



The Senate **e-MONITOR**

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SOTTO CREDITS RECORD-HIGH APPROVAL RATING TO INSTITUTION'S 'HARD WORK'

by Jardine Chua

We work hard. The present Senate is transparent, independent and sincere.

This was the message of Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III, as he credited the whole Senate's good performance for the record-high public approval ratings received by the Upper Chamber in 2019.

Sotto made the statement after top polling firm Social Weather Stations (SWS)

reported in its First Quarter 2019 Social Weather survey that the Senate remained the top government institution with the highest satisfaction ratings at a record-high "Very Good" +62.

"This perception is largely because of the diligent work of the Senate as a whole."

The latest survey, conducted last March, showed that the Senate's ratings remained much

higher than the other top government offices – the House of Representatives which received a "Good" +47, the Supreme Court which received a "Good" +50, and the Duterte Cabinet which also received a "Good" +44.

The SWS survey also noted that Sotto is second only to President Rodrigo Duterte among officials with the highest public satisfaction rating, with the Senate President receiving a "Very Good" +61, ahead of Speaker

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who received a “Poor” -17, and Chief Justice Lucas Bersamin who received a “Moderate” +14.

“I will continue to work hard and make sure that the Senate will be productive under my leadership.”

Sotto said that the high ratings of the Senate and his office are both due to

the cooperation of the senators and the hard work of senators and the employees of the institution alike.

“This perception is largely because of the diligent work of the Senate as a whole,” he stressed.

Sotto said he is happy that the public is taking notice of the Senate’s achievements in the 17th Congress, noting

the record-high ratings received by the institution. SWS records showed that the +62 satisfaction rating received by the Senate is the highest in the country since the EDSA Revolution in 1987. The records also showed that since Sotto assumed the leadership of the Senate in May 2018, the net satisfaction

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Sotto hails ‘independent, progressive’ Senate as 17th Congress ends

Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III has only words of appreciation and praise for the senators of the 17th Congress, as he lauded the institution’s landmark legislative achievements, its “independent and progressive” stance, and its commitment to human rights, democracy and clean governance in the past three years.

In his valedictory address at the last session day of the 17th Congress on June 4, 2019, Sotto thanked each of his colleagues, saying that the strong performance and record public ratings of

the Senate would not have been possible “without the dedication and focus of each senator.”

“We delivered on our promise when this representation accepted this post – to continue in helping the passage of laws that will be beneficial to the country and to every Filipino,” Sotto said.

Sotto said the legacy of the Senate in the 17th Congress will necessarily be determined at a much later time by historians. However, he pointed to the data on the Senate’s legislative performance in the 17th Congress: From

July 25, 2016 to June 4, 2019, senators have filed 2,235 bills of local and national application, of which 464 have been successfully pushed by the Senate and are now new laws of the republic, while senators have also filed 1,048 resolutions covering various issues and advocacies.

Of the hundreds of laws passed by the Senate in the 17th Congress, Sotto pointed to 10 landmark laws on health, social services, peace and security and finance which the Senate was proud to have successfully worked on.

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THE 'GRADUATES'

by Cecille Lardizabal and Yvonne Almirañez

HONASAN: Defining moments in history



Senator Gregorio “Gringo” Honasan left the Senate with mixed emotions. He looked back at how he has progressed since he first spent his life

...serving as a senator in 1995. “I’ve been undergoing rehabilitation in the Senate for the last 20 years so merong political outlook. There’s been value-added to my outlook about

the political, economic, social, and even spiritual condition of our country, syempre lessons learned,” was how Honasan described it.

He is the principal

author and co-author of, among others, the Clean Air Act of 1999, Disaster Risk Reduction Management Act of 2009, the Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 and the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reforms Law (CARPER). He revealed that his defining moments as a public servant is not as a senator but as a soldier (and also as a rebel)

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TRILLANES: A strong voice of the opposition

What could be more colorful and tumultuous than that of the life as a senator of Antonio “Sonny” Trillanes IV?

Trillanes first ran for the Senate in 2007 while in jail and luckily made it in the winning circle. A few months after he assumed office, he joined his military colleagues in leading the protest at the Manila Peninsula

in Makati to reiterate calls for the ouster of then President Gloria Arroyo. This ended in the surrender of the former Navy lieutenant along with other military officials on the same day.

Little did he know that his military training would help him become a legislator. “My training as a soldier has always



been results-oriented and mission-oriented. So, whether it be in committee investigations or passing pieces of legislation, once it’s set as

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ESCUDERO: A senator with a heart

Senator Francis “Chiz” Escudero bids adieu to the Senate for now after he won as governor in his home province of Sorsogon during the May 13, 2019 midterm elections, where he plans to “give back to his roots” what he has learned all these years in politics, economy, culture and good governance. Elected as Representative of the First District of Sorsogon at the young age of 28, he became the Assistant Majority Floor Leader that same year.

Escudero was re-elected twice (in 2001 and in 2004), and he assumed the role of House Minority Floor Leader from 2004 to 2007.

In 2007, Escudero ran for, and won, a seat in the Senate. He headed the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, Joint Oversight Committee on Ecological Solid Waste Management, Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on the Clean Air Act, and Committee



on Environment and Natural Resources.

Escudero championed the rights of minimum wage earners through RA 9504 (Tax Exemption for Minimum Wage Earners and Increased Tax Exemptions).

He also worked to increase the maximum

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LEGARDA: Peace advocate, climate change warrior



Climate change warrior with a compelling vision of a safer and greener world for all, Senator Loren Legarda has dedicated her work

to serve the Filipino people by promoting the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources.

She pushed for the enactment of laws on environmental governance like the Clean Air Act, the Solid Waste Management Act, the Climate Change Act and the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction

and Management Act.

She is a peace-builder and an advocate for the protection of indigenous peoples’ rights, initiating efforts to liberate them from various forms of discrimination by promoting their cultural roots and heritage and setting up exhibits showcasing their exceptional skills and world-class products.

Legarda also places emphasis on protecting

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Miss Universe paints Senate Gray

Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray paid a courtesy call to Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III and other senators last February 26 as part of her official homecoming after being crowned 67th Miss Universe held in Bangkok, Thailand last December 17.

Gray, a model, singer, and volunteer for a non-government organization helping underprivileged children in Tondo, Manila, was welcomed by the Senate chief, Senators Nancy Binay and Gregorio Honasan as well as other Senate officials and employees.

During her short visit, Gray was bestowed Senate Resolution No. 140 congratulating and commending her for bringing “great honor, glory and recognition” to the country in winning the title.

The measure was adopted by Senate last February 8. In his message, Sotto, who authored the resolution, said Gray “deserves nothing better than a high level of praise.”

“Thank you, Miss Universe, Catriona Gray,” Sotto said.

“It is common knowledge in the world that the Philippines has held an exemplary track record in world beauty pageants for being consistently in the top ten, and each of these, regardless of title and rank, has definitely brought pride to every Filipino,” he said.

“Winning the most coveted Miss Universe brings great honor, glory and recognition to all Filipinos and it deserves nothing better than a high level of praise.

“We are truly blessed and honored that Miss Universe, Catriona Elisa Gray, is here with us today, to personally receive, and has received, a commendation from the members of the Senate of the Philippines,” the Senate chief said.

“Continue to inspire others, especially the youth, in pursuing worthwhile advocacies



Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III congratulates Miss universe 2018 Catriona Gray
 Photo below : SP Sotto, Gray, and Sens. Nancy Binay and Gregorio Honasan III.



that could make our country and the world, the universe, rather, to be a better place for everyone,” he added.

Gray thanked the Senate for the recognition. Responding to Sotto, she vowed to “continue to hold Filipinos at a high standard to the international audience” and to pursue her advocacies during her reign.

Meanwhile, she called on senators to support and empower young Filipinos and allow them

to give back to their respective communities, “in their own facets, in their own ways.”

Separate resolutions have been filed in the Senate congratulating and commending the beauty titlist. The resolutions were filed by Sotto, Majority Leader Juan Miguel Zubiri and Binay.

Sotto, in his Senate Resolution 975, cited Gray for besting 93 other candidates from different countries during the 67th Miss Universe Pageant held on December 17, 2018 at IMPACT Arena,

Muang Thong Thani, Bangkok, Thailand.

“Whereas, Catriona Elisa Gray’s outstanding performance deserves to be commended and praised for the great honor, glory and recognition brought to our country and the Filipino people,” Sotto’s resolution stated. He said Gray’s victory has placed the Philippines in the fourth spot in the list of countries that have the most number of Miss Universe title holders.

Gray is the fourth Filipina to win the crown next to Gloria Diaz (1969), Margarita Moran (1973) and Pia Alonzo Wurtzbach (2015).

Zubiri’s resolution highlighted Gray’s work in raising awareness for various causes and her involvement in various organizations such as the Love Yourself organization which focuses on HIV awareness and the Young Focus organization that started a fundraising program for building a preschool for children in Smokey Mountain. *(JPL)*

THE NEW ATTRACTION

SINCE its unveiling last October 2018, the Senate “Gallery of Legacy” has been one of the main attractions inside the Philippine Senate building.

Showcasing the mural and the works of senators of the 17th Congress, the gallery, which is situated in the hallway at the second floor of the Senate building, has drawn visitors and students to snap a selfie or ‘groufie’ with the senators of their choice as their background.

The gallery is an initiative of Jen Legaspi, Public Relations head of the Office of Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III, in collaboration with Manprom Inc. and the Senate Public Relations and Information Bureau (PRIB), to showcase a better illustration of the institution modelled by its very own senators.

“I just want to utilize the space and create a gallery feel while showcasing the senators and their work,” Legaspi said.

The huge undertaking is now the most visited area inside the Senate. (JGA)





Lando wins Sen. Manny Pacquiao's 3rd Biggest Loser Challenge

by Pilar S. Macrohon

What would you do if you win a hefty amount of money? Go on a trip, maybe. Save for the rainy day. Buy new clothes, shoes and gadgets.

But for Lani Lyne Torres, commonly known as Lando, the answer was simple. “Gusto ko happy sila.” So, she gave away almost all of her prize money, amounting to P250,000 to her siblings, uncles and aunts, shoes for her nephews, food for friends and officemates. She even helped bury an uncle in the province.

“I was a big shot when I went home in

Lusuac, Abra,” Lando laughed. Money was just money after all, Lando reasoned. She considered it well spent by making everybody happy.

Lando won first place in Sen. Manny Pacquiao's 3rd Biggest Loser Challenge women's category last February.

She said money led her to join the competition. She made some bad investments and needed to pay off some debts.

“I was worried because I owed my aunt and sibling a considerable amount of money. I also wanted to fix my mother's niche, which needed



repairs. When Sen. Pacquiao offered another round of Biggest Loser Challenge, I grabbed the

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SOTTO CREDITS... *(from page 1)*

ratings of the institution have shot up, from a +41 in June 2018, to a +48 in September 2018, to +58 in December 2018, to +62 in March 2019.

Sotto himself is enjoying consistently high satisfaction ratings as compared to previous Senate Presidents, and

his current +61 rating is second only to former Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile who received a +65 rating back in August 2012.

Sotto said the Senate is thankful for the people's trust and positive reaction to their work, and vowed that the institution will be more productive in the

months ahead.

“I will continue to work hard and make sure that the Senate will be productive under my leadership,” he said.

“Our people deserve nothing less but a higher level of true public service,” he concluded.



LANDO... *(from page 9)*

chance. The only option was to win,” Lando said. Lando had an ace on her sleeves. She had Erwin Jimenez, another winner in the previous Biggest Loser Challenge, as her coach. She said she followed the diet plan rigidly, eating only eggs, fish, vegetables and fruits.

For somebody with a hearty appetite, Lando admitted that dieting wasn't easy, especially during Christmas season.

“I only had two months to shed some of my pounds.

I shed 16 kilos during the final weigh-in,” she said.

Lando said she started her diet by eating three eggs per meal, cutting all carbs.

She said she refrained from eating too much during the Christmas holidays.

“I also went on long walks. Before the final weigh-ins, I spent money going to a sauna and steamed for six hours during the last month of the challenge.

I was surprised at my determination,” Lando said.

She said she was the last one to weigh-in during the final day of the competition and knew she had won even before it was announced.

“I already weighed myself before going to the final weigh-ins so I had an idea how much pounds I lost. When they announced the last competitor, I knew I made it,” Lando said.

She said Sen. Pacquiao's challenge had taught her that nothing is impossible if you put your mind to it and maintain a positive attitude.

SOTTO HAILS... *(from page 2)*

On health reforms, Sotto said the Senate passed the Universal Health Care Act (RA 11223), the Mental Health Act (RA 11036), and the act on mandatory PhilHealth coverage for persons with disabilities or PWDs (RA 11228). The Senate also pushed new laws for expanded social services like the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (RA 10931), the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program or 4Ps

Act (RA 11310), and the Magna Carta of the Poor (RA 11291).

For peace and security, the Senate also secured the passage of the long-sought Bangsamoro Organic Law (RA 11054), and the National Identification System Act (RA 11055). Likewise, the Senate passed laws on the financial and labor sectors, like the amendments to the Corporation Code of the Philippines (RA 11232) and the Tele-Commuting Law (RA 11165).

As the incoming 18th Congress approaches, Sotto said the Senate intends to carry on its tasks as it had in the past – “cooperative but independent, balanced, transparent and sincere.”

“May the divine providence continue to guide the Senate and this nation as a whole and in each of our personal capacities to take its place in the proud member of the family of nations dedicated to peace, freedom and the pursuit of happiness,” he said.
(Jardine Chua)



Pentagon



Powerhauz



OSAA

PNP-PSPG



SP si VST: Eventual champion in the 40+ category



Young at 40s: 1st runner-up in the 40+ category



Mighty Fleas: 2nd runner-up in the 40+ category

Dir. Gen Rodel Dascil, playing coach / manager of Young at 40s against Samuel Marata of SP si VST

Dir. Gen Ronald Golding of SP si VST team guarding erstwhile teammate Jeffrey Sanders of Young at 40s

Senate Warriors



Senate inter-color basketball tournament no longer a side event

by Gil Merino Valdéz

Way back in 1997, the Senate Inter-color started as a side-event to fill-up the activities of Congress in recess before the main event, the Senate Mini-Olympics. The first and second Inter-color was a three-on-three event using rules before the FIBA guidelines we have today. It was held at the GSIS outdoor basketball court. It was a fun event geared towards non-athletic types who just want to have a few minutes of sweat and exercise. My team, the Mighty Fleas, entered the very first contest. Today, we are the only original team left from twenty-two years ago.

In its first decade, the tournament did not have two categories. We now have a category for those younger than forty, the Open category. For old-timers, we have the 40 and above category. After twenty-two years, the Mighty Fleas is now

competing under the “thunders division”.

We are now down to five core members. When one original member had a stroke five years ago, we dropped the moniker and competed as The Cupcakes. When he returned, we deemed it appropriate to return to our original name.

In 2017, playing as The Mighty Fleas, we finished 1st Runner-up against eventual champions, the powerhouse of the Senate Pioneers, bannered by Dir. Gen. Ronald Golding, Dir. Gen. Rodel Dascil, Richard Diño, Warren Tan and Dr. Renato Sison.

The following year, the Senate Pioneers were champions again. The Mighty Fleas were 2nd-runner Up after being left with just seven active players led by Alex Cleofe and Elmer Yabut.

This year, Dep. Sec. Enrique “Louie” Papa, made sure the participating teams paraded their players and take the sportsman’s oath at the opening of the

games last March 19. The championship game was held last April 11.

With the grand opening, it felt for the first time that the inter-color tournament had finally come out from the shadow of the Mini-Olympics, with more eager participants.

The Open category had eight competing teams – the Senate Warriors, OS/RH, OSAA, Friends, HRMS, People’s Champ, EDP-MIS, Powerhauz. The 40 and above category had Young at 40s, Legis, SP si VST, PNP, Pentagon, and The Mighty Fleas.

The PNP team was deemed a guest team.

I personally lobbied for their inclusion as a regular team, since like the Philcare and the Alexis security personnel, they are part of the everyday goings-on in the Senate. The PNP-PSPG, in fact is in the building 24/7 as security augmentation for the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

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PasaLord's synchronized peace prayer, now a yearly tradition in the Senate

by Angie Rosales

A historic, meaningful and spiritually uplifting event.

Thus said Sen. Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III in describing the interreligious movement's synchronized prayer event last Feb. 7 and participated in by the Senate and its employees.

The "Prayer for Peace in the Philippines," organized by PasaLord Prayer Movement, has since been made a yearly "tradition" in the upper chamber beginning this year following the adoption of Senate Resolution No. 1002 introduced by Senate President Vicente C. Sotto III.

"First time na nangyari sa bansa na nagdasal ang three branches of government and of course citizens of the Republic para sa kabutihan ng ating bansa for the Lord's protection and blessings to our country," Pimentel said.

"Because of a Senate resolution authored by the Senate President,

adopted by the Senate, we will institutionalize this in the Senate every first Thursday of February (at 12 noon). This is a work of the Lord using you as the instrument," the senator said, addressing his mother, Lourdes "Bing" Pimentel.

"It is a universal prayer acceptable to all religions. It summarizes our hopes and petitions to God as a nation."

Mrs. Pimentel, lead convenor of PasaLord Prayer Movement, who was at the Senate to lead the prayer, said that never has the Philippines or any country in the world paused all their activities for a moment to lift the nation up to God Almighty.

Incidentally, the event took place two weeks after a bombing incident inside the Jolo Cathedral in Sulu that killed at least

23 people and more than a hundred others injured.

Launched in July 7, 2017, the interfaith movement seeks to unite Filipinos of various creeds and denominations to pray not only for peace in the Philippines but also blessing for the country's leaders, safekeeping of families, protection from foreign invasion, lawless acts, terrorism and war.

"Everyone who joins us in prayer becomes a mustard seed. It only takes a little seed of faith to move a mountain. If we can combine our mustard seeds of faith, then we can tell the mountains of problems confronting our country to go away," Mrs. Pimentel said.

Television giants such as GMA Network Inc. and ABS-CBN responded to the call for a synchronized moment of prayer and even invited its viewers and listeners to take part in the event.

In adopting Senate Resolution No. 1002

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PASALORD... *(from page 13)*

the upper chamber declared every first Thursday of February starting this year and every year thereafter as the “Synchronized Interfaith National Prayers for Peace and Reconciliation.”

It persuaded all Filipinos of any religion to actively participate in

reciting the prayers which has English, Filipino, Cebuano and Hiligaynon versions.

“It is a universal prayer acceptable to all religions. It summarizes our hopes and petitions to God as a nation,” Mrs. Pimentel said. Following the said event, Mrs. Pimentel

expressed hope that Filipinos will take a pause each day to recite the prayer, making it their “12 o-clock habit.”

“Together we can change the spiritual climate of the Philippines so that the good we’ve been trying to do will have a better chance of success,” she said.

HONASAN... *(from page 3)*

and he supposed these experiences brought him to the institution.

His name became significant in the annals of Philippine history. He, along with other military officials and backed by then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, led the unrest to overthrow the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. Then after that Honasan was involved again in various coup attempts against the Corazon Aquino government.

The retired Philippine Army officer made a sense of it all. He shared, “I thought the root to reform or change would be armed struggle. Then again, everything was

a consequence of the tools at my disposal as a soldier, trained in the management of violence.” But the most permanent and important battleground for Honasan is the hearts and minds of the people. The fact that he’s been unbeaten for four senatorial elections is for him a source of pride and satisfaction. He knew he was on the right track.

On the Performance of the Senate

He said the Senate is more consensual and a collegial body. For one, he said Senate President Vicente “Tito” Sotto III is a consensus builder. He went on to say “hindi ito yung relying too much on

his own political instincts and experience. He asks everybody and I think there is no serious challenge against the leadership of Senator Sotto.”

Honasan is part of the so-called “macho bloc” in the Senate, with Senate President Tito Sotto and Senator Ping Lacson as members. Senators Loren Legarda and Grace Poe have also been included in the group. They are the veteran senators, along with Senate Minority Leader Frank Drilon. Honasan thinks each of them gravitated towards each other.

He is equally proud of the younger generation of senators whom he

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SEMCO distributes P13M dividends to members

Almost 1,000 members of the Senate Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative (SEMCO) received their “post-Christmas bonus” after the cooperative distributed more than P13 million as dividends and patronage refund during its 30th annual General Assembly last February 20.

SEMCO president Atty. Jim Ricohermoso said a total of P9,200,154.07 was declared by the Board of Directors as net income surplus for 2018.

In October last year, the Board has allocated more than P3 million as financial benefits to members which was distributed during this year’s General Assembly.

“Thus, some P13 million were distributed to SEMCO members during the assembly,” Ricohermoso said.

During the annual gathering, the Board also reported that the Bingo and Bazaar activities it sponsored during the Senate’s 102nd

Anniversary earned P531,000 and P488,000, respectively.

“Among the well-received financial assistance and loan facilities and other services initiated by the Board last year were the Pagtulong sa Estudyante sa Eskwela (PASOK) loan, increasing the short-term loan from P10,000 to P15,000, motorcycle loan and the newly-launched SEMCO Bayad Center,” the SEMCO president said.

“There was a clamor for more remittance and payment services for the cooperative’s Bayad Center,” he added.

During the General Assembly, the SEMCO also elected new members of the Audit Committee (Richard Ramirez, Jo-ann Figueroa and Ma. Cecilia Florez); and the Election Committee (Nelson Cancillar, Christian Pelagio and Ruperto Valguna Jr.).

The SEMCO further approved its development plans for this year. It outlines the steps to be

taken in achieving the cooperative’s vision, which is the organization’s sustainability.

The SEMCO is also targeting to expand its capital to meet the members’ financial needs.

The Board plans to undertake more education and training activities for directors, officers and members this year, especially in the light of the Cooperative Development Authority’s (CDA) Memorandum Circular No. 2015 – 09, spelling out a revised guidelines implementing the new training requirements of cooperative officers. *(JPL)*

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believes are better legislators as he can never be. He would always welcome fresh wind of change blowing across the policy landscape.

Honasan just took oath as Secretary of the Department of Information and Communications Technology. He humbled himself by claiming he may not be a schooled information technology individual but he sees every opportunity in learning more. For him, ignorance is bliss and he welcomes ideas. The Senate President expressed confidence that his macho bloc-mate would be an asset to the

new department. Sotto once said that the DICT does not only cover the communications technology aspect but the national security as well which is a big factor. Honasan chairs the Senate National Defense Committee. His colleagues at the Senate agree in saying Honasan's background had exposed him to cyber security matters which makes him eligible for the post.

Amid the controversy on the third telco player in the country, Honasan sticks to what he believes in – the third telco player is designed to operationalize what we want the industry

to rationalize by promoting faster, cheaper if not free, and more secure connectivity. This means, connect government to other governments, government to business, government to citizenry and everyone with each other. And having a third telco player, he said, will probably move the industry towards that objective.

He ended by saying, "After all, connectivity is the only way we can unite the country and move forward."



ESCUDERO... *(from page 4)*

insurance coverage to P500,000 for bank deposits (RA 9576). As the chairman of the Justice and Human Rights Committee, he was responsible for the passage of the anti-vagrancy law (RA 10158), RA 10353 (Anti-Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance Act) and RA 9745 (Anti-Torture Act). He also helped

in the creation of 281 additional courts.

Escudero also has several distinctions under his belt, foremost of which was being named one of the country's Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) for youth leadership in 2005. He was the only Filipino to be named Asia News Network's Asia's Idols in 2007. In 2008, he was

honored as one of the world's Young Global Leaders by the World Economic Forum, and in 2012, he received the Rotary Golden Wheel Award in recognition of his contributions in political governance and in the legislative field.

Aside from having a heart in public service, Escudero has a loving wife, actress Heart Evangelista.

LEGARDA... *(from page 4)*

the rights and welfare of women, youth, and children, as seen in her participation on laws such as the Anti-Violence Against Women and Children Act, Magna Carta of Women, Anti-Child Labor Law, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and its expanded version,

the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act.

She is currently the only female who topped the Senate race twice, with more than 15 million and 18.4 million votes in the 1998 and 2007 elections, and the only woman to become Senate majority leader.

This time around, Legarda, who was on her third and last term in the Senate, won a seat in the House of Representatives during the May 2019 elections representing the lone district of Antique. She said she is looking forward to the time when her beloved province will become a world-class tourist destination.

TRILLANES... *(from page 3)*

a mission then it has to get done,” said Trillanes.

Indeed in his two terms as a Senator, he was productive with a total of 1,490 bills and resolutions filed, 89 bills passed into law and quite a number are pending to be signed by the President. These include measures creating Senior Citizen Commission and regulating the practice of fisheries profession. Specific laws that are close to his heart are the AFP reform bills aimed at increasing the salaries and benefits of the soldiers, policemen and other government employees.

“Noong 2003, we issued grievances about the

shortcomings of the AFP and the national government so yan yung pinangako ko nung 2007 campaign and I was able to fulfill that,” he shared.

Trillanes considers his “graduation” from the Senate a relief. He’s known as a very vocal figure of the opposition at the Senate against the administration. He had controversial spats with invited resource persons from the government during hearings and even with some fellow senators. Trillanes also led hearings to look into the alleged involvement of the President in EJKs. He made headlines when he switched off the microphone of former

Senator Alan Peter Cayetano while they debated during an EJK committee hearing. Trillanes traded insults with Senator Richard Gordon during a hearing on the corruption at the Bureau of Customs. Media was all abuzz when Trillanes and presidential son Paulo Duterte faced off during a shabu shipment hearing where the former accused the latter of being involved.

Known for his fearless nature, Trillanes did not spare the government’s legal defender to get away from any accountability.

He opened an inquiry into the alleged conflict of interest in government

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TRILLANES... *(from page 17)*

contracts of Solicitor General Jose Calida's security firm. This prompted Malacañang to order the senator's arrest and revoke his amnesty. Up until today, Trillanes remains a free man while the courts hear the cases that were filed against him.

Any regrets?

"I'm happy with the things that I have

accomplished. Moving forward there are so many lessons learned that will make me a better person in general and a better public servant in the future in case I would still want to be one. I don't regret anything because ito na 'to. What was done was meant to be done. I couldn't possibly have done more or less in anything," he said.

Lessons learned

"My stint in the Senate is a very significant phase in my life. Nag-mature ako dito as a public servant. Na-broaden yung aking knowledge about governance in general and I was able to expand my network professionally in this stint as a senator and it helped me to do lots of things for the betterment of our country." he ended.

SENATE INTER-COLOR... *(from page 12)*

The PNP team won against Mighty Fleas by one point in a do-or-die game. It was the "other" championship game according to those who watched the games. Several players from the Mighty Fleas graduated with fouls on that game.

The People's Champ got the finals trophy against the OSAA in an exciting game. But the suspense and highlight of the event was reserved for the 40 and above category.

The former Senate Pioneers split into two powerhouse teams, the Young at 40s and the SP si VST. The Young at 40s was bannered by no less than former Ginebra player

and current UNTV MVP Jeffrey "Jepoy" Sanders and O/S Angara's Malaga and Atty. Homer Alinsug. The Young at 40s was led by playing coach Dir. Gen. Rodel Dascil and team manager Dir. Clinton Martinez.

The SP si VST was led by Dir. Gen. Golding, and O/S Sotto's Media Relations Officer Mike Caber. They got ample support from Samuel Marata, who was the eventual MVP, Richard Diño, Dr. Sison, Gerry Santos and Albert Sambat.

The two teams faced each other with high emotions and physical play. Most of the time, the Young at 40s led in scores

until the last five minutes when Samuel Marata overpowered the exhausted Sanders and Malaga, relentlessly driving to the basket and getting free-throw bonuses. The last big plays from the Young at 40s was the three point shot from playing coach Dascil and the block by Dir. Ciriaco Manalansan on Marata.

This year's event could be a sign for better and bigger things to come. Players and teams are lobbying for the inclusion of Philcare, Alexis, PNP and BFP participants. I would like to see the Commission on Appointments and the GSIS included next year.



MEMBERS OF THE 17th CONGRESS

