

Amb. Lauro L. Baja calls on Filipino-American communities to unite

By Tony Garcia
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NORFOLK, Virginia, Oct. 30 - Philippine Special Envoy Lauro L. Baja is visiting and calling on prominent Filipino-American community leaders in the East and Midwest coasts asking the Filipino-Americans to assist the Philippines. Baja is currently on leave from the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs where he was formerly the Undersecretary. Until a few months ago, Ambassador Baja was assigned as Philippine Permanent Representative to the United Nations where in a span of less than four years, he was designated President of the prestigious U.N. Security Council, not just one time but twice. A distinct honor unmatched in the annals of the United Nations history. Baja was the recipient of various accolades from the United Nations. He is known among the leaders of the world belonging to the United Nations, including the mega-power nations, as a brilliant and effective world-class leader.

“I am calling on Filipino-Americans as well as all the Filipinos globally to continue their financial supports through their regular dollar remittances to the Philippines. Your remittances to your loved ones in the Philippines is one of the major reasons why the Philippine’s economy is still afloat. Thanks to you. Without your remittances, the Philippines will sink,” remarked Ambassador Baja during the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of San Lorenzo Ruiz’s attended by more than 400 Filipinos at the Philippine Cultural Center in nearby Virginia Beach, home of the largest Filipino community in the East Coast.

Ambassador Baja was welcomed by Dr. Manny Hipol, chairman and the main spearheader of the construction of the beautiful cultural building, the largest Filipino-owned center. Ambassador Baja had an opportunity to meet one-on-one several community stalwarts

Ambassador Baja and his charming wife, the former Norma Castro, were weekend guests of Nonoy and Aida Mendoza at their condo in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Mendozas are with the PINOY GLOBAL ONLINE NEWS (PGON) and FILIPINO IMAGE MAGAZINE, both based in Washington, D.C. The Bajas toured the historic Williamsburg and nearby Norfolk, a Naval town where retired Filipino militarymen and their families settled to retire. In Virginia Beach, the Baja visited the famous General Douglas MacArthur Memorial and met with Emere O. Odango, Museum Attendant and a retired U.S. Navy Chief Aviation. #



Ambassador Baja delivering a speech calling on Filipino-Americans to continue helping the Philippines through their dollar remittances to support love ones in the Philippines. In the background are Filipino priests who concelebrated the Holy Mass in honor of the 20th anniversary of Filipinos' celebration of San Ruiz Lorenzo in Virginia Beach. #



L-R: Ambassador Baja, Atty. Wary Azarcon, a practicing attorney in Virginia; businessman Jessie Farrales and Dr. Manuel "Manny" Hipol, popular and outstanding community leader. #



L-R: Ambassador Lauro Baja, Romy San Antonio, TOFA 2007 awardee and a community leader in Virginia; Emere O. Odango, City of Norfolk's General Douglas MacArthur Memorial Museum Attendant and a retired U.S. Navy Chief Aviation whose parents were from Sabalom, Antique and formerly of Malaybalay, Bukidnon. #



In Williamsburg, Virginia with PGON Staff. - From left: Jean B. O'Cana, PGON Executive Secretary; Aida J. Mendoza of PGON, Ambassador Lauro Baja, Norma Castro Baja and Vicky Tagaza, PGON Special Assistant. #