

KALAYAAN

The digital newsletter is the commitment to continue the advocacies of KKK's Kalayaan newspaper, "Panata sa Kalayaan na May Puri at Kabanalan", a collaboration among The Freeman, Rizal-Blumentritt Pamantalaan Academy, and DILG-7



DILG-7 OFW desk officers and personnel from different government agencies in Central Visayas pose for a photo op after facilitating the arrival of OFWs at Mactan Cebu International Airport. | contributed photo

COVID-19 FRONTLINERS HAILED AS MODERN-DAY HEROES

by Jean Marvette A. Demecillo

Not all heroes wear capes. Some wear face masks, face shields, and other personal protective equipment.

Not all heroes have supernatural powers. Some possess medical prowess to fight an invisible enemy.

In this time of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the world needs heroes –in the disguise of health workers.

Several frontliners in the country died in the line of duty.

As the country commemorated the 159th birth anniversary of Dr. Jose Rizal on June 19, 2020, Malacañang, in a statement, hailed frontliners battling COVID-19 as modern-day heroes to acknowledge their selfless dedication to serve the country in this time of crisis.

In the local scene, The Freeman Newspaper, which is the partner agency of Department of the Interior and Local Government-7 for Kalayaan E-News, came up with a series dubbed as "FACES ON THE FRONTLINES: What keeps you going?"

It features some workers in the health, private, and government sectors that continue to provide extraordinary service amid COVID-19 predicament.

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THOUSANDS OF LSIs RETURN HOME... FINALLY!

by Michael Vencynth H. Braga

For almost six months, Lorena, not her real name, along with her six relatives, was not able to return to her residence in Pangasinan owing to the imposition of community quarantine and travel restrictions in most areas in the country due to COVID-19 pandemic.

They had travelled to Talisay City, Cebu supposedly to deliver some of their products in March this year, but later on that month, localized community quarantine was hoisted in Cebu, preventing them to travel back to Pangasinan. With dwindling funds, they were forced to leave their rented house and decided to go home through a land trip.

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COVID-19 FRONTLINERS HAILED AS MODERN-DAY HEROES



Dr. German M. Mayo, Jr.,

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As a doctor and Nephrologist and among frontliners in this COVID 19 pandemic, working through the frontlines in this scary situation wherein our lives are at stake, I always believe in the fact that we can always make a difference and give our great share of help. The healthcare workers are very much needed during these times. It's our job and our responsibility to empower the health situation during a crisis. The economy of a country depends also on the health status of its constituents. That keeps me going - that I can always make a difference in my own way," said Dr. German M. Mayo, Jr., whose expertise is Internal Medicine and Nephrology.

Dr. Mayo is not only serving one hospital during this crisis.

He is affiliated with Cebu Doctors University Hospital, South General Hospital, Saint Vincent General Hospital, Visayas Community Medical Center, and Sto. Niño Dialysis Center Inc.

The health workers are not exempted from stress, anxiety, and fear brought by the disease.

Dr. Mayo admitted that he struggled with many anxious moments and some degree of depression with the unforeseen and sudden changes brought by COVID-19 crisis into the community.

Dr. Mayo admitted that he struggled with many anxious moments and some degree of depression with the unforeseen and sudden changes brought by COVID-19 crisis into the community.

To counter the despair, he channeled his energy to something "positive and beneficial."

"I spend my free time in vegetable gardening, fishponds, and poultry, and exercises in between. This is to cool my mind off from the anxiety and depression, to make it more focused and alive so I can do good hospital work each passing day. Of course, prayers and faith in God every time I go to work. There's always a rosary and prayer book in my pocket. That faith keeps braver as I embrace each daily task," he added.

As the country continue its battle against an unseen enemy, government leaders and frontliners call for the public to join and be part of the solution.

With this, DILG-7 Director Leocadio Trovela urged the public to follow the minimum public health protocol -wearing of face masks, proper hygiene, and social distancing- at all times as a way to pay tribute to the efforts of the frontliners or the "modern-day heroes." -with reports from *The Freeman*

THOUSANDS OF LSIs RETURN HOME... FINALLY!

by Michael Vencynth H. Braga

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After securing documents as “Locally Stranded Individuals (LSIs)”, they all headed to a port in northern Cebu only to find out that their trip was cancelled since their destination is imposing moratorium on the entry of LSIs.

They were left with no choice but take shelter under a container van for four nights.

Upon knowing about their situation, the local government of Bogu City and DILG field office coordinated with the concerned offices and facilitated their travel as well as securing the lacking documents. Finally, Lorena and her relatives were able to take their trip the day after.

“Maraming salamat sa inyong, sir. Grabe yung napagdaanan naming na hirap, naubos ang pera namin, pero sobrang nagpapasalamat kami sa tulong nyo dahil andito na kami lahat po sa amin,” Lorena said in a text message sent to DILG.

Lorena is among the 80,000 outbound locally stranded individuals (LSIs) in Central Visayas who were able to return home or are set to return to their respective residences as of September 15, 2020.

DILG-7 Director Leocadio Trovela said the office is committed to ensure that LSIs will be able to go home to their provinces safe and sound.



A group of LSIs assisted by DILG and DSWD desk officers at Pier 1.



Dir. Leocadio Trovela meets with the DILG LSI desk officers stationed at Pier 1, Cebu City

In fact, he created a team of desk officers to focus on and facilitate the concerns of LSIs.

The LSI desk office is currently stationed at Pier 1 in Cebu City to immediately address the needs of the traveling LSIs.

Concerns include coordination with the LGU of destination, lack of travel documents, and cancelled trips, among others.

As of September 15, there were only three LSIs left stranded at port and are now being assisted by the desk officers.

DILG-7 AND PARTNERS HOLD “DAMBANA NG BAYAN” ONLINE SERIES; LAUNCH KALAYAAN E-NEWSLETTER

by Grace Melanie I. Lacamiento



Aimed to espouse patriotism and faith amid this pandemic, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG)-7 and its partners organized two “Heal As One For Pilipinas: Dambana ng Bayan” forum series and launched the Kalayaan Digital Newsletter.

On June 29, DILG regional officials and employees in Central Visayas joined first “Heal As One For Pilipinas: Dambana ng Bayan” organized by Rizal-Blumentritt Pamathalaan Academy, Disiplina Muna Project Management Office, and DILG-7.

Rizal-Blumentritt Pamathalaan Academy founding member Consolacion R. Alaras discussed the “DENR and DILG Sacred Prophetic Role in the Pandemic” and “In the Fullness of God’s Time: Sacred Prophetic Politics in the Philippines”, while DILG Public Affairs and Communication Service Director Marlo S. Guanzon spoke on “Disiplina Muna in the New Normal” and DILG-7 Director Leocadio T. Trovela talked about “DILG-7 in the Prophetic Duterte Presidency”.

It was followed by the second “Heal As One For Pilipinas: Dambana ng Bayan” online forum with the theme “Advocating Positive Change Through Effective Mass Communication and Community Engagement in the Digital Age” on July 13.

Information officers of local government units in Central Visayas, DILG-7 city and provincial directors, regional division chiefs and employees, field officers, and focal persons attended the forum.

Key speakers were Rizal - Blumentritt Pamathalaan Academy President Atty. Rafael A. Morales; DILG Assistant Secretary For Community Participation and Barangay Affairs Roosque B. Calacat; The Freeman Newspaper Online Editor Joeberth M. Ocao; Prof. Alaras; and Director Trovela.

Highlighting the forum was the official launch of the Kalayaan Digital Newsletter. It is a byproduct of the collaboration of partner institutions Rizal-Blumentritt Academy Pamathalaan, The Freeman, DILG-7, and Disiplina Muna-PMO.

Committed to continue the advocacies of advocacies of KKK’s Kalayaan Newspaper, the Kalayaan E-News aims to advocate positive change through promoting real and inspiring stories on the ground that will help shape the public perception on relevant issues, thus stirring people into action.

For more updates, you may visit our website <http://dilgregion7.net/kalayaan/> , official Facebook page Kalayaan E-News and Twitter account @KalayaanENews .

"DAMBANA NG BAYAN" FORUM NOW ON ITS 3RD SERIES

by Grace Melanie I. Lacamiento



Regional directors and their representatives, field officers, and Region-7 employees of the Department of the Interior and Local Government joined the third “We Heal As One For Pilipinas: Dambana ng Bayan” online forum on August 6, 2020.

Carrying the theme “Advocating Positive Change thru Heroic and Servant Leadership”, the forum was graced by panelists namely DILG Undersecretary Marjorie N. Jalosjos who spoke on “The Sacred Prophetic Dapitan for Philippine Local Governments”; Rizal-Blumentritt Pamathalaan Academy President Atty. Rafael A. Morales who talked about “National Global Network of the Philippine Sacred Prophetic Vision”; Rizal-Blumentritt Pamathalaan Academy founding member Consolacion R. Alaras for “The Philippine Art of Nationhood in the Online Panata sa Pilipinas Dambana ng Bayan”; and DILG-7 Director Leocadio T. Trovela gave updates on “The DILG-7 Digital Kalayaan Newspaper for Sacred Prophetic Vision”.

Sir Edison A. Delos Angeles of The Knights of Rizal, being the new expanded partner institution for the Kalayaan E-Newsletter, also delivered a message of support to the digital newsletter and talked about the “Heroic Life of Rizal”.

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HOW WE ANNUALLY DEFY RIZAL'S DYING WISH REFLECTS A LOT ABOUT HIS PRODIGIOUS LEGACY



By: Sir Charles Ezra Anthony L. Tuoza, KCR
Chapter Commander Knights of Rizal,
Negros Oriental

It's already September, and Rizal Day is fast approaching. In the many years I have spent studying the life and works of Dr. Jose Rizal, I have been made aware of an annual celebration that has continuously defy his dying wish – Rizal Day itself!

Rizal Day is a Filipino national holiday celebrated to commemorate the death anniversary of the Philippine National Hero – Dr. Jose Rizal.

But interestingly, in his final days before martyrdom, Rizal wrote a letter to his family: “Dear parents, brother, sisters: Give thanks to God who has kept me tranquil before my death... (When the time comes) bury me in the earth, put a stone and a cross on top with my name, the date of my birth, and that of my death. Nothing more. If later you wish to surround my grave with a fence, you can do it. No anniversary celebrations!”

These were Rizal's final instructions to his loved ones. But none of these wishes were granted following his death. A large monument of himself sits at the top of his burial place instead of his humble wish of only a stone and a cross. No fence can be seen anywhere around his grave. Instead, a whole park was dedicated for his final resting place. Equally disturbing is the annual commemoration of his death anniversary which goes against his final will.

The defiance to Rizal's dying wish only tells us that his life, his youth, and his works were too precious and sacred to be forgotten in the annals of history. We, the Filipinos, are eternally grateful for being gifted a national treasure in his person and what better way to repay his selfless sacrifice than to pass on his inspiring legacy to the next generation.

We, the Knights of Rizal, the sole fraternal order chartered by law to propagate the hopes and teachings of our national hero will continue to lead his annual death commemoration wherever we may be. To his honor and sacrifice that granted us – the Filipinos – our rightful dignity and freedom: Long live, Dr. Jose Rizal!

Non Omnis Moriar

FACES OF THE FRONTLINES- What keeps you going? LET US HEAL AS ONE. Kaya nato kini, Cebu! Kaya nato kini, Pilipinas!



Kim de Jesus
Staff Nurse, UCMED

"We strive to report to work every single day despite the discrimination and toxic work environment especially during this pandemic because we believe that as nurses, we play a vital role in providing compassionate and quality care to our patients. Our role as advocates is essential in helping them attain the care that they deserve without violating their dignity as human beings. Most people in the country don't really appreciate our role in the healthcare system, but being able to help patients recover from their illnesses is enough to inspire us that what we do help these peoples lives better."

Bonifacio Monjas

Volunteer, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office, Naga City, Cebu

"Sa pagkakaran nga nag-atubang pa kita sa pandemic, I'll just continue to volunteer, tabang bantay sa checkpoint to ensure the safety of the people of Naga samtang wala pay mga company nga nag-open and work. Sukad pa lang pag January, I have no work and still looking for a job. Pait ang walay work but mas maayo kung naa kay mabuhat nga maayo para sa uban kaysa wala kay silbi karong panahuna."



Hanes Louise Visitacion
Medical Technologist
Perpetual Succour Hospital



"I am the only one left working in the family due to the current situation. If I don't work, I can't provide food and my family's necessities. To be honest, I can't really afford to stay at home and wait for the government's relief packs knowing I can help my family on my own. It is indeed full of risks but I once took an oath to help my fellowmen, especially in times like this."

Franley Ann Concepcion, RN

Staff Nurse
Mendero Medical Center

"Everyday is a battlefield working in a COVID-related unit. We never know who, how, and when this enemy will be right in front of us. Donning up and doffing our sweat-soaked fighting gears (PPE) is a crucial part of this journey. The fear of contamination crosses our mind every time. But as I look at my gloved hand, I see how Filipinos work hand in hand to help win this war - the bayanihan spirit that dwells within, the camaraderie that binds us together, the Filipino people who truly appreciate and respect us - medical or non-medical frontliners. We are more than your applause and 'saludos'. We are just human, too; we also get exhausted from all these. But as long as we have the entire Filipino people to back us up by wholeheartedly following the precautionary measures, I believe we can survive this and heal as one. Yes, this is our calling - the calling that keeps me going. What's yours?"



Mackie Monillas
DILG Lapu-Lapu City



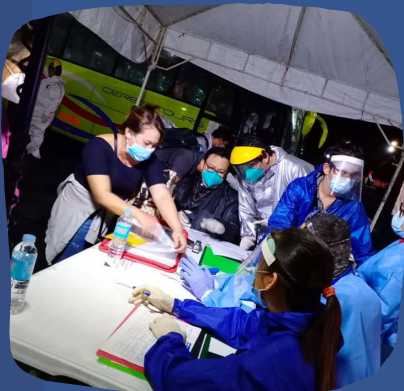
"The people's resiliency. I see people already at their lowest point emotionally, financially in these times yet they are still able to find ways to turn things around. If they can do it, and I can help them get through, then that keeps me going."



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

SALUTE TO THE DILG FRONTLINERS!

Salamat sa inyong pagsisilbi sa bayan.
We are proud of you!



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