

# TEODORO FIRM PHL HAS RIGHT TO BOOST DEFENSE CAPABILITIES

## Takes pot shot at China, others questioning military build up

By ALFRED GABOT, Editor in Chief

CAMP AGUINALDO, Quezon City – Bar topnotcher and former congressman Gilberto Teodoro Jr. is back as Secretary of the Department of National Defense and immediately took a pot shot at China as the Philippines boosts its defense posturing in the wake of growing tension in South China Sea and the Indo Pacific region.

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## Bonta decries presidential wanna-be's 'drama' sending migrants to California

By Jun Nucum



AG Rob Bonta

SACRAMENTO - Filipino American California State Attorney General disclosed he believes that one of those 2024 Republican presidential "wanna-bes" may be involved in what the AG has compared to State sanctioned kidnapping after migrants arrived in Sacramento by planes on Friday.

AG Rob Bonta deplored that a total of 36 migrants from Venezuela and Colombia on two planes – one with 16 migrants ►Page 7

## NYC woman nabbed for serial hate crimes vs Asian-Americans

By Gilda P. Balan, Correspondent

NEW YORK - Whatever her reasons are, this 29-year-old woman's seemingly non-stop assaults on persons of Asian descent may have finally come to an end. Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg says she will have to pay for multiple attacks on people in New York City committed over the last ►Page 8

## Acclaimed documentary film director invites FilAms to be featured in his film

By Jun Nucum



Film Director Tony Shyu speaking before pre-screening audience.

SAN JOSE, California - The celebrated director of the documentary film that highlights how Asian American pioneers shape and enhance local, national, and global economy by exploring the

experiences of Asian American entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley invites Filipino Americans to be a part of and be featured in his film "Builders of The Silicon Dream." ►Page 17

## Top academicians, more lawmakers, NGOs lambast Maharlika fund

By Beting Laygo Dolor, Editor

MANILA – The Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF) may become a reality when the bill creating it is signed into law by the president, possibly this week. But a growing number of opponents are still bent on stopping what they say is a flawed law that contains numerous landmines, symbolically speaking.

For one, a group of 21 faculty members from the UP School of Economics – considered as one of the top institutions of ►Page 8

### Upside

## SSF champions healthy, safe homes, communities

By Cherie M. Querol Moreno

SOUTH San Francisco's Philippine-born Mayor Flor Nicolas exemplifies residents' quest for quality of life in her personal life and her elected role.

This spring her city joins San Mateo County cities Colma and Daly City as champions of safe communities by hosting ALLICE Alliance for Community Empowerment's 14th annual Our Family, Our Future, a free event 2-4 pm, Saturday, June 17 to promote elder care, prevent elder abuse and stop AAPI hate. ►Page 11



SSF Mayor Flor Nicolas, 2023 Outstanding Mapuan.

## US Embassy hikes nonimmigrant visa fees

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## FilAm cum laude graduate addresses SFSU class of 2023

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### VIEWES & COMMENTS

## Requirements for petitioning Caregivers

By Atty. Lozano Page 14

### SHOWBIZ

## Tito, Vic and Joey, Eat Bulaga moves to TV 5, to air by July

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### SPORTS

## NBA's Clarkson, Sotto lead Gilas 21-man pool for FIBA

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### PESO-DOLLAR RATE

\$1.00= P55.67

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 MANILA OFFICE: Le Marquis Townhomes, 51 P. Tuazon Blvd. Quezon City 1112, Tels. 8546.8426, 8451.1892, 8546.8421

**FRANCIS ESPIRITU**

Publisher/President

**THELMA L. CRUZ**

Vice President

for Operations & Promotions

**ALFRED G. GABOT**

Editor-in-chief

**CLAIRE M. TRUE**

Managing Editor

**MARILYN B. KING**

Vice President  
for Sales and Marketing

**BETING LAYGO DOLOR**

Manila Editor

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Entertainment Editor

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Chief Correspondent  
Northern California

**LYDIA SOLIS**

Chief Correspondent  
Southern California

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**EDITORIAL**

## Time to arrest China's growing belligerence

The near collision between US and Chinese warships at the Taiwan Strait a few days ago is further proof that China is growing more and more belligerent today, posing a challenge to peace in the region.

Previously, China would only bully the likes of Filipino fishermen or the Philippine Coast Guard or Philippine Navy. Being a far superior force militarily, its ships have lorded it over an area that they claim is theirs, offering no proof but old maps that could be concocted from thin air, for all anyone knows.

China referred to the near collision between the two ships and the possibility of it deteriorating to an armed confrontation as an "unbearable disaster."

The US, for its part, said any conflict as a result of that near accident would have had "devastating consequences."

Both are correct, yet it was clearly the Chinese who were trying to provoke the US.

Having successfully bullied any and all its neighbors which also have claims to the rich waters of the South China Sea, the country now feels that it can go head-to-head against the most powerful nation on earth, the United States of America.

Where it found the gall to believe that its might is equal to the US is beyond us. Or maybe it's just one leader, Xi Jinping, who believes – or would have the rest of the world believe – that they are now at par with the US and that they will eventually own all the lands and seas of its neighbors. Air space too.

Let there be no doubt, China and most especially Xi is the danger, one that must be stopped soonest.

As the head of the Philippine Coast Guard put it, what China says and what China does are not always one and the same.

Put it another way, China's diplomats will say that all problems between friends can be settled by dialogue, but the country's military, specifically its Coast Guard, does not seem to believe in what its leaders and diplomats say. They only believe that the entire South China Sea is theirs, and this includes the West Philippine Sea. This is how they act now. It will certainly be worse in the weeks, months, and years to come.

Xi should be reminded that China would not be the superpower that it is today had it not been for the US.

It was the US that opened its doors to Chinese exports, granting China most favored nation status. This was the spur that the struggling Chinese economy needed to get out of its rut some decades ago.

Sadly, as China became rich, it opted to become not just an economic superpower, but a military giant as well. And it has been XI who has set his country on the most dangerous road imaginable. He is leading his country on the road to war.

Xi is no Asian Putin. He is, in fact, China's Hitler, whose lust for expansionism must be stopped now, by whatever means.

Let one thing be clear. The Chinese people are not the enemy of the American people or the people of our beloved homeland, the Republic of the Philippines.

There are no ifs and no buts. It is China's current leader and his megalomaniac ways that poses the greatest danger to world peace.

## SSF champions healthy... (From page 1)

Mayor Nicolas, a 25-year leader in biotechnology, is vice president and head of global safety and pharmacovigilance at Rain Oncology. Just a few days ago, she received the Outstanding Mapuan, the highest award from her alma mater Mapua Institute of Technology, where she earned her bachelors in Chemical Engineering before gaining her masters of Public Health at University of Massachusetts Amherst.

### BOOMING CITY

South San Francisco is multicultural with a booming economy instantly recognizable by skyscrapers piercing the skies over its massive sprawl.

Hard to imagine its beef packing beginnings now that "South City," for decades self-identified on its mountainside as the "Industrial City," has become the Biotech Capital of the World, its current sobriquet for the largest industries pumping greens into its coffers: healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, hospitality and food service, professional, scientific and tech, and more.

Lucky are some 68,000, per the 2020 Census, who come home to the municipality at the foot of San Bruno Mountain, that, by the city's own admission, "has an unusually high number of residents working in Law Enforcement Supervisors; Life, Physical, & Social Science; and Architecture & Engineering." In fact the "highest paid jobs held by residents of South San Francisco, by median earnings, are Computer & Mathematical; Fire Fighting Supervisors; and Health Practitioners," according to its website.

The first FilAm woman elected in her city where she is currently the lone female on the City Council, Nicolas combines wisdom from her education, optimism from her immigrant beginnings when a fire broke out while her family was on vacation and the community showered Flor, husband Nenar and their children with support, and compassion for those still finding their footing as newcomers.

Since 2019, Nicolas has called herself a Kumare, as female members of the all-volunteer organization ALLICE Alliance for Community Empowerment call themselves. The team has been educating the public about the dynamics of healthy and unhealthy relationships and how to distinguish between the two. They stayed united through the pandemic, pivoting to virtual presentations and activities to provide individuals, couples and families a lifeline to safety precautions and how to access helping resources.

### FORWARD TO SAFETY

As this year's co-president, Nicolas is leading South San Francisco in advancing ALLICE's movement mission as host of their traditional spring at the city's Municipal Services Building on 33 Arroyo Drive.

Free and open to the public, the event is sponsored by Philippine News Today, Positively Filipino and San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services with support from allies Lucky Chances, Moonstar, Duggan's Serra Mortuary, Classic Bowl, Serramonte Center, FilAm Cuisine and many more.

"As Mayor and longtime community volunteer, I have assisted families facing all kinds of challenges," explains the now grandmother of three. "Many often are uncomfortable reaching out at first, whether to friends, professionals or our faith community. We elected officials are duty-bound to earn their confidence, so we may gently guide them through the healing process."

(Continued on page 26)

## Postscript to a birthday celebration

On May 20, 2023, at Benicia's Veterans Hall, I celebrated a milestone: my birthday.

The event, based on the feedback of the attendees, was a success, despite the fact that a number of relatives and friends were "conspicuous by their absence."

Preparations for the celebration started months earlier and it was supposed to be a surprise to me. It was not, considering the speed of communication these days.

From different parts of the United States, friends and relatives came: Aimee Tagle Billones, Lilian Parale Urbi, Gina Debuque from Los Angeles; Goya and Danny Navarrete, George Nervez, Ging Reyes of ABS-CBN fame, Ditas and Robert Hahn, Grace and Gilbert De Ocampo, Ronald and Arlene Domingo, Long Mahinay, Bing Anisco from San Francisco; Birdie and Ashley Reyes from New Jersey, the Nava sisters Erlinda Mendoza, Myrna Pinili and Josephine Pineda from Hayward and Fairfield, Rica Gatchalian from Alameda, Soledad Ruivivar and her husband, Sonia Reyes from Antioch, Elizabeth Williams Gonzalez and son, Ricky Williams and family and others whose names escape me at the moment.

Not to be forgotten is my grand daughter Pamela, who came all the way from the Philippines enroute to Canada, to celebrate my special day.

Many hands made light work, orchestrated by my youngest daughter, Yasmin Assad. It was a labor of love for her, her husband Dave, her children Kevin, Chilli and Brison, her brother Sean and his family made up of Vien, Erle and Sara and her brother Jory, wife Natasha and son Kyle and Birdie Reyes and daughter Ashley.

Close friends also pitched in to make the party a success: Grace and Gilbert De Ocampo, Brian Wardle, Long Mahinay and Bing Anisco. Even the girlfriends (Continued on page 26)



CHERIE M. QUEROL MORENO





# STATE TREASURER FIONA MA OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCES CANDIDACY FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

*Backed with Key Endorsements and Funding, Ma Seeks to Become State's First Elected Asian-American and Second Elected Woman Lieutenant Governor*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (May 31, 2023) – State Treasurer Fiona Ma today formally announced her bid to become California's Lieutenant Governor in 2026.

Ma, a Democrat and Certified Public Accountant, would be the state's first elected Asian-American Lieutenant Governor and the second woman elected to the position. She would also be the first CPA to be elected Lt. Governor of the state.

"With more than two decades of experience in public office, I am uniquely qualified to be California's second-highest ranking elected official — where I will continue to be a powerful advocate for improving our state's housing supply, environment, education systems and economy," said Treasurer Ma. "California needs proven leadership to take on bold action to meet our ambitious climate change and energy goals, level the playing field and attract better quality jobs for all Californians while expanding access to healthcare, housing and education. I am committed to ensuring California remains an economic leader and powerhouse, investing in the small, family-owned businesses and the people that are the foundation of our success."

Ma, 57, has been serving as California's 34th State Treasurer since 2019. She was first elected on November 6, 2018 with more votes (7,825,587) than any other candidate for Treasurer in the state's history. She is the first woman of color and the first woman Certified Public Accountant (CPA) elected to the position.

As the state's banker, Ma helped steer the state's finances through the COVID-19 pandemic. She has grown and revamped the state's affordable housing and homeless housing programs, funded clean energy projects to create new jobs, and dramatically increased Californians' ability to save for college, retirement, live with a disability and achieve a better quality of life. At the same time, she has bolstered support for K-12 and higher education. She also has been a strong advocate of divestment from fossil fuels at the state's pension funds.

Her office processes \$2.5 trillion in payments within a typical year and provides transparency and oversight for the government's investment portfolio and accounts, as well as for the state's surplus funds. Treasurer Ma oversees an investment portfolio that currently averages over \$200 billion – a significant portion of which is beneficially owned by more than

2,200 local governments in California. She serves as agent of sale for all state bonds and is trustee of billions of dollars of state indebtedness.

Ma previously served as a member of the California Board of Equalization from 2015 to 2019 and the California State Assembly from 2006 to 2012. She has built a reputation as a solution-oriented public servant and adept at building unlikely coalitions to overcome California's most complex problems. Prior to serving as Speaker pro Tempore, she was Assembly Majority Whip and built coalitions during a state budget crisis to pass groundbreaking legislation that protected public education and the environment while expanding access to health care.

As an Assembly Member, she authored 60 bills that were signed into law by two different governors. Her successful legislation to ban toxic chemicals in baby products, known as phthalates, became a model for federal legislation that was authored by U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein in 2008. She chaired the Assembly Select Committee on Domestic Violence and spearheaded legislation that strengthened laws protecting victims of domestic violence, consumers and working families; prevented the spread of Hepatitis B; increased access to quality health care; and expanded equal rights for all Californians.

From 2002 to 2006, she served on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and championed a human rights campaign to end human trafficking in massage parlors and close prostitution rings. She led an effort to create the city's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program to empower small businesses to more easily participate in public works projects.

Treasurer Ma first became involved in public service in 1994 when she was elected president of the Asian Business Association, where she began advocating at San Francisco City Hall and the State Capitol on behalf of minority business owners. Her work resulted in her election in 1995 as a delegate to the White House Conference on Small Business, where she advocated for socially responsible contracting for minorities and women in San Francisco, ultimately producing a report to Congress detailing 60 top policy recommendations to help small businesses grow and prosper in the 21st century.

Also in 1995, she was appointed to the Assessment Appeals Board of San Francisco by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. That year she started her public service career as a part-time district representative

for then-State Senator John Burton and served as Burton's district representative until her election to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. For Burton, she was responsible for helping constituents with Medi-Cal, workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, franchise and employment development department taxes, and professional licensing.

From 1989 to 1993 she worked for Ernst & Whinney in the real estate tax group, before starting her own accounting practice in San Francisco. Today Ernst & Young is one of the largest professional services firms in the world and considered one of the "big four" accounting firms.

Treasurer Ma has been a licensed CPA in California since 1992 and holds a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), a Master's Degree in Taxation from Golden Gate University (SF), an MBA from Pepperdine University, and an Honorary Doctorate from the RIT.

She is a Member of the Vatican's Council for Inclusive Capitalism, Member of the California Society of Certified Public Accountants, serves on the Board of California Women Lead, a member of the CalCPA society, is an Honorary Chair and Spokesperson for the San Francisco Hepatitis B Free Campaign, and is a member of the Screen Actors Guild. Treasurer Ma is also active with the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) and has served as the 2020 Chair of the ABLE Committee and Member of the Legislative Committee.

She is married to Jason Hodge, a full-time firefighter and Oxnard Harbor Commissioner.

## Upside...

(From Page 11)



Mapua Institute of Technology executives hail Mayor Flor Nicolas and husband Ninar Nicolas (center) for modeling the school's pursuit of excellence.

To mark March 8 International Women's Day, Nicolas invited ALLICE to give a mini presentation at a City Council meeting as a re-introduction for the organization that has collaborated with South City faith-based and health entities in their twice-yearly presentations. Majority of people surviving and working to prevent relationship abuse are women, after all. ALLICE believes that education is the greatest weapon for empowerment, and South San Francisco concurs.

The June 17 event features San Mateo County Supervisor David Canepa as keynote speaker. Former Philippine Vice President Leni Robredo, founder of Angat Buhay - a PH-based nonprofit volunteer movement to uplift Filipinos, will deliver a message encouraging the "bayanihan" system ALLICE espouses.

Dr. Jei Africa, Director of San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, will present safety tips for people witnessing or directly experiencing hate attacks against Asian Americans. Tessie Madrinan, coordinator of Peninsula Family Service Filipino Peer Counseling program, will present the 9 Acts of Kindness to Empower Older Adults.

Twenty-five family resource providers will attend to discuss their programs and services. ALLICE's "A-List," a resource guide vetted for cultural and linguistic competence underwritten by the Town of Colma, will be distributed. Refreshments will be served. A free raffle will be drawn immediately at the end of the program.

### DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

"At this gathering we can learn how our organizations may earn public trust to help participants recognize and learn to distinguish between healthy and abusive behaviors. Knowing the subtle but impactful differences in the way we interact can help us make adjustments toward healthy interaction with our family, our friends, clients - even strangers," said the mayor.

The event reinforces South San Francisco's efforts to foster diversity and inclusion.

"I'm proud to say that South San Francisco formally established a Commission on Equity and Public Safety. It is the result of a yearlong initiative called the Commission on Racial and Social Equity to identify issues of racial and social injustice, investigate their causes, and to create systems for positive change in policies and processes. The Executive Summary, Action Plan, and full Final Report are available in Spanish, Tagalog, and Traditional Chinese as well," Nicolas shared.

The Commission on Equity and Public Safety bolsters community participation and decision making and increases transparency and accountability. It focuses on a holistic approach to community safety and applies an equity lens to advance equitable practices in housing, social services, policing, and other areas.

For more information, visit [www.allicekumares.com](http://www.allicekumares.com). See public service announcement in this issue.

ALLICE Kumares & Kumpares Alliance for Community Empowerment  
in collaboration with Positively Filipino, Philippine News Today,  
San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services,  
and the City of South San Francisco  
invite you to our

# Our Family Our Future

14<sup>th</sup> Annual

A free and open-to-the-public event to promote elder care,  
prevent elder abuse and address Asian hate attacks

2:00–4:00 p.m. | Saturday, June 17, 2023  
SSF Municipal Services Building  
33 Arroyo Drive, South San Francisco, CA 94080

#### WELCOME

Hon. Flor Nicolas, Mayor, City of South San Francisco;  
2023 Co-President, ALLICE

#### KEYNOTE

Hon. David J. Canepa, District 5 Representative, San Mateo  
County Board of Supervisors

#### MESSAGE

Hon. Leni Robredo, Former Vice President of the Philippines;  
Founder, Angat Buhay (Uplift Lives)

#### PRESENTATIONS

*Safety Tips for those Witnessing or Experiencing  
Hate Incidents*

Dr. Jei Africa, Director, San Mateo County Behavioral  
Health and Recovery Services

*9 Acts of Kindness to Empower Older Adults*

Ms. Tessie Madrinan, Coordinator, Peninsula Family  
Service Filipino Peer Counseling Program

#### RECOGNITION

*Grand Agers:* Aurea Cruz, Conrad Gamboa, Cynthia Bonta,  
Perla Ibarrientos, Peter & Estrella Chan

Free health exams by Kaiser Permanente Filipino  
Association

Light refreshments will be served

Free raffle drawing follows the program; must be  
present to win

**Family and Health Service Providers** will be  
present to address questions:

Adult Protective Services San Francisco, Aging and Disability  
Resource Center San Francisco, Asian American Recovery  
Services/Healthright 360, San Mateo County Behavioral Health  
and Recovery Services, Catholic Charities Adult Day Care Services,  
Colma Police Department, Community Overcoming Relationship  
Abuse, Daly City HART, Peninsula Family Service, Philippine  
Consulate General in San Francisco, Kaiser Permanente Filipino  
Association, National Alliance on Mental Illness, North East  
Medical Services, Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County,  
Pilipino Bayanihan Resource Center, Pilipino Senior Resource  
Center-San Francisco, Rape Trauma Services, San Mateo County  
Aging and Adult Services, San Mateo County  
Commission on Aging, SamTrans,  
Self-Help for the Elderly, Second  
Harvest of Silicon Valley, South San  
Francisco Police Department, South  
San Francisco Women's Club



ALLICE is an all-volunteer nonprofit dedicated to promoting healthy interaction by education through shared resources since 2003.