

1. 'Age is just a number': 81-year-old man conquers highest Philippine peak

Sergio Palomo, an 81-year-old hiker, had always dreamed of conquering the Philippines' highest peak, Mount Apo, at least once in his lifetime. He successfully set foot on Mount Apo's summit over the weekend. Courtesy: Lakaw ni Paw

Sergio Palomo, an 81-year-old hiker, had always dreamed of conquering the Philippines' highest peak, Mount Apo, at least once in his lifetime.

But climbing "Apo", which means "the grandfather of all Philippine mountains" is not an easy feat due to its terrain and its height of 2,954 meters.

But Palomo, an architect, challenged himself and successfully set foot on Mount Apo's summit over the weekend.

"I hope every able-bodied Filipino will try their best to come here. Forget the age, age is just a number," he said in a video shared by tour operator "Lakaw ni Paw".

Palomo is the second oldest man to successfully climb Mount Apo, and the oldest to climb via the Sta. Cruz circuit trail.

"Magandang experience na hindi matutularan basta-basta. Napakahirap nga pero successful naman. Kaya rin pagka gusto, regardless of age. Hindi na kailangan maging bata. Pwede pa rin ang 80 plus na kagaya ko," he said.

Palomo said he hopes to conquer Mount Apo again.

Trails going to Mount Apo's summit recently reopened after a 40-day closure due to El Niño.

2. Ombudsman lifts preventive suspension of 72 NFA warehouse supervisors

MANILA (UPDATE) — The Office of the Ombudsman has lifted the preventive suspension of dozens of National Food Authority warehouse supervisors implicated in the allegedly irregular sale of rice buffer stock to select traders, saying their continued assignment to rice warehouses would influence the ongoing investigation.

The 72 warehouse supervisors were among 139 NFA officials and employees put on a six-month preventive suspension on March 1.

The suspension stemmed from administrative charges of Grave Misconduct, Gross Neglect of Duty and Conduct Prejudicial to the Best Interest of the Service over the sale of NFA rice to select traders at a low price and without public bidding or authorization from the NFA Council.

The supervisors are assigned to warehouses across Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Soccskargen, Caraga, and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

In lifting the order, the Ombudsman noted that the point of preventive suspensions is to keep respondents from influencing an investigation and to preserve evidence that may be under the respondents' control and custody.

READ: House panel to investigate alleged improper disposition of NFA rice stock

It said that the documents under the warehouse supervisors' control are already with the Office of the Ombudsman.

"Moreover, there is insufficient ground to believe that their continued stay in office may prejudice the investigation of the case filed against them," it also said.

"Thus, the continued preventive suspension of the afore-named Warehouse Supervisors is no longer necessary."

<https://news.abs-cbn.com/regions/2024/5/14/ombudsman-lifts-preventive-suspension-of-72-nfa-warehouse-supervisors-917>

3. 5, patay sa karambola ng 3 sasakyan sa Lopez, Quezon

LOPEZ, Quezon - Patay ang limang katao sa aksidenteng naganap sa Maharlika Highway, Canda Ilaya, Lopez, Quezon nitong Miyerkoles ng madaling araw.

Dead on the spot ang apat sa siyam na lulan ng isang tuktuk tricycle makaraan itong masalpok ng isang delivery van at masunog pa.

Sa pagamutan naman nasawi ang isa pang pasahero ng tuktuk.

Nangyari ang aksidente dakong 2:30 ng umaga.

Ayon sa inisyal na imbestigasyon ng Lopez Police, patungo sa direksyon ng Bicol ang tuktuk tricycle nang masalpok ito ng kasunod na delivery van.

Sa sobrang lakas ng impact ay sumalpok naman ang tuktuk sa likod ng isang pampasaherong bus.

Nagliyab ang tuktuk hanggang sa madamay at magliyab rin ang pampasaherong bus.

Apat na sakay ng tuktuk ang nasunog. Samantala, lima ay naisugod sa pagamutan na lahat ay nagtamo ng matinding sugat sa katawan. Mga bata ang ilan sa lulan ng tuktuk.

Wala namang nasugatan sa mga pasahero ng bus.

Kasalukuyang nagpapatuloy ang imbestigasyon ng Lopez Police.

Makiki-fiesta sana

Ayon sa nakaligtas na driver ng tuktuk na si Julius Brin, galing silang magkakaanak sa Cogeo, Antipolo at patungo sana sa Libon, Albay para magbakasyon at maki-fiesta.

Apat na bata ang kanyang kasama kabilang ang isang tinatayang walong buwan pa lang na sanggol.

Nasawi din ang sanggol sa trahedya.

Sugatan din ang anak ni Julius.

Nasa Magsaysay Memorial Hospital sa Lopez ang iba pang nakaligtas.

Ayon sa hepe ng Lopez Municipal Police Station na si Lieutenant Colonel Dandy Aguilar, lumalabas sa imbestigasyon na ang fish dealer delivery van ang may pagkakamali sa aksidente.

Hawak na ngayon ng Lopez Police ang driver ng fish dealer delivery van na si Ernesto Alberto.

https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/balitambayan/promdi/906798/5-patay-sa-karambola-ng-3-sasakyan-sa-lopez-quezon/story/?just_in

4. PH civilian mission sets sail for Scarborough Shoal in WPS

Around 100 boats departed from Zambales early Wednesday morning for a civilian mission to Scarborough Shoal or Bajo de Masinloc in the West Philippine Sea (WPS).

Atin Ito Coalition, organizer of the civilian mission, said they will install symbolic markers or buoys within the Philippine exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

“The primary objectives of the mission are to conduct a ‘peace and solidarity regatta’ within our EEZ, during which symbolic markers/buoys emblazoned with the rallying cry

'WPS, Atin Ito!' (WPS is ours!) will be placed to reinforce our country's territorial integrity," Atin Ito co-convenor and Akbayan president Rafaela David earlier said.

Aside from this, Atin Ito also plans to deliver essential supplies like fuel to Filipino fishermen in the area.

The civilian mission proceeded despite reports of an alleged "huge force" of Chinese vessels heading to Scarborough Shoal.

https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/906794/ph-civilian-mission-sets-sail-for-scarborough-shoal-in-wps/story/?just_in

5. Hontiveros won't let go of Bamban mayor over ties to Pogo

MANILA, Philippines — It may sound stranger than fiction, but Sen. Risa Hontiveros on Wednesday raised the possibility that Mayor Alice Guo of Bamban town, Tarlac province, might be a Chinese "asset" trained to infiltrate and influence the Philippine government.

Hontiveros' suspicion added yet another layer on the already intricate web of controversies surrounding the Philippine offshore gaming operator (Pogo) business, which flourished during the Duterte administration.

She said the investigation by the Senate, part of the continuing inquiry into Pogos that the committee on women and children opened last year, and other state agencies should focus on Guo's ties with gaming operators and her personal background.

Pogos had been linked to human trafficking, kidnap-for-ransom, killings, illegal drugs and internet fraud.

"During our hearing (on Tuesday), we nearly drowned in numerous revelations that led to more questions. First of all, is it true that Mayor Alice Guo is a Chinese national?" Hontiveros told a press briefing.

"This is an important question because [Guo] has no records in our country and she was instrumental in the entry of a very huge Pogo company in the Philippines," she said.

"Did they plan this long ago to use [her] supposed Filipino identity to gain a foothold in our political (system) and even national security sector?" she asked.

She pointed out that Chinese nationals who had allegedly obtained legitimate Philippine passports and other government documents used late registered birth certificates.

“Is Guo, like all others who have a mysterious past, an asset that China sent to enter our government for them to have an influence in Philippine politics?” she said.

Guo, who was accompanied by a lawyer, said she was being subjected to trial by publicity.

“It is sad that I have been judged prematurely. I was tried publicly based on baseless allegations and made-up stories,” Guo said in a statement she read during Tuesday’s hearing.

Hontiveros earlier said that she received “persuasive information” from the intelligence agencies that the vast Pogo complex in Bamban, which the authorities had raided on March 13, was linked to surveillance operations and hacking of government websites.

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1938663/risa-wont-let-go-of-bamban-mayor-over-ties-to-pogo/amp>