



# Paglaur

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## MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!



PILG CORE GROUP: Celebrating the Annual Christmas Party at Emerald Restaurant (December 17).

### PILG 2014 ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

By Clarisse Aquino

In the year 2014, the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance (PILG) has pursued its goal of national transformation among public officials and the youth.

The PILG conducted its four core activities throughout the year which are the Batang Transformers seminar-camp, the Seminar-Workshop on

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## Word from the Institute

### Firearms, Firecrackers blacken Christmas

To us, Filipinos, Christmas is not only a day, but a season, of happy festivities, and of exceptional acts of kindness.

Unlike other countries, where Christmas is celebrated only on December 25, in this country, the season begins in November when radio and television stations start airing "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" or "Rudolf, the Red-Nosed Reindeer" even if Christmas is far from white in this snowless land, and reindeers are found only in children's fairy tale books.

That was what Christmas

meant to our people several decades ago.

Caroling homes of friends was the name of the game for the kids, then, and even for adults.

And children visiting their *ninongs* and *ninangs* - to kiss their hands, and receive gifts in return - was de riger in crowded towns, and even in remote villages.

Indeed, firecrackers were, even then, exploded. But, firearms were not a part of the noise-makers on Christmas Day, or on New Year's Day un-

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### GIVE CALAMITY FUNDS DIRECT TO LGUS

By Jay Dejaresco

In order to fully implement the constitutionally-mandated local autonomy, public funds intended to alleviate the plight of calamity victims should be channeled directly to local governments and not through national agencies.

Former Senate President Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr. found it disturbing to learn that the bulk of the money needed to alleviate the sufferings of calamity victims that strike the country continues to

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## Word from the Institute

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til - if the recollection is correct - in the late 50s.

In fact, the writer of this piece recalls one such unwelcome incident on an evening during the Christmas holidays in 1958.

After visiting his intended, at her home in Project 8, Quezon City, on New Year's Day, he boarded a passenger jeep that plied the route along Taft Avenue in Manila on the way to his boarding house.

As there were only a handful of passengers in the jeep, he had a lot of space to enjoy the ride, and he had his forearms resting on his knees.

The firecrackers, however, were bursting beside the houses along the road that one could practically hear no other sound but the "bang" and the "boom" of the holiday explosives.

All of a sudden, something hit his left

wrist so forcefully that it swung his hand from his knee.

Instinctively, he looked at his wrist. It was not wounded. But, it had a slight scratch.

Then, he saw a spent .38 caliber bullet on the floor of the jeep.

The media, then, did not report how many casualties our people suffered from the uncaring holiday revelers.

But, last Christmas day, it was reported in the media that there were 73 firecracker injuries, and one death. And the New Year festivities had 714 injuries, out of which, 12 were caused by stray bullets.

The taping of the muzzles of the guns of the police ordered by the police authorities certainly helped minimize the number of injuries.

But, how does one tape the muzzles of the guns that are unlicensed in the hands of so many people?

It's a problem that the government and the people must somehow begin to tackle before the situation worsens. And the work must start at the level of the local governments.

The ban against firecrackers and the firing of guns has been successfully implemented in Davao City. All because, the city has a Digong Duterte as its no-nonsense Mayor.

If Davao can do it, other cities can also do it.

Firecrackers - and the firing of firearms - do not whiten the Christmas holidays. They only blacken the season with toxic fumes, and, worse, with lethal bullets.

By all means, therefore, firecrackers should be banned. Then, who knows, it might be easier to monitor, and consequently, to discourage firearms holders from firing their guns "to celebrate" the Christmas season.

## Give calamity funds direct to LGUs

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**Nene Pimentel as a keynote speaker at the round table discussion on the 'Assessment of the Local Government Code' sponsored by AKBAYAN partylist and Active Citizenship Foundation (December 4).**

be dispensed by national government agencies.

Pimentel made the revelation when he keynoted the round-table discussion entitled *Assessment of the Local Government Code: Impact in the Economic and Political Empowerment of the People* held last December 4 in Quezon City.

The roundtable discussion was initiated by the office of Akbayan Partylist Rep. Ibarra Gutierrez in partnership with the Active Citizenship Foundation (ACF).

The discussion sought to bring together local officials and institutions engaged in local governance work to discuss, based on their experiences, local governance reforms that would be beneficial in the on-going review of the local government code in Congress.

Pimentel cited the P87-Billion in the proposed national budget for 2015 for the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Pimentel said the amount should be allocated directly to the lo-

cal governments, especially to those areas prone to calamities.

"The devolution of powers ordained by the Code is being --- wantonly, it seems--- evaded by the policy makers of the national government," Pimentel said.

"Hence, the national government powers, funds and personnel that the local government code has devolved to the provinces, cities and municipalities and barangays should be fully implemented," he added.



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# PILG 2014 Accomplishment Report

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Good Barangay Governance, Roundtable Discussion on current issues and the Empower Lunch.

## Batang Transformers

The Batang Transformers is a continuing project which aims to dismantle barriers among the Muslim, Lumad, and Christian youths of the land.

This year, 2014, two batches of Batang Transformers graduated from the four-day camp which were held on March 24-27 for Batch II, and October 23-26 for Batch III.

The activities were held at the 16 hectare Philip Pestano Sanctuary and Farm in Antipolo City, owned and run by Pepe Pestano, father of the late navy ensign in whose honor the camp site is named.

A total of one hundred sixteen youth leaders participated in the Batang Transformers seminar this year.

## Barangay Seminar



The PILG also conducted seminars on good barangay governance which were participated in by barangay leaders from different parts of the country.

This year's participants came



Batang Transformers Batch II



Batang Transformers Batch III

from the barangays of the Science City of Munoz Nueva Ecija, Payatas, Quezon City, Puerto Princesa City, Palaan City, Malabon City, Bayawan, Negros Oriental, Victorias City, Negros



Occidental and members of non government organizations.

The seminars were held on February 21-22, May 23-25, and November 13-14.



## Roundtable Discussions

The PILG also conducted roundtable discussions of current issues affecting the nation.

Last June 11, the discussion was on the issue of the Falun Dafa and the persecution of its members in China. Guests were Falun Dafa Practitioners, Michel and Bernadette Wolf.



On July 8, their discussion tackled the Catalonia and Basque Secession movements, with the Hon. Ignacio Cambre, Charge d'Affaires of the embassy of Spain.



On August 20 the issue dealt with the prospects of peace in Mindanao, in the wake of the recent peace agreement between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front. Dr. Firdausi Ismail Yahya Abbas was the discussant.



On October 27, the topic was on decentralization with guests from the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic headed by Dr. Kongkeo Xaysongkham

President of the Provincial Leading Commission for Rural Development.



On December 3, delegates from the University of Indonesia headed by Prof. Eho Prasajo. The other guests Lina Miftahul Jannah, Zuliensyah P. Zulkarnain and Nidaan Khafian discussed local government issues with Professor Nene Pimentel.



## Empower Lunch

The PILG also conducted a series of Empower lunch with the faculty and personnel of the University of Makati.

On January 22, Transformational Education was discussed by Pastor Hugh Nguyen.



On February 12, the nuances of Love Courtship and Marriage were explained by Pastor Roy Carandang.

On March 12, Drugs as a Menace to Society was presented by Dr. Rey Echavez, and



On June 2, the topic, Preparing Ethical Leaders for a Caring Community was covered by Pastor Hugh Nguyen.