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VOL. 12 NO.7

COMELEC CONDUCTS HYBRID MOCK POLLS IN CAVITE

A mock polls was recently conducted by the Commission on Elections (Comelec) at the Bacoor National High School in Cavite using a hybrid voting and counting system, and it was observed to be considerably slow in the vote-counting process.

It actually brought back memories of the country's manual polls, where counting took days or even weeks, a lag time that's enough to give some losing candidates the opportunity to manipulate results or even send out goons to terrorize people and make the elections go their way.

According to Comelec spokesman James Jimenez, two hours after the ballot counting started, only 25 ballots were counted in one of the two mock precincts. He didn't say though if the hybrid system proposed by Augusto Lagman was a failure. He said the mock election showed the factors that would cause the counting to drag on. Incidentally, a printer also malfunctioned and had to be restarted with a new device driver.

Comelec Chairman Andres Bautista said the mock polls were held so as to test the Precinct Automated Tallying System (PATAS) or the

hybrid system being pushed by Lagman. It involved 394 voters in two polling precincts at the Bacoor National High School. In one polling precinct, "voters" were asked to shade the number that corresponded to their chosen bets. In the other precinct, "voters" were made to write the names of the candidates. Ballots were counted manually through cross tally and inputted in a laptop, through which the information was relayed – this time electronically – to the canvassing system. During the event, Bautista took the opportunity to reiterate calls for

voters to validate their registration, and even admitted that he is among the 4.3 million voters in danger of getting disenfranchised in the 2016 polls for having no biometrics.


Under the biometrics law, the Comelec will have to remove from the Book of Voters those who do not have biometrics, before the next year's presidential polls. The ongoing voter's registration including biometrics is set to end on Oct. 31 but around 4.3 million voters still do not have biometrics. Meanwhile, around three million new voters are expected to sign up for the coming elections.



Toothpaste to clean your specs? A toothpick to replace a screw? Check out these DIY Eyeglass Care Tips and tackle the hassles with ease.

(Turn to **GOOD INFO**, page 5)

GENERATION



Love is the key to teaching the high-EQ children of Generation Y.

(Turn to **EDUCATION**, page 4)

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EDITOR THINKS



In the Pinoy Game of Thrones

It's excruciating to admit but sheer popularity can really take one so far in this country's politics. No Philippine politician can deny this. In fact, they know all too well that the more the campaign advertisements, the higher the ratings in popularity surveys. It matters little if one is accused of being immoral or corrupt, as clearly demonstrated by Joseph Estrada and Jejomar Binay who, after having been tainted with all sorts of accusations and extensively maligned in the media, still command considerable public approval.

It's no wonder politicians scramble to get to the campaign trail prematurely despite particular rules set by the Comelec against excessive campaigning. Many don't mind the risk of violating the imposed cap on TV commercials, if these will cause them to be noticed more. It's actually become common practice for politicians to assume airs and graces during election time and act like benevolent monarchs granting the wishes of their royal subjects. It's also become a tradition for them to plaster their images and names on public projects, which in a way is like taking the credit for what our taxes should automatically redound to. They know that publicity is the key to winning elections. Around here, for as long as you are popular, you can have a successful political career. But how can even a plunderer or a hoodlum be recycled into the popularity race after fatal blows to their political careers? Why don't traditional politicians die out like the characters of Game of Thrones?

Diabolically-designed suffrage

We tend to underrate the appalling truth graphically illustrated by the need for election candidates to have their own people to guard their votes. They may pretend and say another thing, but most people, irrefutably, including politicians, don't really think our elections are credible.

Are we so quick to forget how Diosdado Macapagal's daughter Gloria, with her infamous "Hello, Garci Scandal", painted a clear and plain picture of how extensively electoral fraud and electoral sabotage can become while calculatingly perpetrated by an incumbent power? She still faces charges related to that event, up to this day.

In this warped and malignant system that is apparently reinforced by our society's elite, you can be president if you're popular, whether or not you have the integrity and capability to be in that office. Our Constitution mandates the government to maintain honesty and integrity in the public service and take positive and effective measures against graft and corruption. Yet, the Commission on Elections seem unable to discern candidate material from convicted plunderers and rapists, and people with pending criminal cases, as well as those tagged in immoral fiascos that just faded away with whitewash. This can't possibly be what the Filipino people want, for the main reason that this can't possibly be good.

When corrupt politicians, ousted in the past by people's revolutions, are recycled back into the political arena to deceive the public once again, it certainly isn't because the Filipino people simply forgave them and decided to trust them again with leadership positions. And as much as politician-actors like Erap and Bong Revilla would like to believe otherwise, loyalists and fans who keep on voting for corrupt but popular personalities do not comprise the majority of citizens who, of course, would prefer a better nation than to be thanked with a smile by useless idols.

There is no way an exasperated citizenry, long despairing for a better, more responsible and noble government, will be comforted by empty promises and meaningless fanfare. The poor who despair everyday because of lack of opportunities to rise and live decent lives; the laborers denied higher wages and turned into slaves by a silent agreement between the government officials and exploitive capitalists; the youth who are forced to stop schooling because the government has made it quite impossible for them to cope with the expenses of education; the homeless who've had their dwellings demolished by police who act for the interest of real estate tycoons; the victims of a whole gamut of human rights violations who are mercilessly denied justice; the sick and dying who have lost all hope because of healthcare they could not afford; and the farmers who are refused farmlands to till because of an agrarian reform program neglectfully left speckled with loopholes for land-grabbing oligarchs to abuse; and migrant workers who sacrifice life with family, away from their motherland, to labor abroad and earn dollars for the country, only to be generally ignored and abandoned by their own government in times of need—these who comprise the true majority of the Philippine population will certainly not waste the sacred chance to correct what is fundamentally wrong with our government and vote unthinkingly every election time.

For the past three decades, the majority of Filipinos has been electing the biggest names and most familiar faces, even though these "assumed politicians" have really nothing to show in the areas of trustworthiness, good governance and honorable public service. As a result, we got the worst leaders ever.

Are we so dense that we'll keep putting the same kind of people in the leadership, particularly those who, after having been exposed of their crimes, show no remorse whatsoever, and even parade the gall to still seek public office? Perhaps that's just too hard to believe. Surely most, if not all of us, must have learned by now that a popular leader isn't necessarily a good one, and that a famous name has little

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bearing on the way votes go, if the electorate sincerely wants progress for this nation.

Unless we are a nation of mostly idiots, or we are all insane, it's highly unbelievable that the majority still opt to vote for popular personalities who could never be truly honorable statesmen. Especially after seeing consecutive presidencies plunge to messy scandals that detail some greedy acts of plunder—all of which were poorly resolved and somewhat made to be forgotten—we have to rethink of what many of the old-but-still-running politicians are saying...that they keep being elected because they are popular and the people love them. At the same time, we must shift our stares towards all the mischief and humbuggery that's taken over our country, for these are, unmistakably, blaring implications of a continuing kleptocracy that has exacerbated already to an unspeakable magnitude. Deep in the midst of an outlandish circus that's showcasing only evil clowns, it's the only sensible explanation for why we, who are in such dire need of a good government, always end up electing the same bunch of people who aren't able to do much for our nation, and can't keep their hands off the cookie jar.

It is the corrupt elite, and not the uneducated masses, that own the blame for our poor options every election time. With nothing to show but a fanciful parade embellished with lies and false promises, they managed to narrow things down to a popularity contest. But beyond the frenzy around political campaigns, poll ratings and confetti, elections in the Philippines only legitimizes the great sabotage of the Filipino's right to suffrage. They are not really the windows of opportunity for us to improve our country's situation, but a pointless exercise to glorify a sham. Thieves disguised as public servants make sure our elections follow such a design.

Rather than pinning our hopes on "recycled" corrupt politicians, it's more likely that the Filipino people will choose new faces, like 2010 presidential candidate Nicanor Perlas, who is far more qualified to be president than any *trapo* out there, being the winner of The Outstanding Filipino Award and the Alternative Nobel Prize for his accomplishments in the field of agriculture and the environment. But what did the weirdos in the Comelec do? They deemed Perlas a nuisance candidate and outright disqualified him from the presidential race. They had no problem allowing a convicted plunderer ex-president to run for president again, but they simply had to block from the leadership one of the most brilliant minds of our time. What a classic example of how a few stupid men so casually destroy our chances for a better government, by restricting the candidates for leadership to a crappy selection of corrupt oligarchs!

1,290 respectable individuals from 44 different countries launched a historical global protest and a petition urging the Comelec to reinstate Perlas as a presidential candidate, claiming he is the most promising of them all, even comparing him to Nelson Mandela, Vaclav Havel and Al Gore in terms of how his leadership will benefit, not only the country but the world. Signatories of intellectuals from Germany, the U.S., France, South Africa, Canada, the U.K., and Sweden came with messages that scolded the Comelec for acting so dumb, and begged for more rationality. Some messages were stronger.

Michael Schreyer of Germany warned what would happen to the country's reputation if Perlas is disqualified and said, "The Comelec decision is for people in democratic countries totally not understandable. Comelec should change their decision as soon as possible otherwise I can not see Philippines as a democracy". Also from Germany, Thomas Autenrieth told the Comelec not to interfere with the people's rights to choose their own candidate, and not to "de-democratize" the Philippines. "Let the people decide and don't decide for them", he said. Laura Langford Schnur of the U.S. said that the Comelec's disqualification of Perlas was "a blatant announcement to the world of corruption in the existing traditional political establishment!" If people all over the world can see how our democracy can be sabotaged by just one ruling by the Comelec, why can't we?

Nick Perlas was eventually allowed by the Comelec to run for president again in the 2010 elections, but having spent most of his time proving his worth—through petitions and supporting papers detailing his projects and even his platform which none of the other candidates even had—he was way behind the campaign trail...too disrupted to catch up in the race, his name too associated with the nuisance tag the Comelec had branded him, and his resources too scattered to mount a successful rally. But it was not too late for him to impart yet another matter of enlightenment for us Filipinos to scrutinize. One month before the Philippines began the first automated local and national elections, Perlas petitioned for the Comelec to postpone the polls for 90 days, citing irregularities that indicate not everything is set for the elections to take place. The Comelec did not heed Perlas' warning, which tainted the constitutional commission all the more with the dark colors of suspicion.

Contrary to the Comelec's propaganda that it was successful and relatively "clean" the 2010 elections was speckled with cheating and fraud. PCOS (Precinct Count Optical Scanners) machines malfunctioned in poll centers across the nation, for which the Comelec resorted to conducting an improvised, less secure manual count, thus compromising the sanctity of a considerable percentage of the ballots. There was also a clear and undeniable case of mass disenfranchisement of voters



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which the Comelec simply downplayed. Independent analysts have estimated the extent of the disenfranchisement at 30% of the electorate, which is significant enough to reflect false election winners. The way things went actually just showed that if you have such crooks in government, the corrupt will keep on winning elections even if nobody votes.

Pseudo Democracy

Without being illogical, it's enough to suspect something is wrong when we elect the same sets of people every time—but maybe elect for mayor in this elections the same person we elected for congress in last one, whom we shall wind up electing for president in the next. We can't just be imagining that our choices of people to elect for the leadership are so limited, with the same old names and faces every time, to the point of even recycling back convicted plunderers into the roster of presidential candidates. One can reasonably say that the country's political and governmental situations are not under the control of the masses as they should be, but are wholly dominated by the few who've cornered the market share of power over these islands. How, then, can this be a democracy?

Because their very legitimacy depends on the majority rule, most traditional politicians will not concede to the actuality that their mandates are not truly derived from the majority but rather from the minority who are in control of a system that mimics though is not truly a democracy. It does not, however, mean that it isn't true.

It was not the majority of Filipinos who pardoned Erap only about two months after he was convicted, but just one president whose motive in doing so might even be questionable. And it is only by the much-inclined discretion of the Comelec commissioner and the strange interpretation of the law by a handful of Supreme Court magistrates that an ex-president convicted of plunder is permitted to run for the presidency again, as most Filipinos will certainly not agree with the lunacy that lets the same person fool the nation twice, much more rob the nation twice.

Constitutional safeguards put in place to protect the sanctity of our democracy, like the Anti-Dynasty provision purposed precisely to effect fairness in the opportunity to be in government, have been completely ignored. No anti-dynasty bill had been passed in Congress for 28 years now. Dynasties, therefore, have proliferated and greatly restricted our choices for leaders and our chances for good government. Did hundreds of congressmen simply forget about the Anti-Dynasty provision in the Constitution or simply could not come up with the definition for the term 'dynasty' as they claim? Is it sheer coincidence that the most dominant members of Congress are members of and thus harbor their own political dynasties?

Some years before his death, the late and former President Diosdado Macapagal admitted in an article he wrote for the Manila Bulletin that the United States government has been a decisive factor in every presidential election since 1935, and that no presidential aspirant is ever elected if he or she is disliked by Washington. Macapagal further explained that if a sitting president manages to displease Washington, he or she invariably winds up unseated by Washington.

That what we have is puppet government might be seen and felt as fragmented hints in many aspects of Philippine society, in our schools, our civil codes, in the media, and even the churches; or as underhanded insinuations in the political economy, particularly in the agricultural, industrial and labor sectors—but cannot be more apparent in the political process, especially at the level of presidential politics where U.S. intervention is most crucial and most fatal. There is, of course, no way we can be a genuine democracy if our government was but a puppet of a American neocolonizers.


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Seven Pillars: The School That Thrives In Love

by Bobbie Mabilog

When I was eating at a Chinese restaurant, an all-girl family which consisted of a mother and her three daughters caught my attention. The mother was in gym clothes and carrying an office bag, and her eyes glowed with contained excitement. The youngest daughter, who might be in the fourth grade, sat next to her mother, while the two daughters, perhaps about fourteen and sixteen years old, sat across from them.

During that time I was amidst my final weeks in college, which was characterized by deadlines, sleepless nights, and rushed projects and papers. I live in Laguna but had to dorm in Katipunan to be near my school, going home only during weekends. Seeing this family in the restaurant made me miss home, although there was a slight sting in my heart. The mother had ordered delicious food for her daughters, and was lovingly tending to them. However, her older daughters across the table were glued to their cell phones, oblivious to the smile of their mother who apparently was only appreciated by her youngest daughter. Mother and bunso would tickle and talk, but when the mother would address one of her older daughters, they would look to her with annoyance, and would give her single-word responses.

Though few words and glances were exchanged among these two daughters and their mother, I saw how their mother kept a sweet yet somber smile and went on with the dinner. However, this smile was a mask she had put on to maintain an aura of happiness, a smile to tell her to stay calm despite the indifference of her daughters. The sumptuous dinner on the table was not enough to break the distressing distance between family members.

The generation in which the two daughters belong to is categorized in what sociologists call the "Millennials", or "Generation Y". Members of Generation Y include those who were born between 1982 to 2002 (www.cpcc.edu). This generation is considered to be tech-savvy and is also found to be the most educated compared to generations preceding it (www.businessinsider.com).

Likewise, Millennials are considered to be change-makers because they recognize opportunities brought by a technological era and are optimistic about the future (www.npr.org).

However, there are also cons in being part of Generation Y. Francis Kong, a respected inspirational speaker, writer and entrepreneur said, "The thing that concerns me is that the young generation of today has put premium on gadgets and creature comforts and the importance of having money over values and virtues". True enough, in a study conducted by EY, which determined and compared the characteristics of "Boomers", "Gen X", and "Millennials", showed that Millennials "scored the lowest on being a 'team player (45%)'", being "hardworking (39%)", and in perceiving themselves as "a productive part of my organization (58%)" (www.businessinsider.com).

This is unfortunate because more and more studies of this day reveal that social skills and a high emotional quotient are vital tools in achieving success. The article "18 Behaviours of Emotionally Intelligent People", gives traits of successful people with high EQ and shows how these are important in the workplace. For example, those who have high EQ "appreciate what they have" and "are difficult to offend", because they are confident but also listen to opinions of others.

Also, people with high EQ "know their strengths and weaknesses", which allow them to hone what skills they know they are good at. They also "have a robust emotional vocabulary", which allows them not to be misunderstood by the people around them and are able to communicate effectively with others (www.time.com). With this, people who have high EQs are individuals who know themselves well, which is why they have a pleasant and positive disposition. Their drive is also strong because they know that they can accomplish whatever they set their minds to. However, one might ask, how am I able to know myself well? This is where a healthy spiritual relationship comes in, which Seven Pillars Catholic School provides to its students.

Knowing God is key to knowing oneself, in fact, God knows us more than we can ever know ourselves because He is a Being of possibilities while we are beings of mere limits. In other words, we define ourselves as capable of only doing so much. However, with God, He certainly knows that we can do more. To illustrate this, recall the time when you were in love. In this state, you felt that you could do anything, right? You felt very happy, and when you went to school or work, things were done efficiently. Because of being ecstatic, your colleagues teased you, "yiee inspired siya!"

We feel inspired because we are joyful about someone accepting us for who we are, and that the person we are in love with will support us in every way. But

how will this materialize if the person we are in love with...does not love us back? Well, when it comes to God's love, we should not worry about that, because He loved us first, and our only job is to respond to this love. Also, since God's love is enduring beyond time, He will never leave us. With this, knowing that we are and will always be important to someone makes us feel valuable. This perfect, unconditional love is what makes us aware of our dignity, which is why it also brings us happiness. Because of this, we realize that a high EQ, in actuality, is the ability of a person to love oneself, and to love others.



GENERATION

This is why Seven Pillars has touched the lives of many students, because this school thrives in love. We recognize the value of each student, parent, teacher and staff and in turn, teach each other how to love as well. However, we have to remember that someone only knows that we love him/her if we actually tell them or show them. Communication is where we channel our love toward the other. This is why Seven Pillars is always hands-on and involved with its students. With this, we will be able to make each other shine and help one another in developing our skills and talents.

In the same way, parents should be the first to teach their children to love. It is the job of the parent to initiate communication in the family, because a child is still trying to find him/herself and attempting to understand the world. The child needs to feel that she/he is loved for him/her to open up and grow, which is not satisfied by mere family dinners-out or weekend shopping sprees. Like God loving us first, a child will only know how to respond to love if his/her parent loves.

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DIY Eyeglass Care

Eyeglasses are fragile things, and so succumb easily to wear and tear. In fact, many of those who wear eyeglasses need to keep many pairs lying around because they often break. Scratches, scuffs and broken hinges are all but regular occurrences. And sometimes, when they are designer specs or are have custom-fit frames from the pharmacy, it can get costly.

Here we give you some useful tips on how to fix common eyeglass breaks, so that you might get a longer life out of your spectacles.



To Fix Scratched Lenses

Lenses scratch easily. Just putting your glasses in the wrong place where something can rub on the lens, and that's it. You end up with scratched lenses. It's a good thing there are a few simple remedies for this very common problem.



Toothpaste

Apply a small amount of non-abrasive toothpaste onto the scratched lens. Don't use toothpastes with "scrubbing beads". Using a soft cotton cloth, buff the toothpaste into the scratch using small, circular motions. Do this for approximately two minutes and then wipe the lens clean. Using a cotton swab and some rubbing alcohol, gently clean the lens and dry with glasses cleaning cloth. For deep, stubborn scratches, just keep repeating the process until the lens is scratch-free.



Metal Polish

Apply a small amount of lightly abrasive liquid (not paste) metal polish to affected area. Using a soft cotton cloth, buff the metal polish into the lens. Keep on this process for two minutes or longer, depending on the severity of the scratch, until the scratch is buffed out. Afterwards, clean the lens with alcohol as above.

Baking Soda

Using baking soda and a small amount of water, make a paste and apply it to the scratched lens. Using a soft cotton cloth, buff the baking soda paste into the scratch. Continue as necessary and then clean with alcohol as above.

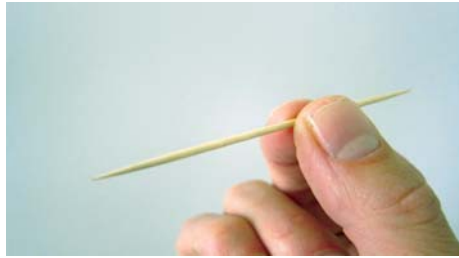
To Replace a Missing Screw

Screws loosen in time, and then just suddenly fall off, leaving you unable to wear your glasses. An eyeglass mending kit should contain a replacement screw, but if you don't have one, here are two quick solutions for you.



Using a Toothpick

Align the frame with the dislodged arm, so that the holes of the hinge overlap. Insert a toothpick through the hole, pushing steadily until the toothpick will not budge any further and is securely stuck in the hinge. Snap off the toothpick on either side, close to the hinge. Ideally, you should snap the protruding excess as close to the hinge as possible.



Using Wire

Align the frame with the dislodged arm, so that the holes of the hinge overlap. Insert a piece of wire through the hole and then twist both ends of the wire tightly. Twist as close to the hinge as you can until the arm is secure. Snip off the excess wire using wire cutters.

To Adjust Ill-Fitting Glasses



Glasses that are worn too tight can cause some serious headaches and discomfort, while glasses that keep sliding down your face will annoy you constantly. Instead of heading to the store for an adjustment, try these simple DIY tricks.



When Glasses are Too Tight

Run very hot water from the faucet along the curved ends of your glasses' arms. Hold the ends under the running water for about two minutes until the plastic becomes a bit softer. It will not melt if the water isn't boiling, but it should become soft enough to flex. Then, gently bend the curved ends slightly up and out to loosen tightness behind the ears.

When Glasses Slide Down Your Face

Repeat the above procedure, but then bend the curved ends of your glasses downwards and in to make a tighter grip behind the ears.



To Clean Eyeglasses

Try this DIY Cleaning Solution.

1. Combine 1 part water, 1 part isopropyl alcohol and 1 part dish soap in a spray bottle. Shake to combine.

2. Spray glasses with solution and, using small circular motions, polish your glasses clean using a microfiber cloth.



The CHAMP, MY DAD

Events

THE CHAMP, MY DAD
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Serenata Strings at Chefs Avenue

June 20 - 21; 11:00 AM to 8:00 PM
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2L Carousel Court

IT'S FOR YOU, DAD!
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June 20; 8:00 PM
Activity Court, River Park

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June 24 to 30; 2L Carousel

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June 1 to 14; 2L Carousel Court

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<p>AV Surfer Weekend Exclusives Get free Jollibee GCs for every purchase of LED TVs (June 5-7, 12-14, 19-21, 26-28)</p>	<p>Reebok Back to School Sale 20% off on all regular priced items (June 1 to 30, 2015)</p>	<p>California Nails & Day Spa Father's Day Celebration 15% off on all services (June 1 to 30, 2015)</p>
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Tanduay Workers On Strike

By MARYA SALAMAT Bulatlat.com



They are demanding their regularization, higher wages, and a safe workplace.

(Photo courtesy of Pamantik-KMU)

MANILA – In the wake of a factory fire in the capital that killed 72 workers and left 30 more missing, contractual workers in Tanduay Distillers Inc. launched a strike May 18 in Cabuyao, Laguna, south of Manila. They are demanding their regularization, higher wages, and a safe workplace. They want to reduce the risk of accidents and deaths at work before it becomes too late like in Kentex slippers factory.

“Similar to the lack of safety protocols in Kentex, the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) is pervasive also in our workplace,” said Anse Are, president of workers’ organization TUDLA (Tanggulang Ugnayang Daluyang lakas ng Anakpawis sa Tanduay Distillers Inc. or literally, Defense, Linkages and Channel of Workers’ Strength in Tanduay Distillers Inc.).

The group said when workers use PPE in Tanduay, it is deducted from their wages, forcing them to forgo it but they become more vulnerable to injury. They sustain wounds from frequent exploding or breaking of bottles.

Unfortunately, even in their picketline this week, they risk injury from shards of broken bottles. This time, they said these are being thrown at them by Tanduay management’s security guards. On 8 a.m. May 19, the second day of their strike, they reported being harassed by the security guards who threw bottles and rocks at the picketline, hitting and wounding strikers in the process. The place became littered with shards of glass.

“Instead of stopping the guards, the policemen at the scene merely shrugged their shoulders,” PAMANTI-KMU told Bulatlat.com.



Picket of contractual workers in Tanduay Distillers Inc. being blasted by water from a firetruck early morning of May 19.

(Photo courtesy of Pamantik-KMU)

During the first day of their strike, the workers were water cannoned twice by a firetruck reportedly owned by Asia Brewery. This followed attacks on the picketline by a combined force of company security guards and the police hitting the strikers with truncheons, and throwing stones and bottles at them.

Strikers saw three trucks labeled with “BJMP” and loaded with male passengers entering the factory premises. The strike has reportedly paralyzed the company operations from 5 a.m. of May 18 till early morning of May 19. So far, the contractual workers have maintained their picket despite harassment from the police and security guards. They are in front of Gate 2 of Asia Brewery Complex along Katipunan Highway in Bgy. Pala, Cabuyao, Laguna.

Tanduay management has not yet faced the strikers on the negotiating table.

For humane wages, labor conditions

Tanduay workers blame their below minimum wages, insecure and dangerous work conditions on the consuming “greed” of billionaire tycoon Lucio Tan

whose company owns Tanduay Distillers Inc. as well as Asia Brewery in Laguna, Philippine Airlines, Philippine National Bank, and Eton real estate.

Forbes magazine listed Lucio Tan as the second wealthiest billionaire from the Philippines with a net worth of \$6.1 billion or P270 billion.

The labor center Kilusang Mayo Uno said in a statement how unjust it is, for such high ranking billionaire from the Philippines to keep 90 per cent of its workforce in Tanduay as lower-paid contractuales.

Based on the Labor Code, these workers should have been regular on the job for years now as they have worked continuously in Tanduay for five to 11 years already. Until the strike this week, Tanduay Distillers Inc. employs nearly 400 contractual workers of long standing, with less than 40 regular workers.

Contractuals here said their pay is lower than the mandated minimum wage, which is already considered low compared to the Family Living Wage and to Tanduay’s profits.

In 2012 and 2013, the company reported net sales of over P10 billion (\$224.6 million) and P12 billion (\$269.5 million) respectively. TUDLA said only a minuscule part of it goes to Tanduay workers as wages and benefits.

The contractual workers chafe at the injustice of receiving only P315 (\$7.07) per day when the minimum wage is P362.50 (\$8.14) in Calabarzon, the KMU said. Worse, the government will further slash the minimum wages here to P255 (\$5.73) “floor wage,” if it had its way in implementing its new two-tier wage policy, the striking workers’ organization, TUDLA, said in a statement.

Collusion and repression

Aside from the unjust and “inhumane wages and job conditions” which the strikers seek to change with their strike, Anse Are of TUDLA said they hope to see changes also in the existing union in Tanduay. Anse Are describes this union as “yellow and turning a blind eye on workers’ sorry plight,” which, he said, explains why their condition does not improve even with a union around.

It was TUDLA that has been working to expose what they call as illegal labor-only-contracting happening for more than a decade now in Tanduay. TUDLA accessed the legal venues provided by law to get redress, starting with getting their organization registered with the labor department. Last month they succeeded in securing their registration papers with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).



Contractuals for 5 to 11 years at Tanduay Distillers, they join picket and brave harassment that injured 50 in just the first two days of their strike.

(Photo courtesy of Pamantik-KMU)

But it turned out they not only have an “inutile union,” Anse Are also decried the “blindness and deafness to the truth” of their situation by the personnel of DOLE.

“We orderly followed the requirements in filing a petition for regularization with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), but the labor inspectors themselves turned out to be paid accomplices of Lucio Tan,” Anse Are said in Filipino.

Dante Ragasa, TUDLA’s vice-president, said labor inspectors Jennifer Taip and Daisy Ramos did not really listen to them nor observe the actual conditions when they came over to “inspect.”

How else would they fail to realize the company is engaged in labor-only contracting (LOC) which is supposed to be illegal? Ragasa asked in an interview with Bulatlat.com.

He explained that the agencies employing contractuales in Tanduay Distillers Inc. simply supply manpower to Tanduay, a practice that is supposed to be illegal according to the labor department.

But, similar to the burned down Kentex that

cremated with it 72 or more workers — the labor department claims it was “compliant” with labor standards and safety requirements. The labor inspectors in Tanduay reported as “legal” the two agencies supplying it with contractuales, the Global Skills Providers Multi-purpose Cooperative and the HD Manpower Service Cooperative.

Not only did the labor department not see the proofs shown them by workers that an illegal LOC is happening in the profitable company, TUDLA said their efforts to expose and oppose it have been met with repression.

On May 16, the contractuales received confirmation “that more than 200 among us are to be illegally terminated just because we stood and fought for what is right and just working conditions,” TUDLA’s statement read.

On that date, Tanduay management denied them work schedules, effectively removing them on the job. They include machine operators, product quality assurance, and maintenance workers.

The termination followed various forms of repression, TUDLA said. These, they said, included forcing them to go on a five-day leave starting on April 24, and forcing them to sign a waiver that would retract their calls for regularization.

“For so many times, our members have been threatened with termination, or else verbally abused and reviled as ingrate,” TUDLA said. But, they asked, how did it come about that it was they who are called ingrates when they have served the company for a decade without tasting a tiny morsel of the profit which their labor brought to it?

For that, TUDLA launched their strike on May 18. They appealed to fellow workers and other sectors such as the students, professionals, farmers, church people and patriotic politicians and others more to help boost their calls against the exploitative likes of Lucio Tan.

Lucio Tan as a sample of the elite

“The labor situation in Tanduay-Cabuyao confirms that Tan, a prime example of the country’s elite, is most socially irresponsible. He is clearly conscious of the vast wealth that he has accumulated but shows no recognition of the pitiful state of the workers who create his wealth,” Joselito Ustarez, KMU vice president, said in a statement.



Striking workers of Tanduay Distillers return at the factory gate after the blasts of water from Asia Brewery’s two firetrucks May 19. At least 50 have been injured in separate incidents of harassment since they started picketing May 18

(Photo courtesy of Pamantik-KMU)

The labor center said Lucio Tan and the Tanduay-Cabuyao management should heed the workers’ just demands and stop meeting these with repression. Ustarez warned that grave violations of workers’ rights would always spur workers’ resistance.

The KMU has condemned the massive illegal layoff which Tanduay planned to carry out before the contractuales held a strike. It also criticized the use of water cannons against the workers’ strike on May 18 and 19.

In Cabuyao by afternoon of May 19, the Liga ng mga Manggagawang Kontraktwal (or League of Contractual Citizens), the PAMANTI-KMU and other labor supporters joined TUDLA in marching to Cabuyao market to request the people’s support and to urge City Hall to put pressure on their local government especially Mayor Isidro “Jun” Hemedes Jr. and the Philippine National Police in Cabuyao to defend the workers of Tanduay and not Lucio Tan.

In the capital, along with various workers’ formations from both the public and private sectors under the campaign network All Workers’ Unity, Ustarez of KMU called for the banning of contractual employment in the country, saying the employment scheme is “a crime against Filipino workers.”

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Sprawl

DERMAX Laser Center, a skin care company that offers innovative, science-based, and technology-focused skin care products and procedures, opens its Nuvali branch this July. It's actually the company's third salvo this year of a series of launches, starting with its first ever top-of-the-line concept store in Centrio Ayala Mall, CDO on January 8, 2015, and followed by a new branch in Abreeza Ayala Mall, Davao on February 7, 2015. Now opening in Solenad 2, Nuvali in Santa Rosa, Laguna, DERMALX Laser Center is apparently on a roll and right on target, with its aim to address the growing skin care needs of more and more people, by opening branches all over the country.

DERMAX Laser Centers provide customers with personalized treatments to reveal their best skin, using the latest in cutting-edge technology. Specialized treatment procedures such as anti-aging, skin whitening, tattoo removal, and the highly popular Diode laser hair removal service are applied through the latest techniques in skincare innovations to impress the most discerning of clientele.

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science-based, skin-enhancing items ranging from anti-aging, anti-acne and whitening to moisturizers, sunscreens and toners. These products are formulated by multi-awarded chemist Fred Reyes, who is the founder, Chairman and CEO of DERMALX Laser Center and Skin Station. Mr. Fred Reyes is the recipient of the 2008 Achievement Award conferred by the Philippine Federation of Chemistry Societies, and the 2011 Outstanding Professional Award in Chemistry from the Professional Regulations Commission.

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Who can better represent DERMALX than the beautiful Mayor of Santa Rosa, Arlene Arcillas, who did the honor of cutting the center's ribbon during the launch?

Skin Consultants are constantly aligned with the directive to provide the best service each client deserves.

To know more about DERMALX Laser Center and DERMALX Professional products, visit their newest branch at G/F Solenad 2 Nuvali, Sto. Domingo, Sta. Rosa City, Laguna. You may also email at info@dermaxpro.com or check out the website at www.uniqly.net/store/DERMAX and official Facebook page at www.facebook.com/dermaxlasercenter.

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