



## *Razor's Edge*

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# *Travesty: The Ampatuans Are Loaded With Alibis*

**NEW YORK, NY Jan. 05 (PinoyGlobal)** - Filipino Times is happy to announce that it has successfully launched its Internet forum. In all modesty we can say that even though [filipinotimesonline.com](http://filipinotimesonline.com) is barely a month old yet our patrons are increasing by the thousands weekly all over the world. This blast off in readership and viewers is awfully inspiring. E-mails are flooding in our main office to the delight of our staff that put their best in the job.

You can also listen to my live commentaries and those of Dr. Erie Agustin in our weekly forum at [filipinotimesonline.com](http://filipinotimesonline.com), which can be accessed through Mozilla fox fire in your computers. The issues we discuss are changed every Saturday. Filipino Times' and its forum's effectiveness is due to the dynamism of our young publisher Mr. Manny Agbanlog who is a fierce advocate of intrepid journalism. Manny motivates his writers' steadfastness in fighting corruption in the government, constantly urging them to stand by our principles whatever the consequence.

The column of Dr. Agustin and yours truly can also be read at [filamimage.com](http://filamimage.com)—a prestigious media in the Internet. The famous [filamimage.com](http://filamimage.com) is a legend for its crusading spirit and fearlessness to expose anomalies anywhere they manifest. Significantly based in Washington D.C.—the citadel of democracy—it has been around for over two decades already. It is under the baton of its indomitable publisher Mr. Nonoy Mendoza—a gentleman who adheres to the concept that public officials should at all times be men of integrity and honesty or they have no business being in public service.

So if Filipino groceries, stores, bakeries, restaurants and other designated places we supply Filipino Times run out of copies you can always go to these Internets to read our columns and the latest news.

Lastly, I appeal to the friends of Nonoy Mendoza to pray for him. He has been seriously sick for a while now. Your prayers and kind thoughts, for this media giant who served his readers with devotion and courage through the years is entitled to be on his feet strong and healthy. May he recover soon to continue his messianic crusade for good government, which is the same mission Mr. Agbanlog has pursued since he took to publishing Filipino Times. Both publishers fight against predatory wealth and predatory poverty. God bless them.

### *Travesty*

From day one of their arrest the people knew that soon the Ampatuan brothers would be roaming around again scot-free. It seems this is not far-fetch. Under the Constitution they too have rights. Their “airtight” alibis would make the prosecution an exercise in futility: a waste of time and people's money if they are acquitted. These scions of that murderous clan (Ampatuan) do not deserve a melodramatic climax after trashing our government in the eyes of the world as a banana republic.

The author of the most heinous Human Rights violations nowadays, Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr., is at this very minute

desperately trying to exhaust our justice system to extricate himself from the hell he got into by imploring our courts for his salvation. How brazen can be when only last November 23 he viciously violated the law by mercilessly killing innocent people in his turf to boost his ego and political foothold?

Obviously, he has been nurturing a deep rooted grudge against journalists because nowhere in the world were dozens of working media men massacred in a fit of euphoric anger. And to think that the perpetrator was no less than the mayor of Datu Unsay town who could not accept that anyone would dare challenge his candidacy for governor - it was too much for his towering ego!

Having set the example of shooting the journalists himself, the lunatic mayor ordered his private army to finish the job. Among them were policemen in uniform who took him literally and liquidated the victims with the murderous instinct of hardened criminals. The spectacle mocks at our justice system that allows the richest pollo loco (Andal Ampatuan Jr.) to shield himself against justice by using the law, which he so horribly violated. With the clan's ill-gotten wealth, he hired prominent lawyers to protect his "rights." What a farce!

When the Department of Justice (DoJ) took the case, Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera insinuated of a tremendous pressure being weighed down on DoJ to be easy on the elite killers and mastermind/s. The question is who could possibly have the chutzpah to coerce Justice Secretary Devanadera to tiptoe on eggshells in handling this case that smacks of inordinate notoriety?

It is no secret that Malacanang and witnesses (hired, coerced or intimidated) have collectively corroborated with the allegations of the Ampatuan brothers who said in their affidavits to the Justice Department that during the savage carnage they were away from the scene of the crime. The victims are now 59 and only God knows how many were actually killed on that day of infamy in Maguindanao.

Mayor Andal did not spare Jimmy Pal-Ak Cabillo who begged for his life at the same time reminding his would-be assassin that they were friends. Just the same, the live wolf turned mayor shot him in cold blood. Thus validating the truism that "Man is wolf to man," which means he can kill even friend without remorse, in the same manner that a wolf kills its own kind propelled by its destructive instinct.

Most of those accused are brothers aside from the patriarch, Governor Andal Sr., who plotted the crime with his son Andal Jr. a day before the mass murders. ARMM Governor

Zaldy Ampatuan has also been charged. With him are his brothers Anwar, Sajid Islam and their cousin Akmad. One after the other claimed innocence. Naturally, with money, power and connections alibis can be fabricated. Zaldy, for one, has an "airtight" alibi. He was in Malacanang at the time on a "medical mission" and also had an "audience" with the president when the massacre was consummated, he says. Sad to say, his allegations were corroborated by a Palace spokesperson. Didn't I say the Ampatuans have CONNECTIONS?

Their alibis may appear unshakable but it does not follow that merely because they were away when the massacre took place they are innocent. One can be guilty of a crime when he consents to it or obstructs justice by his silence. There are other factors too that can shatter the veneer of an alibi. An eye-witness or witnesses debunking their claim with incontrovertible proofs is one. Eyewitnesses came out already and gave their testimonies before the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and DoJ.

Curiously, all of the accused had the temerity to denounce the Justice Department of prejudging them, which is really unfounded. In the first place the opinion of DoJ is of no moment because it will just prosecute the cases. It is the presiding judge who renders a decision based on hard evidence and the witnesses will be grilled and cross-examined by the best defense lawyers, money can pay. So what is the problem?

If they are convicted they can go to the court of appeals. If their convictions are upheld, there is still the Supreme Court to fall back. In a criminal case the element of doubt works in favor of the accused, in case they forget. A lawyer adroit enough can establish doubt with his courtroom savvy. Besides, if they are really innocent, justice will be on their side regardless of public opinion or DoJ prejudging them, the majesty of the law prevails in the end.

Guilt complex made the Ampatuans afraid of their own shadow. Nobody has pre-judged them it's just their hallucination eating them up. Andal Jr.'s euphoria of having killed the wife of his political enemy is Pyrrhic because he too will get his due in retributive justice after the wheels of justice stops spinning. Mayor as he is Andal Jr. should have known that murdering journalists is never discreet, more so because he did not spare the women whose genitals he shot like an insane maniac. He and those cutthroats with him must suffer the consequences of their rank inhumanity!

Whatever harsh judgment Andal Jr. and his co-accused are meted, it would only be poetic justice – an eye for an eye.

After the hearing the courtroom should be fumigated lest those who were inside with them would get their evil instinct by osmosis.