. The supporters called for justice for their fallen comrades. The killings were a violation against the humanitarian law, said the NPA.

10th Infantry Division Commander Major General Eduardo Año refuted this statement, saying that justice has already been served for Parago's innocent victims.

Pitao died at 58 years old. Limpag also died in the encounter.

Pitao was said to have long been hunted by the AFP. According to reports, the rebel's head was worth 5.6 million pesos.

The AFP said in a statement that "The death of Parago is the death of the New People's Army."

However, Parago's comrades and supporters would say otherwise. Upon Parago's death, a massive outrage arose in the city, where activities heralding Parago as a hero was conducted. On the day of his funeral, a marching funeral attended by an estimated 20,000 supporters, with some of them being guerrillas who came down from the mountain to visit their hero, their shining red star.

As supporters flooded the streets red with their attire and bandanas, the cry of mourning was blared on the speakers and written on paper.

"A tree falls, but the forest lives forever. Ka Parago may have gone, but a thousand Ka Parago have risen."

## The Philippine Revolution

The Philippine Revolution is one of the longest standing revolutions in Asia. It was started by the CPP-NPA-NDFP (Communist Party of the Philippines—New People's Army—National Democratic Front of the Philippines). The Philippine Revolution is anchored on the theoretical framework of Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, and Mao Zedong.

The Philippine Revolution's aim is to overthrow the current government in order to put up a new government, which is ruled by proletariat dictatorship. They aim for the formation of a socialist society, where private ownership will be abolished and a communal means of living will be established.

Revolution, through a communist perspective, is international and a world-wide necessity. Communism is only

achieved when the majority of countries in the world become socialist states.

Their means of achieving this goal is through armed struggle.

The CPP is an underground political organization since its founding on December 26, 1968. Its aim is to overthrow the Philippine Government through armed revolution through their direct leadership over the NPA and the NDFP (National Democratic Front of the Philippines).

The NPA was founded on March 29, 1969 by Bernabe Buscayno, alias Commander Dante. The guerrilla struggle is also termed as "People's War".

In an estimation by the AFP, there are reportedly around 3,200 NPA guerrillas at the end of 2014.

The NPA collect revolutionary taxes in areas where they operate most. Lieutenant Colonel Ramon Zagala of the AFP, in 2014, said that the rebels are engaging in extortion activities.

The NPA was declared as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the U.S. State

The NDFP (National Democratic Front of the Philippines) March 29, 1969 is a coalition of various progressive organizations, leftist political parties, and other related groups in the Philippines. Its ideological principle is anti-imperialism, and pro-communism, socialism, and left-wing nationalism.

It was cited in an article in the Philippine Revolution Web Central, which is the official website of the Philippine Revolution that poverty is the main reason

why the revolution was born.

"Mayaman ang Pilipinas, ngunit naghihirap ang mamamayang Pilipino," the article said. (The Philippines is rich, but the Filipino people are suffering).

"As long as there is poverty, the need for a revolution exists."

## Pitao's life and deeds

Pitao is one of the oldest and most wanted NPA leaders in Mindanao. He was captured in November 1999, but jumped bail and rejoined the movement in 2000.

Pitao was born on 1957 as Leoncio Pitao in Brgy. Balite, Loreto, Agusan del Sur to poor farmers. He started working at the farm at a young age to help his family survive.

It was said that Pitao pledged to the NPA

at age 22 and eventually became a high-ranking official of the rebel army due to his skill.

He gained popularity in February 2000 when he led the capture of Army General Victor Obillo, a high ranking officer, and his aide. They were held hostage for weeks before being released to the International Red Cross.

He was also reported to have been killed several times, but resurfaced as head of the 1st Pulang Bagani Command. The 1st Pulang Bagani Command is believed to be the main regional guerilla unit of the NPA's Southern Mindanao Regional Command.

The NPA's Southern Mindanao Region is reportedly the biggest and strongest command of the communist rebels with over 1,000 fully armed regulars spread across the Davao Provinces and parts of

North Cotabato, Agusan del Sur, and Bukidnon.

Pitao was often described as an icon. He was fondly called "Tatay" by his comrades and supporters in the areas where the NPA operates.

Pitao remained an NPA leader for more than 10 years. His identity and reputation had detrimental effects to his family.

In 2009, massive outrage broke out in Davao City when suspected military men abducted and killed his 20-year-old daughter Rebelyn, who is a substitute public school teacher.

Rebelyn was on her way home from work last March 2009 when unidentified gunmen grabbed her off the tricycle she was riding. She was missing for more than 24 hours when her dead body was found dumped in an irrigation ditch around 50 kilometers from where she was snatched.

Autopsy reports indicate that she was raped and stabbed to death.

At least 4 of the 7 suspected military agents named in the Rebelyn killing were themselves executed by the rebels.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte described the slaying as "murder most foul."

After Rebelyn's killing, the Pitao family worried about their safety. One daughter, Rio, quit her new nursing job in the city while her brother Redford pulled out of school. The family has since moved into a new house in an undisclosed location.

Another brother, Ryan, reportedly left the city in 2005 to join his father in the armed struggle as an NPA guerrilla.

It can be recalled that during an interview with a local online agency, Pitao shared his experience during his capture back in 1999 at their house in the Toril District. He said he was holding two hand



## HIGHLIGHT

► grenades which he was tempted to blow off, but decided not to upon hearing his wife's words.

"Andam na unta ko pabuthon ang granada pero giingnan ko sa akong asawa nga surrender na lang kay basin ma disgrasya pati akong mga anak", said Pitao. (I was ready to have the grenades blow off but my wife told me that I should just surrender instead for the safety of our children).

After the murder of Rebelyn, Pitao said that the death of his daughter had only fueled his courage and determination to engage further in the revolution in the countryside. He claimed that he will never be caught alive again.

"Kung nagtuo ang militar nga mapahuyang nila ako sa pagpatay nila sa akong anak, nasayop sila. Karon di na ko padakop ninyo" (If the military believes that they have weakened my resolve when they killed my daughter, they're wrong. Now, I won't ever let you capture me), Pitao said.

Pitao admitted that while it was tough for him to have lost a daughter, he was determined to give her "revolutionary justice."

True to his word, Pitao wasn't captured alive again, but this time he resurfaced dead.

**Pitao and the government**

Pitao was known to be one of the best NPA soldiers. He was considered to be a great military tactician. His fellow rebels credited many of their military successes to his strategic thinking.

In an article by Raymund Villanueva of bulatlat.com, "Ka Teo," an NPA veteran, stated that Pitao was an extraordinary leader.

"The many military tactics that we use today to defeat the enemy were devised by Kumander Pitao.

His brilliance is proven by the fact that our casualties are always fewer than the number of our enemies killed and wounded in battle," he said.

However, his plans and that of the NPA as a whole came with many consequences. The raids they planned affected civilians.

One such event was when the NPA members attacked the 58th Infantry Battalion in Gingoog City, Alagatan last July 15, 2015. According to an article published by Mindanews, the attack left the resident women and children shocked.

"My four-year old daughter kept on saying 'God help us, please, God help us' while crying," Gem, who asked that her full identity be withheld, recalled.

She also added that she was still experiencing fear and had difficulty sleeping at night.

"I can't sleep properly; whenever the dogs bark we get out of bed in fear".

It was also reported that one day after the incident, only 10 out of 120 pupils from kindergarten to grade six went to school. The rest stayed at home due to the trauma they experienced.

The NPA raids also destroyed both private and public properties. One event in which the NPA caused destruction was in 2013 where armed men attacked Standard Rubber Development Corp., one of the biggest buyers of rubber in Mindanao.

Reports say that over P150 million worth of property went up in smoke.

The crossfires they exchanged with army officials also often lead to unplanned and unwanted deaths which further contributed to the increasing death tolls.

In an article published in Rappler.com, reports say that on March 10, a total of 11 people – including seven soldiers and two policemen – were killed in separate clashes with the NPA in Matanao, Davao del Sur.

Capt. William Rodriguez from the military's 102nd brigade said that soldiers were bound to the Matanao police station to provide reinforcement and pursue the rebels which attacked the station.

However, their truck ran into an NPA unit. The said unit detonated a landmine in the vehicle's path, killing seven soldiers and wounding eight others.

Many others were killed in separate armed clashes.

Although they engaged in peace talks with state representatives various times, they still went back to fighting with force, further adding to the increasing number of casualties and destruction.

As a result of this, the government declared the NPA as an enemy of the state because of the war and terror it leads.

Yet, many people still admired Pitao for his ideals and charisma. They appreciated his vision of a communist Philippines where everyone and everything would be ideally equal.

However, there was also a great number of citizens who despised the NPA's methods of warfare and destruction.

In an article published by Philstar, Gov. Emmylou Talino-Mendoza said that the NPA attacks in North Cotabato were atrocious.

"These atrocities being perpetrated by the NPAs in the province are 'anti-people' because it's the innocent people, the non-combatants that suffer most from the brunt of these wanton attacks," Menodza said.

The armed struggle is a violent and difficult situation, but the NPA believes through ideology that it is a necessary evil.

**Pitao and the people**

Pitao was praised by his comrades both as a great man and a great leader.

A further demonstration to how the NPA admired him was the reverence he received during his funeral march last July 10, 2015.

"Ang nagaganap po na aktibiti ngayon ay pagbibigay na pinakamataas na pagpupugay kay Kasamang Pitao, isang mahusay at magaling na kumander ng New People's Army. Ang mga tao po ngayon ay nagbibigay ng kanilang pagpupugay at patuloy na sinusundan ang yapak ni Ka Pitao," said an NPA sympathizer during the funeral march. (The event today is to give the highest respect and honor to Commander Pitao, a great and effective commander of the New People's Army. The people here are giving their last respects and are following his footsteps.)

Pitao, for many, was a father figure. Many journalists recall Pitao in a good light. He was described as a "smiling and kind man", as well as a "soft-spoken warrior."

"Pasalamat ko nga naay mga tao nga sama niya na nagtan-aw sa kaayuhan sa mabagang loob sa katawhan na mga nakabsan sa kapalaran (He's a good man. I'm thankful to have someone like him who cares for the welfare of the people)," Mindanao Times photojournalist Rene Lumawag said.

Lumawag first met Pitao in a media coverage in Barangay Baracatan in Toril District in 1990's.

"Tungod sa ang tinguha naa sa kasing-kasing ug sa utok na kung mahimo naay kausaban sa katilingban, ilang gihimo,

kung palawman nato ilang gisakripisyo ilang kaugalingon ug kaaruhay sa kinabuhi para sa mga pobre," said Lumawag. (Their intention in their hearts and minds that if there is change in the society, they do it, and if we go deeper, they sacrifice themselves for the poor)," Lumawag said.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte also considered Pitao to be his friend. The mayor allowed Davao City's gymnasium to be used for the late NPA commander's wake.

Furthermore, Pitao was also considered to be "humane." In their abduction of POW (Prisoners of War), there were no reports of torture, or any form of abuse. "Kapag ang army makadakup ug NPA, ilang pasakitan ug maayo, pero kami, pakan-on pa namo ug lami na sud-an, bahalag unsa pa among kaunon," said an NPA fighter interviewed during the funeral march of Pitao's body. (When the army captures an NPA, they torture them, but when we capture the army and other prisoners, we even feed them the most delicious viand available).

The NPA has released POWs unharmed upon peace-talk conclusions with government representatives.

The killing of a high ranking NPA cadre like Pitao only served to spark wildfire across a country that is torn in war, instead of the expected curbing of an insurgency.

As the military formulate battle tactics, the NPA is growing in numbers. Currently, peace talks have yet to resume. Amidst the calls for change and end of corruption, poverty is still highly prevalent in the country. This is why the revolution continues.

The fate of the Philippines is still uncertain.

3

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## IDOLIZING THE DEATH SQUAD

"A not so peaceful way of attaining peace." This is how some Davaoños describe the Davao Death Squad. Despite the negative description, some believe that the said group serves justice better than the existing judicial system. What could've fueled this public acceptance?

Civilians call for the public and government to not be lenient and stop summary executions. Photo/Human Rights Watch

## 3 FEATURES

# Idolizing the Death Squad

Jessica, not her real name, was still in elementary when she allegedly discovered that her older brother was a member of a secret organization operating in Davao City. Their goal: to eradicate criminals. Their name: Davao Death Squad.

REIL BENEDICT OBINQUE

**T**ODAY, JESSICA reveals that her brother is not alone and that there are many of them hired to assassinate criminals like drug users, drug pushers, murderers, and rapists. When asked who hires them or who instructs them to kill, Jessica chooses to remain silent. She says one thing is for sure: the DDS exists.

Despite all this knowledge—from their existence to their methods of killing—Jessica seems to show complete acceptance of the executions made by the DDS. Undeniably, most Davaoños also do. Are Davaoños merely apathetic about this serious issue or are they frightened to voice out opinion?

Targeted killings in Davao are not new. A report from the Human Rights Watch (HRW), a New York-

based non-governmental organization that advocates and conducts researches about human rights, revealed that in Davao City, the number of cases of extrajudicial killings has risen from 2 in 1998 to 98 in 2003 to 124 in 2008. In 2009, 33 killings were reported in January alone.

Despite this number of killings, however, Davao City is still known as one of the safest cities in the country. Most people attribute this to the extrajudicial killings. Undeniably, summary executions seem to become a practical method to prevent crime in the city.

These killings have caused several reactions from different individuals, even from famous politicians and the Davao City mayor himself. Surprisingly, despite its violent and unconstitutional method

of "delivering justice," the killings seem to gain positive reaction from the public.

Rodrigo Duterte is among those who are very vocal in showing support to the said killings. In 2009, the Davao City mayor said, "If you are doing an illegal activity in my city, if you are a criminal or part of a syndicate that preys on the innocent people of the city, for as long as I am the mayor, you are a legitimate target of assassination."

In his interview with Gikan sa Masa Para sa Masa, he even "admitted" his links to DDS by saying "Ako, ako daw death squad? True, that's true." Even now, his threats to the criminals are still evident.

According to Philip Alston's report to the UN Human Rights Council, "The mayor of the Davao city has done nothing to

prevent these extrajudicial killings."

Even law enforcement officials seem to be complacent about the issue. According to the HRW's report entitled "You Can Die Anytime: Death Squad Killings in Mindanao," "The police often did not talk to eyewitnesses to the killings, neglected to collect the most obvious pieces of evidence, such as spent bullet casings, and later failed to inform the families of victims of any progress in their investigation."

This "consistent failure of the Philippine National Police to seriously investigate apparent targeted killings" alarms the HRW.

On a broader scope, majority of the people and other local officials in the city seemingly supports—whether verbal or otherwise—anti-crime

campaigns that promote violation of the law. No one from the public seems to be vocal enough to speak ill about the said method. In the HRW report, it is said that "there appears to have been a certain degree of public approval among citizens of Davao City for the actions of the death squad." The recent news about HRW calling for an investigation into the DDS killings is even perceived negatively by most Davaoños. Social media is flooded with netizens trying to defend Duterte, justifying how Davao has become a very peaceful city because of the said targeted killings.

Commission on Human Rights (CHR) Chair Leila De Lima once expressed deep concern about "the growing culture or mentality of public acceptance of the executions."

What could have fueled public acceptance to the



operations of the DDS, despite its being entirely unlawful?

One of the reasons is that most people are more concerned with the results than with the means used to achieve them. According to HRW, public's approval with the operations of the DDS is primarily fueled by public discontent at "the arduous and ineffective judicial system" that created an environment where extrajudicial executions seemed to be a "practical resort" to suppress crime in the city. Even if they know it's wrong, they believe that it's more effective than the existing judicial system.

There might be individuals who disagree with the summary executions. However, extreme fear contributes a lot to their inability to help in suppressing the said killings.

Not wanting to have their safety threatened, most people decide to just stay silent and conform to those who do not question the operations of the death squad. Some are afraid to reveal what they know about the DDS, or even express their disapproval about the said group, because of the alleged involvement of the local government to the said killings.

In an interview, Carlos Conde, a researcher for the Human Rights Watch Asia division, expressed his thoughts about the Davao Death Squad.

"Based only on media reports, hardly a week goes by without somebody getting killed in Davao by gunmen who operated in the same fashion as in other DDS-type killings," he said.

He described that Duterte's support to the

DDS muddles justice.

"But the true measure of his accountability, in the absence of direct witnesses or testimony, is his city's failure to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the killings," Conde added.

Conde said that extrajudicial killings are never a good way to deliver justice. According to him, it can never be a substitute for the existing judicial system unlike what most people would think.

"The best way to deal with criminality is to make sure that the criminal justice system and due process works. Crime and extrajudicial killings are just a symptom of the broken criminal justice system. The solution is to fix that system by making sure that police are competent in investigating, that prosecutors are competent

and the courts are competent," he expressed.

For him, public acceptance is the cause of public fear.

"Fear is the first thing that the DDS instills in the public, so whoever voices a contrary opinion about it is frowned upon. Often, fear also results in 'public acceptance,' same phenomenon during the martial law years," Conde said.

When asked about what the government and the people can do in dealing with these extrajudicial killings, his answer was simple: "Fix the criminal justice system."

Undeniably, in Davao, one could freely walk around the city streets while staying secured. But it cannot also be denied that this security is a product of several extrajudicial

killings. Apparently, one's life has to be taken away in order to protect the lives of the others. And with our seemingly defective judicial system, one would think that this is the best way to attain peace.

We are left with no other choice but to idolize those who carry out those killings even if we know how wrong they are. We become believers of the saying that "Sometimes you have to pick the gun up to put the gun down." But the question remains: until when?

Illustration/Maria Cyra Dealca



## 3 FEATURES

# Strength in (small) numbers

*It has been said that there is strength in numbers, that goals or objectives, no matter how simple or complicated, are somehow easily achieved when more people are involved in the process. From creating a movie to constructing a skyscraper, and even making a class project, tasks or jobs can simply be done if more people work together.*

SOL MARIANO

**A**TENEO de Davao University currently accommodates more than nine thousand undergraduate students. The School of Business and Governance (SBG) makes up 47.5% of that total population, with Bachelor of Science in Accountancy being the course with the largest population of more than 1,400 students.

On the other hand, the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS), while it comprises 24.7% of the total undergraduate population of AdDU, holds some of the courses having least number of

students. Examples of these courses are Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies, Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, and Bachelor of Arts Major in Philosophy.

Adding up the number of students from the aforementioned courses would not even get close to half of the population of Accountancy, let alone the entire School of Engineering and Architecture (SEA). So, what would be the reason for the lack of numbers with such courses? Should the concept "strength in numbers" apply to them?

"Parents influence the decision of their sons and daughters to choose a partic-

ular course," said Philosophy Department Chair Jeremy Tuvida when asked on the reason why courses like Philosophy only have a small number of enrollees.

Tuvida further explained that most parents want their children to take up courses that are somehow marketable or courses that would supposedly provide strong chances of landing a good job, like business-related or engineering-related courses.

In the case of the School of Education (SoE), "Ateneo de Davao is not the only school offering the education program; there are neighboring schools and universities of-



***The one thing that the department chairs and deans emphasize is the quality of graduates that they produce.***



fering the teacher education program and, unfortunately, these schools and universities offer lower tuition and [other] fees," said Gina Montalan, SoE dean.

Knowing that the courses they lead somehow lack the number of enrollees as compared to other programs, how do deans and program chairs keep these courses alive?

"When it comes to doing something for the School of Nursing, we did so many strategies already in the past," said Patria Manalaysay, School of Nursing dean.

When their staff realized

that enrollees for the Nursing program are coming in extremely slow, they placed stickers inside jeepneys, showed advertisements through the little screens in taxis and grabbed every opportunity to talk about the Nursing program of AdDU. However, out of all the marketing strategies that they have done, the most important thing that they do is to continually improve.

For SoE, Montalan said that given the number of teachers and personnel that they have, their population is somehow enough, but they are also challenged to invite more students in to experience Jesuit education.

As for their methods in attracting more students in, the SoE is strategizing in the context of their curriculum.

"Right now, we are studying the possibility of offering a five-year program for Education, but it is a straight program up to the master's level so that when the students that graduated from us apply to public schools, they will already have a Master Teacher category," Montalan stated.

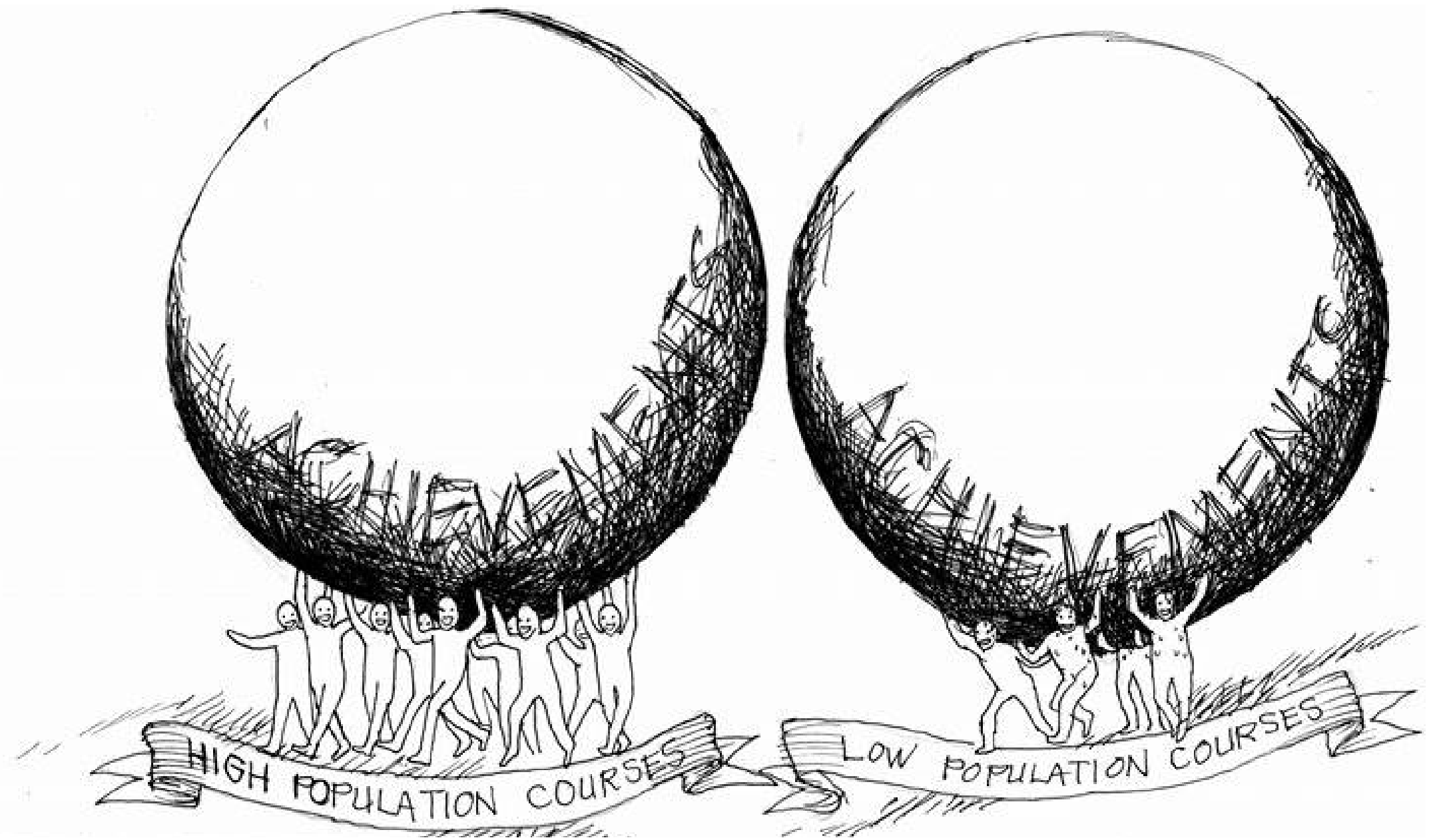
Clearly, different methods are involved in attracting enrollees to courses with lesser population, but the one thing that the department chairs and deans emphasize

is the quality of graduates that they produce. How their graduates turn out to be is much more important than having a large population.

Even though courses like Nursing, Education, Philosophy and many more make up small populations, nothing stops them from having achievements like any other course. In fact, students from such courses perform well during their respective board exams.

Indeed, there is strength in numbers – that if more people join in, the difficulty in achieving a goal or purpose would somehow be alleviated. However, this is clearly

not the case for courses with small populations, as they have stood the test of time and still continue to make room for improvements. What they may lack in numbers may not be in strength.

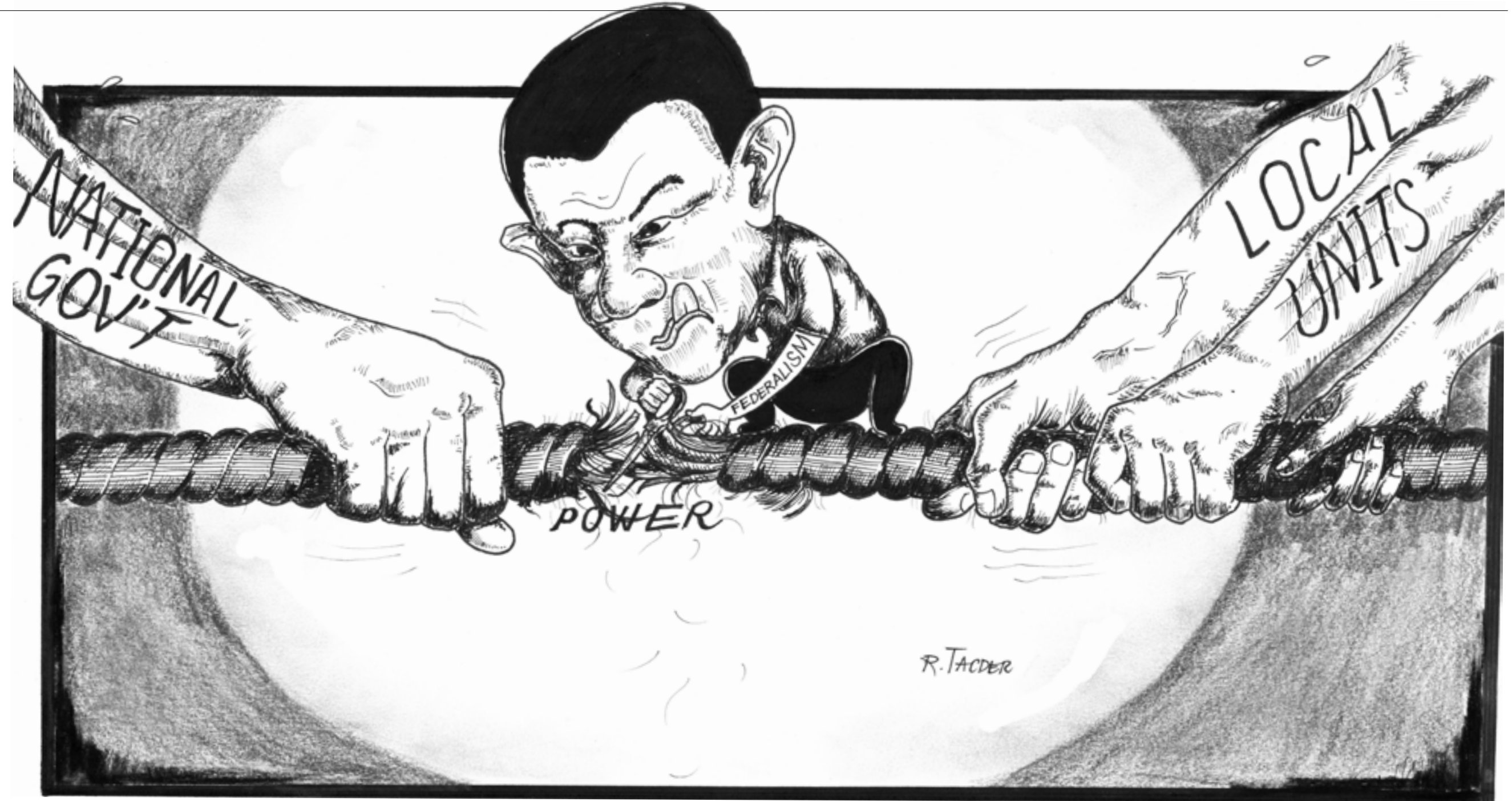


## 3 FEATURES

# Straying away from a unitary Philippines

Due to recent events, specifically Duterte's rise to being the talk of the nation, a foreign government system made its way into the minds of the Filipinos. It promised a practical solution to the nation's recurring issues. But how?

DANELLE GEN FLORES & FROILAN MICHAEL GANDIONCO JR.



Illustration/Raf Maurice Tacder

**I**s federalism really what we think it is? With all the hype about this foreign government system, it is difficult to understand all its sides. Concretely, how can Philippines be better under it? For what price? Do the benefits outweigh the costs? Is the Philippines ready for this drastic change? What's in it for us?

## Differing Advocates

Duterte is not the first politician of the country to propose this said government system.

In 2008, Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. proposed Joint Resolu-

tion No. 10 that sought to create eleven autonomous regions in the country. However, this resolution required a constitutional reform that, theoretically, would be prone to abuse. Afraid of letting former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo extend her hold in office, the citizens protested against the proposal.

Today's view on federalism is far from negative however, for the majority at least. When Duterte proposed federalism as a better alternative to the current system, many supporters began to open up to the idea. Subsequently, they drove him to run for pres-

ident with this ideal being one of the major reasons. They are hopeful for the government system. But how much do they actually know?

## From One to Many

Federalism is a political system in which administrative powers are shared between the national government and its units. Autonomous regions have the power to act independently on certain areas of governance such as managing their own taxes and administering educational programs.

Countries like the United

States, Mexico, and Canada follow the said political system. They prove that the outcome of federalism is successful.

Political Science and History Department Chair and Political Analyst Ramon Beleno III explained the government structure that is federalism, and some of its advantages and disadvantages in an interview.

"In the Philippines, we are using the unitary system. There's one central government in the state," Beleno started. The rest of the country has to follow the proposals of this central government.

"In federalism [however], it's different because the government is not that centralized, aside from the central government, which is called the federal government, there are [smaller] political units," the political analyst distinguished.

Beleno also explained that in the latter system, each lower political unit has the power to set up their own laws. They can take charge of their own issues and govern their areas independently from the central government.

## The Centrality Problem

Duterte proposed feder-

alism as a solution to the centralization of power in Metro Manila, which he saw as a major problem. He stated that this power concentration has "centralized corruption on one place and prevented the growth of poorer regions." The latter are then left with very little share of the national wealth.

"Of course a government's major source of funds is income taxes. All employees are subject to income taxation. [In a unitary government,] Everything [income tax] is then forwarded to Manila. Manila then facilitates the distribution of resources to the other provinces," Beleno stated.

The danger in the situation is that resources will be unfairly allocated to Manila and nearby regions in Luzon.

According to the analyst, once taxes are collected, they are placed into a single fund available for public use by the government. And since the government in a central government are closer to the Manila, the latter and the places around it mostly receives the bigger shares.

This leaves other regions in Mindanao and Visayas underfunded and underdeveloped.

This year, the total budget of the National Capital Region (NCR) as allocated by the Department of Budget and Management is 460.4 billion pesos. This is substantially larger than what other regions in Visayas and Mindanao receive yearly, which only amount to about 40 to 80 billion pesos.

Another disadvantage that the analyst gave is that a central government has a tendency to become selective in solving problems. Problems of Luzon are being focused more than the other islands.

## Federalism: The Solution?

A federal system on the other hand, gives each region the autonomy and liberty to effectively manage their own resources, taxes for one. This makes other regions in Visayas and Mindanao less dependent on the unequal distribution of funds from the central government. The political analyst considers this the major advantage of federalism.

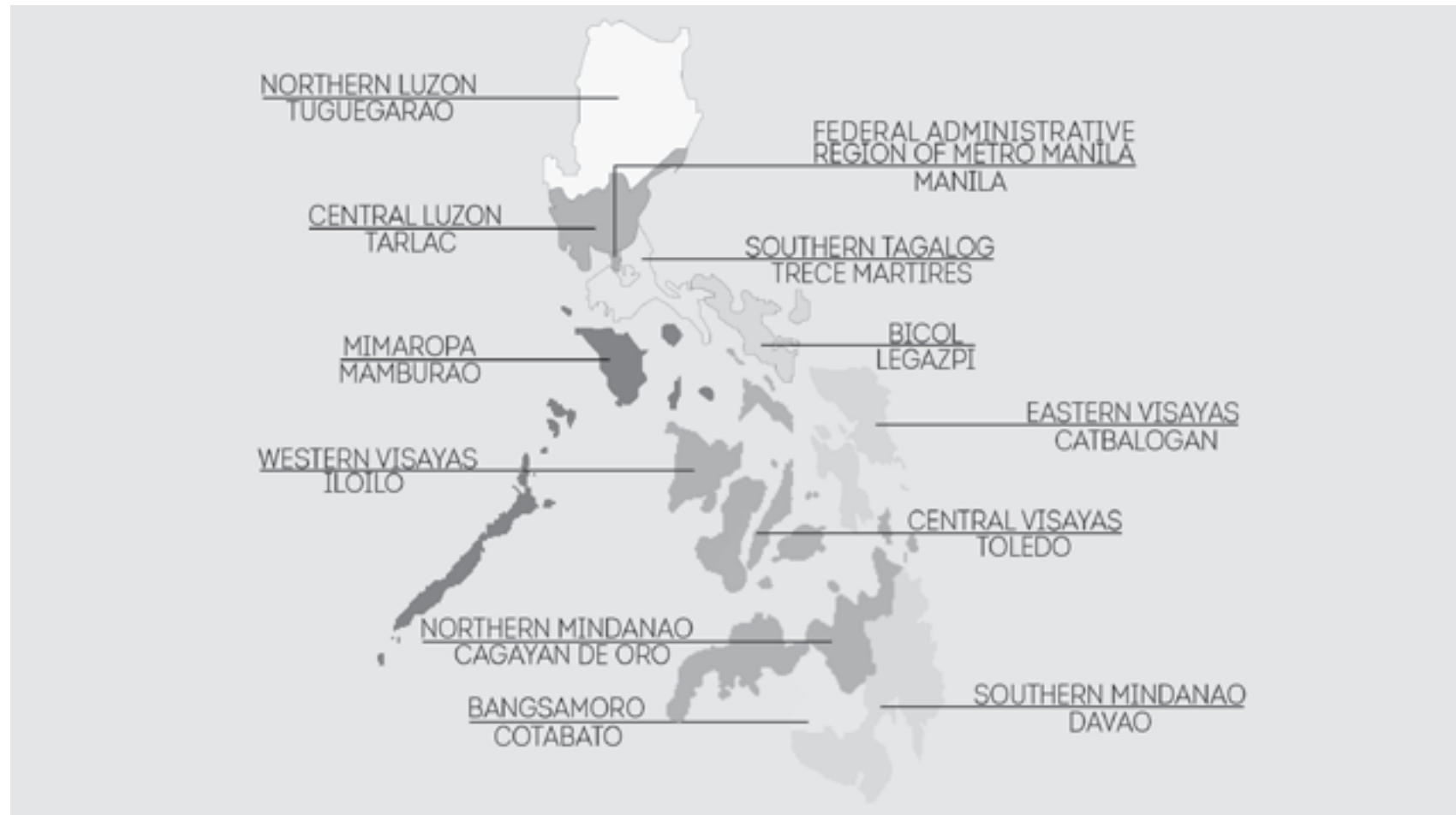
"Funds are concentrated in the different state governments. For example, if there should be corruption in Davao City, we are the only ones affected. Other re-

gions will not suffer, we are the only ones incurring the losses," Beleno explained.

A federal system will empower the people and involve them more in governance. The masses will become more sensitive on the transparency of the government regarding the usage of funds.

Federalism would also tailor the small regional governments' plans according to their applicability in their respective situations. Beleno stated that federalism would cater to the "unique" needs of each region, considering the diversity of our

### 3 FEATURES



The Joint Resolution No. 10, proposed by Aquilino Pimentel Jr. in 2008, sought to create eleven autonomous regions in the country. Infographics/Jairah-Mae Viduya

country. However, federalism might become detrimental for other “poor” regions.

“What will happen to the other regions? Whatever Davao del Sur makes will belong to Davao del Sur only. Only a small share will be returned to Manila. What happens to regions like region 8 and ARMM? They are already struggling to begin with.”

“If we pursue enriching just our region, what would happen to them then?” Beleno said.

The political analyst also said that federalism would further divide our already divided archipelagic regions. It is already difficult enough to establish one Filipino identity due to the multiple ethnicities. How much more in a system where regions are autonomous?

When asked if Philippines is ready for the rise of a federal state, Beleno replied, “Technically, on a legal perspective, yes.”

According to the political analyst, the Philippines has already divided itself into regions. In addition, the Local Government Code of 1991, which allowed local governments to exercise certain powers affecting local issues, has also already prepared the country for this type of government.

He stated that the main problem is how the people would accept the change. On a behavioral standpoint, the Filipinos might not be ready.

“There are very many people from Mindanao or Visayas who still dream of working in Manila, studying in Manila, or even living in Manila. The people’s thinking is still so centralized. We are still excessively dependent on the central government,” the analyst remarked.

**“Federalism would cater to the unique needs of each region, considering the diversity of our country.”**

Further more, he added that there is still the lack of resources to effectively establish smaller and self-sufficient political units.

**What’s in it for us?** If federalism pushes through, how would it affect us Ateneans?

“There would be no negative effects,” Beleno answered. “In fact, it would be better. Ateneo de Davao could be a center of excellence or development in this region.”

He stated that although there are different Ateneos in the country, these branches are actually independent from each other.

“I think only the very centralized universities will have a problem with the new setup. They have different branches from different regions of the Philippines but their decision-making powers are still based off Manila,” Beleno explained.

Looking at the foreign

government system in depth, federalism carries promising results. Before achieving the fruits of this more transparent system however, the nation has to experience drastic reforms that its citizens may not be ready of. Hence, before pushing for this complex system, we have to overlook its overhyped features and understand it at all sides.

We need to reassess our view of federalism—if what we know is actually what the system is or is it the hope we want it to be.

# 4 DIVERSIONS

## BARYO TINYO/DOMINIQUE FRANCESCA COSTALES

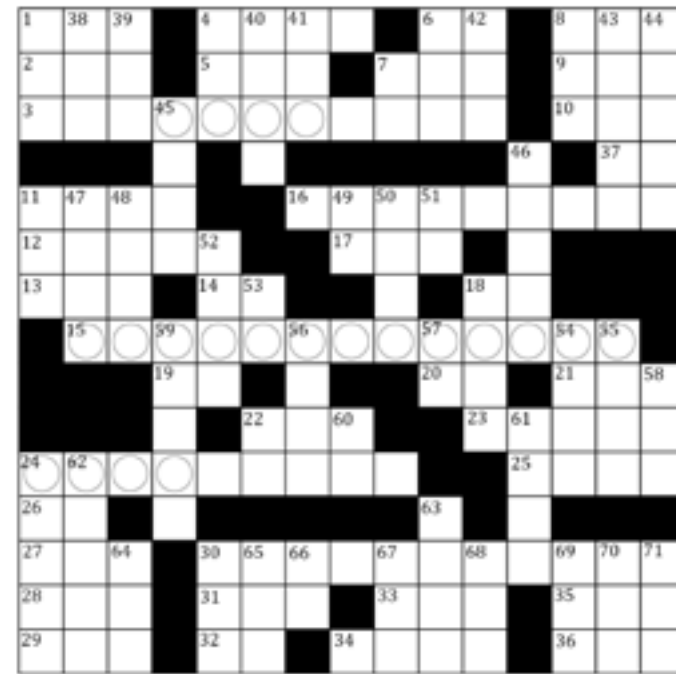


## GROUP PLATE/DOMINIQUE FRANCESCA COSTALES



# 4 DIVERSIONS

## FIESTA THROWBACK/CROSSWORDS



- 3 News lead with 5 W's, 1 H
- 4 Historical metal club
- 5 Before now
- 6 Background (abbr.)
- 7 Noise to scare
- 8 Bio, Chem, Math, EnviSci
- 9 Respiratory infection
- 10 Atomic Adsorption Spectroscopy (abbr.)
- 11 Commonly used to culture microorganisms
- 12 08-09 Youtube sensation
- 13 Original Net Animation (abbr.)
- 14 Pixar balloon movie
- 15 Fiesta first day group competition
- 16 School rucksacks
- 17 Nintendo motion console
- 18 Freud's subconscious
- 19 Fine, alright
- 20 Person affected (suffix)
- 21 Encyclopedia of Life (abbr.)
- 22 Witty wordplay
- 23 To make small changes to
- 24 Could be cited as evidence
- 25 Available
- 26 0.5 Chinese kilometers
- 27 Vampire drama star
- 28 To shout or scream
- 29 Weeping instrument
- 30 Liquid mercury
- 31 Calabash
- 32 Comparison adverb
- 33 International Humanitarian Law (abbr.)
- 34 Orinoco songstress
- 35 Ateneo Religious Organization (abbr.)
- 36 Down emotion
- 37 Civil Engineering (abbr.)
- DOWN**
- 1 Management Information System (abbr.)
- 4 Woodridge area
- 6 Long feathered accessory
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ rice
- 11 Australian native
- 18 Thought or concept
- 22 Irrational circle constant
- 24 Lost in Wonderland
- 30 'As being' conjunction
- 38 Arithmetic Logic Unit (abbr.)
- 39 Happily eating sound
- 40 \_\_\_\_\_ culture; farming
- 41 Pretentious of modesty
- 42 Philo 106 topic
- 43 Cut me some \_\_\_\_\_!
- 44 Greek goddesses
- 45 Prole v. bourgeoisie
- 46 Missing red stripes
- 47 Central Indian IPs
- 48 Australian X-ray Analytical Association (Abbr.)
- 49 Expression for many feelings
- 50 Bye!
- 51 Chi, Qi, \_\_\_\_\_
- 52 Gross!
- 53 2-unit subject
- 54 To shed tears
- 55 Nada
- 56 Remnant of something once long
- 57 First person plural
- 58 London (shorthand)
- 59 Latin new
- 60 Netherlands (abbr.)
- 61 Gangster's she-companion
- 62 Personal writing
- 63 Full of powdery residue
- 64 Bill \_\_\_\_\_, Science Guy
- 65 Popular Courier
- 66 Dota Guardian Spirit
- 67 Family
- 68 International Literary Association (abbr.)
- 69 Duct or vessel
- 70 Historical period
- 71 Thin bar

### ACROSS

- 1 Philo 104 focus
- 2 International Labor Organization (abbr.)

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ANSWERS NEXT ISSUE.

## BEADLE/RENNETH ENA ODE



## PARADE/MARIA CYRA DEALCA



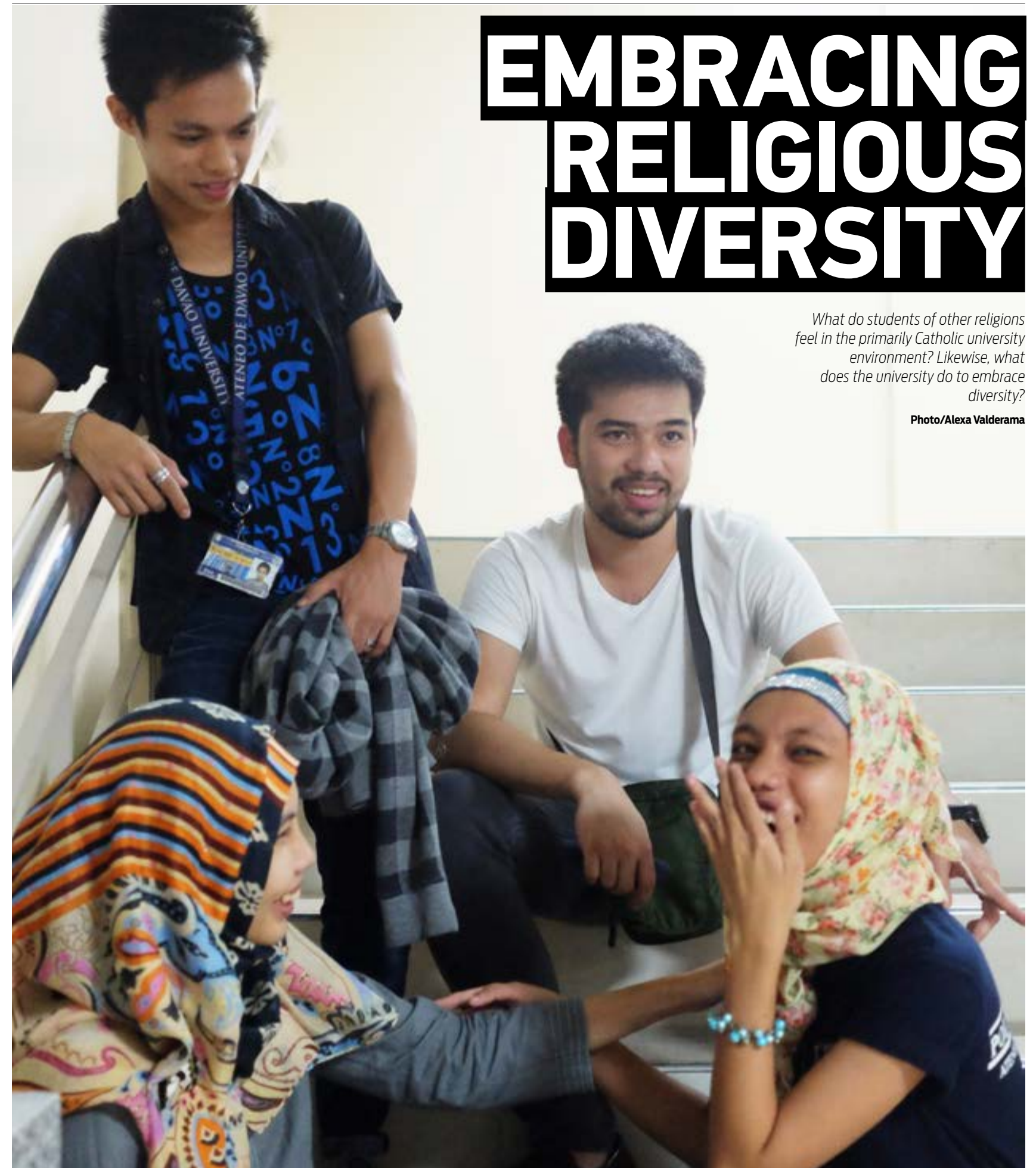
## FINSTER HALL/RAF MAURINCE TACDER



## CLASS RECITS/LE GRANDE DOLINO



# 5 MONTAGE



## EMBRACING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

What do students of other religions feel in the primarily Catholic university environment? Likewise, what does the university do to embrace diversity?

Photo/Alexa Valderama

## 5 MONTAGE



# Embracing religious diversity

As a private institution with six undergraduate and graduate units, eight divisions, and an overall population exceeding 8000 students, more than 800 academic employees, and 400 administrative staff, diversity in terms of culture and religion is an unavoidable consequence. CHRISTIAN DALE ESPARTERO

**A**ccording to the school registry, Christians comprise an estimated 70 percent of the school's student population, more than half of which being Catholics. The other estimated 30 percent is comprised of other denominations including Muslims, Buddhists, and even indigenes.

Religious and cultural diversity concerns most, if not everyone in the university. In what way does the Catholic school respond to the needs of students belonging to religious minorities? How do these students, in turn, react to these responses? And how do these students deal with subjects and activities inclined to Christianity?

"The school has publicly manifested its complete support for the tri-religion: the Indigenous, the Muslims, and the Christians—expressed through joint liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations," Sir Bong Villanueva, a guidance counselor, and a faculty member from Ateneo's high school department stated.

"There are two approaches in relating to other religions: inter-religious di-

ologue with non-Christians, and ecumenical dialogue with other Christian sects," he added. Both of which had already been endorsed by the school for its students.

"Accommodating ang campus, though mas [marami] talaga ang Catholics dito, the school is still very much open to the ideas ng other religions" Ma'am Lynx, a faculty member from the School of Engineering and Architecture stated.

The Al Qalam Institute for Islamic Identities, as well as Salam: the Ateneo Muslim Society, and moreover the University Community and Engagement Advocacy Council (UCEAC) are all concrete responses of the school for those belonging to religious minorities—albeit mostly for our Muslim and indigenous brethren in particular.

"There are over 800 Muslim and Moro students here in Ateneo," Abdul Basset Nur, a Muslim student as well as a member of Salam said. "But out of that 800 plus students, only about 30 attend our meetings in Salam—I think there is a perception about our organization that we are extremists in a way, or a

very conservative club. That is not the case—our club's main purpose is to unite and empower every Muslim and Moro student in Ateneo."

Recently, the Salam club has organized numerous lectures on faith and raised funds for what they are calling the Iftar for a cause.

Abdul shared that the facilities present in the school that accommodate their religious needs such as the Ablution areas and the Muslim prayer room are very considerate of the school.

"But these facilities for us do not mean that we are being given special treatment; we are as other students are. The school is just very understanding, and most of all, fair," he added.

As for subjects specifically inclined to Catholic students like Theology, Abdul said "Kailangan [namin] tanggapin. Because they're a part of the school curriculum; as for me, I treat these subjects as a means of exposure, and to understand other religions."

In the recent years, the school has become more and more proactive in developing its image and

reputation in supporting cultural and religious diversity within and outside the campus. One example is that the school has offered up specific scholarship grants for indigenous and Muslim students as well as scheduling ongoing special retreats for non-Catholics, especially Muslims.

For its undertakings outside the school, in May 2015, Ateneo de Davao in partnership with the Lake Sebu National High school and the Department of Education had led the construction and inauguration of the T'boli Senior high school in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato.

Following the success of the T'boli Senior High School, AddU is now spearheading the Muhdari schools in Bangsamoro territory.

Though it may have its lapses, the Ateneo de Davao University has nonetheless done its part to cater and accommodate the needs of all minorities inside the campus, while also taking action to address issues on cultural and religious diversity outside the campus.

“  
We [Muslims] are as other students are. The school is just very understanding, and most of all, fair.”

## 5 MONTAGE



# The chains of pornography

*We all have our dirty little secrets, be it binge watching a very shallow reality TV show or hiding a forbidden love affair. We all crave that sense of privacy and release from everyday life. There is a certain satisfaction we receive when we experience the thrill of getting away with something.* FRANCESCA MAREE TESTA

**I**n a somewhat ruthless and conservative society that will shoot us in the head for going beyond socially acceptable behaviour, we all need that certain friend that we can confide in and reveal our true unadulterated and uncensored selves. It is important that we find someone who accepts us without getting judged or looked down upon.

A great example of a trustworthy friend that we all share is our internet browser history. If you really come to think of it, our browser history knows every little thing we do online and as we all know, that most of our darkest sins and urges come to life the moment we disappear into our little world. What do we have to lose? We're just going to delete everything after.

Rap, a philosophy student, believes that he needs to put on a mask to avoid being judged by society.

"Unlike the law, which has a set procedure for dealing with 'deviants', people from different backgrounds will either harm us or look the other way," he says.

Concerned with the uncertainty of the response of society, Rap feels defense-

less in doing things that are true to himself but may be questionable to other people.

"I do live a 'double life', because the internet gives me a barrier of anonymity and I think people are naturally inclined to use that 'double identity' in order to finally satisfy their desires or urges, whatever they may be," he adds.

No matter how safe and angelic we may seem on the internet, we must remember that we leave footprints everywhere we go. These are not restricted to chatboxes and imageboards.

A few months ago, the adult site Pornhub released their yearly review and revealed that the Philippines ranked 19th among the top countries in watching porn. That is a whopping eight places higher than last year's.

The average time spent on porn is approximately 12 minutes and 40 seconds. Another interesting statistic is that Filipinas bring in 26% of the female viewer base in Pornhub, which is slightly above a quarter of the female viewers worldwide, assuming that these are not male viewers that chose to identify as women

on the website.

For a country that aims to preserve the innocence of their citizens by placing paper covers on the bodies of sultry models on adult magazines, we Filipinos have quite the sexual appetite despite our efforts to preserve and retain our conservative image.

Professor Hadji Balajadia, a full-time faculty of the psychology department who teaches Social and Filipino psychology, shares that Filipino values are being challenged by Western pornographic culture. The traditional Philippine conservative image is becoming heavily influenced by globalization.

"Filipinos are now changing their values based on this global demand for phallogocentric pleasure through pornography. The Philippines is held by these pornographic outfits or websites as a robust target market ready to consume, in a collective sense, materials of pornography," he says.

And this is not necessarily a good thing, Prof. Balajadia believes. The infiltration of Western culture challenges what was traditionally held as sacred.

"Every click of such websites challenges the whole array of Filipino values which privileges centrality of the family, respect for women, and the sacrality of the human body," he says.

With such great influence of pornography over the whole population, it would be quite the challenge to control the thoughts and actions of such a modern and liberal society.

Although we may think that some ideas and teachings of the old times may be outdated, we should not drop the most important values of our ancestors immediately and completely because they largely define our identity as Filipinos.

We may have gained freedom from colonizers yet we still feel the chains of their influence over our culture and our environment.

We may have succumbed to pornography, but it should not redefine who we are as people.

With what Balajadia has implied, it is now our challenge as modern Filipinos to continue fighting against being conquered mentally by Western influences.

**We Filipinos have quite the sexual appetite despite our efforts to preserve and retain our conservative image.**



BACK PAGE ANTICS/DOMINIQUE FRANCESCA COSTALES

