



Receipts and documentations posted by the Student Council

Photo by Nathaniel Soriano

# SC breaks silence on allegations of inaction

▼ Paolo Vital

IN RESPONSE TO accusations of indifference towards student concerns, the Student Council (SC) published a statement assuring that it had fulfilled its responsibilities during the Academic Year 2024-2025.

Among the criticisms circulating online were allegations that the Student Council (SC) had dismissed student concerns, with some members reportedly responding with remarks such as “*Iba na kasi generation niyo*” and “*Dati pa ‘yan ginagawa*.” One of the more vocal critics at the time was then-candidate under the San Bigkis Party (SBP) Ramon Gabriel Ledesma, who has since been elected as the new Internal Vice President.

In a direct rebuttal of these “passion-fueled” statements, the SC, in a Facebook post published last April 9, reminded instances such as the student ID processing concerns, the disbarment of the San Beda University (SBU) Band, and reforms in mandatory ticket selling where the Council argued how it

had reached out to the CAS Dean and followed up on these matters persistently.

Among the contents of the SC’s statement included a comprehensive transparency report on the allocation of the Student Activity Fund (SAF), alongside letters sent to university administrators.

In an interview with *The Bedan*, Mari Okol, outgoing SC President, cited the necessity of breaking the perception of the SC’s alleged inaction.

“That is definitely not a message that we want to bring to the students because it breaks the trust between students and student-leaders,” she said.

In meeting this end, the second Student Assembly (SA) held last

February 15 was opened to provide a transparent avenue for the students to voice their concerns. As Okol affirmed, “One of the reasons why we held a general assembly is to include the students and to make them feel included in discussions.”

## Matters at the student assembly

During the SA at the Jonathan Sy Auditorium, a dialogue on key issues such as budget allocation, policy proposals and matters concerning the student body were opened.

The event began with the SC presenting their plans in streamlining the Student Activity and Budget Proposal (SABP) processes, with Lourenella De Leon, SC Secretary General, highlighting the creation of a collaborative SAP and SABP.

Afterward, Okol outlined her

platforms focused on inclusivity. First among these were the ‘People’s Council’ aiming to provide a “recognized voice” for minority groups in the student body.

Moreover, she proposed “better policies” for student-athletes, saying “*Dapat may involvement ‘yung Student Council para sa required sanctions for student-athletes*,” underscoring a system like the Board of Discipline (BOD) wherein the jurisdiction will fall under two student-representatives who can vote on their sanction.

“*Ang nangyayari doon kaya nag-kakaroon ng gray area is because walang process on what happens if student-athletes violate the code. So that’s what we want to cover and what we want to protest*,” Okol explained.

However, she also noted that while this may cause conflicts with the University administration, these issues can be fixed through proper dialogue.

## Transparency on Pista ng Sto. Nino tickets

The same pattern of obscurity was reiterated when a student raised a question on whether the purchase of the Pista ng Sto. Nino tickets were required.

“*Yung official statement po kasi sa previous SOC (Student Organization Circle) meeting was that hindi required...pero nakita rin po namin sa lahat ng Batch Rep group chat sa first year to fourth year na yes, required po, ang sinabi naman po ng OPSA [Office of the Prefect of Student Activities] na required*,” a student asked. **P3**

## Abbey hosts ‘Viva La Musica’ tribute for Pope Francis’ healing

▼ Rizian Veniz Balleta

PRAYING FOR THE healing of the ailing Pope Francis, the Benedictine Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat Manila, in partnership with Treble Choir Association of the Philippines, Inc. (TCAP) and Alsina Formwork, organized a concert tributed titled Viva La Musica last February 26.

A day after hosting “Resonatur: A Concert of Pipe Organ Music from Montserrat, Barcelona” which commemorated the 1000th anniversary of the Abadia de Montserrat in Spain and the 130th anniversary of Benedictine presence in the Philippines, the Abbey and San Beda University (SBU) collaborated with the

Embassy of Spain in the Philippines to organize Viva La Musica.

Vicenç Prunés Lloret, a Spanish organist from the Monastery of Santa Maria de Montserrat, performed alongside his son, Ignasi Prunés de Riba, who were also accompanied by the Young Voices of the Philippines

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## 12 senate hopefuls clash in TR-moderated debate

▼ Vol. 82 Writers

IN CLOSE COLLABORATION with ABS-CBN, The Republic (TR) hosted “Tapat na SerbisYO: A Senatorial Debate 2025,” featuring 12 senatorial aspirants for the 2025 Philippine midterm elections at the Jonathan Sy Auditorium last February 12.

Participating in the Senatorial Debate were former Bayan Muna Rep., Teddy Casiño; France Castro from ACT Teachers Partylist; environmentalist David D’Angelo; independent candidate Atty. Angelo de Alban; labor leaders Leody de

Guzman and Atty. Luke Espiritu; Valenzuela 2nd District Representative, Eric Martinez; former Gabriela Women’s Partylist Representative, Liza Maza; Chairman of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), Danilo Ramos; Manibela Chair-

man, Mar Valbuena; fisherman Ronnel Arambulo; and environmentalist Roy Cabonegro.

Before the series of rounds began, the candidates were asked, “*Sa nakasanayang politika, ano ang isang bagong bagay na iyong maipapamahagi?*”

Arambulo first took the stage to discuss the prevalence of political dynasties and traditional politics, citing its effects on the welfare of fisherfolk such as himself. “*Sa deka-dekadang panahon ay nakita natin na hindi ito naglingkod sa mga mamamayang Pilipino, lalo sa amin, sa mga mangingis-da.*”

Meanwhile, Cabonegro underscored the urgency of addressing environmental issues, asserting that the next administration must take decisive action on cli-

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12 senatoriables pose for a photo opportunity at the Jonathan Sy Auditorium

Photo by Xialea Pelayo

# SC appoints Fourth-Year rep for remainder of A.Y.

▼ **Thirty Pabilico**

THE COLLEGE OF Arts and Sciences (CAS) Student Council (SC), together with the Office of the Prefect of Student Affairs (OPSA), appointed Department of Legal Management senior Iane Tabor as the new Fourth-Year Level Representative on February 27, resolving a two-month-long vacancy in the Executive Board position.

Tabor will serve as the representative for CAS seniors for the remainder of Academic Year (A.Y.) 2024-2025 as outlined in the Council's Resolution No. 01-2425

This came after the February 5 Student Assembly convened in favor of addressing the vacancy of the Fourth Year Level Representative position by "means of appointment."

Subsequently, the SC opened applications for the position to all fourth-year students of the CAS, with Tabor being the lone applicant interviewed by SC President Mari Okol, Asst. Prof. Sybil Agreda, Assistant Prefect of Student Activities, and Prof. Marvin Reyes, the Prefect of Student Activities.

Prior to his appointment, he previously served as the SC's First-Year Level Representative during A.Y. 2021-2022 and more recently, as the Vice President for Internal Affairs (IVP) of the Junior Bedan Law Circle (JBLC).

"Right now, the motivation is more of what can I do one last time for the batch. I believe [that] my platforms are more focused on preparing our batch to be ready, to be integrated into the workforce," Tabor told *The Bedan* in an interview.

To enliven his remaining term, Tabor aims to prepare the graduating Class of 2025 by "assisting with the processing of clearances, organizing job fairs and

workshops, and ensuring the success of the seniors' graduation ball."

Moreover, he plans to "leave a legacy" by sharing tips from CAS Departments and providing an avenue to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of the batch.

All of these projects, he says, can be done while minimizing costs and focusing on collaboration instead.

"*Ang nakakaturwa dito is karamihan ng mga projects na 'to—aside from the grad ball—would take minimum to no budget at all, so it's something [na] trabaho lang talaga 'yung kailangan; kasi I have most of the things planned out, kailangan talaga ng execution,*" Tabor explained.

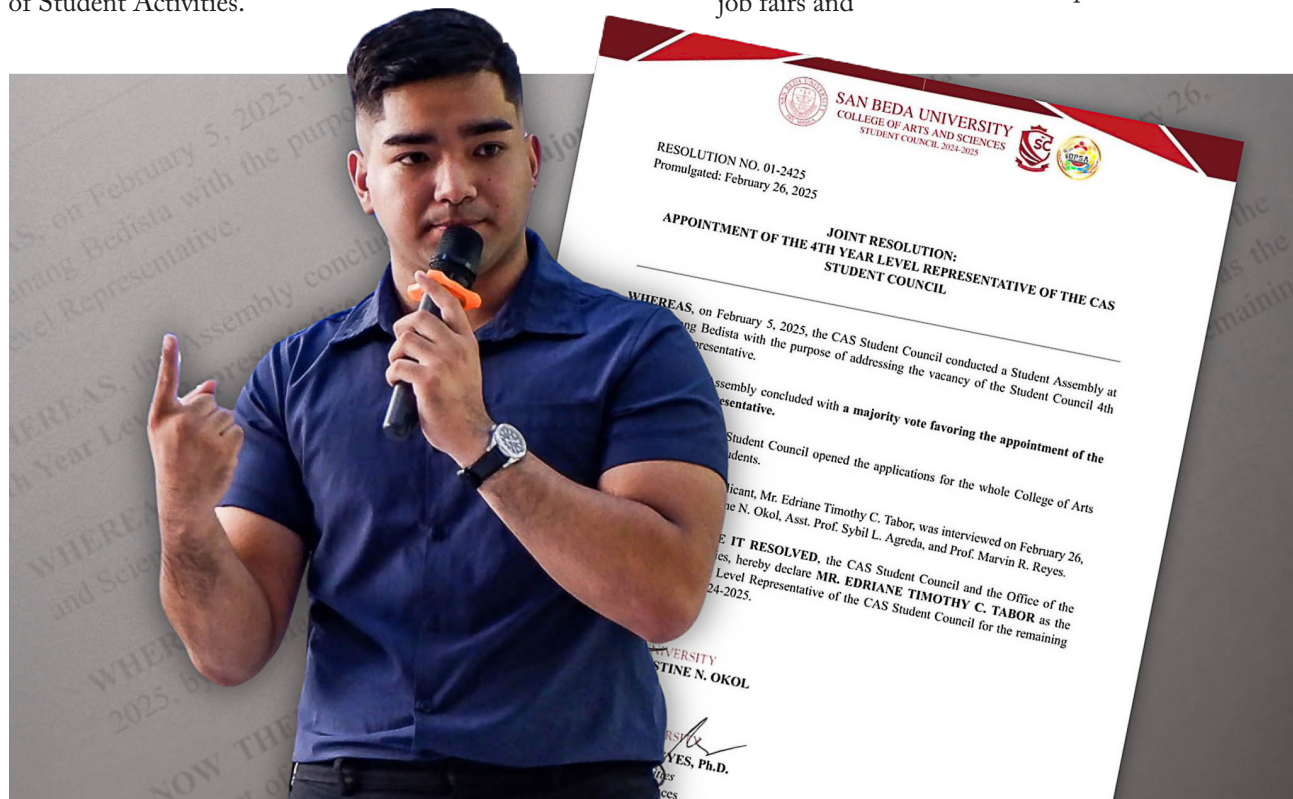


Photo composite by *The Bedan*

# BACES pays homage to 39th EDSA Revolution Anniversary; Joins wreath-laying tribute

▼ **Rizian Veniz Ballea**

AS PART OF their ongoing commitment to commemorate the 39th anniversary of the EDSA People Power Revolution, the Bedan Advocacy and Consciousness Society (BACES) attended the wreath-laying ceremony, hosted by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) and the Quezon City (QC) local government, at the EDSA People Power Monument, thereafter joining the rally that followed on February 25.

"This activity is actually a follow-through of our 'Martial Law Noon: Ano Na Ngayon?' event last September, as it clearly showed that injustice and tyranny come in many forms. Even though we are not under Martial Law, there are still blatant abuses of our fundamental rights," BACES President Aldrich Rivera explained.

Rivera added that their initial plan for honoring the EDSA anniversary was different, stating, "What we had in mind was to hold a seminar or a school-based activity at best. It was only when our partner organization from the ML (Martial Law) activity, 'Bubay Ang People Power Network,' invited us to attend the wreath-laying that we got the idea to go there ourselves."

QC Mayor Josefina "Joy" Belmonte and the NHCP spearheaded both the flag-raising and wreath-laying ceremonies. Both ceremonies were attended by local government officials and representatives from various organizations, including the Human Rights Violations Victims' Memorial Com-

mission (HRVVMC), Spirit of EDSA, Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation, Inc., August 21 Movement, Chino Roces Foundation, Project Gunita PH, and the Ateneo Martial Law Museum and Library.

Following the flag-raising ceremony, students from Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo High

School (CGEAHS) and Sr. Mary John Mananzan presided over the Pledge of Allegiance to the Philippine flag and the invocation. Sequentially, the wreath-laying ceremony commenced, with participating organizations, including BACES, placing their wreaths in a line before the EDSA monument.

In the afternoon, Rivera, along

with his members, Mari Aldwindrei Ambayec, Samantha Catimon, Julia Francisco, John Dave Francisco, Jesse Rebueta, Reuben De Leon, and organization Moderator, Prof. Zernan de Ramos, participated in a rally that started at the National Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace and proceeded to the EDSA Monument, where an assembly took place.

Rivera encouraged his organization to join the rally as a "learning experience," emphasizing that "the spirit of EDSA belongs to the people, not to a single person or family."

"I think it was an eye-opening experience for them. Since some of them are from STEM-related courses, and a few have only known about activists and protests from books and cases we've read. They have acquired knowledge through practical experience, which is something you can't learn by merely reading books," he further shared.

Extending the organization's resolve to the Bedan community, Rivera asserted, "With the current Marcos administration attempting to erase the memory of EDSA from the Filipino people, it is our duty as youth to continue, remember, and embody its spirit and ideals... Just like the people in EDSA 39 years ago, let's stand together for a genuine unity. A unity built by love, patriotism and care for our countrymen; not by greed and personal agenda."



BACES participating in the wreath laying tribute at the EDSA People Power Monument

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The YVP performed at the Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat Photo by Carl Casilag

(YVP) children's choir. The father-and-son duo played an interpretation of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf," complemented by the narration by YVP's Maria Sophia Roldan,

The concert's repertoire included sacred songs such as *Ama Namin* (The Lord's Prayer), *Ave Maria*, and *A Song of Blessing*. The latter was composed by YVP's co-founder, artistic director, and renowned composer Jude Roldan. A *Song of Blessing* was previously performed by the choir before Pope Francis at St. Peter's Square in Vatican City last May 2024.

"So, our plan was really to perform sacred choral music composed by Spanish and Filipino composers as a prayer for Pope Francis. We would like to thank the Benedictine community for allowing us to use this beautiful sacred space for the concert," Mr. Roldan shared.

Sharing this sentiment, Dr. Maria Theresa Vizconde-Roldan, an accomplished choral pedagogue and children's choir conductor, said "I am very happy and fortunate because we were able to collaborate with Spanish

organists and create beautiful music together. At the same time, it is an honor to sing and offer this concert for the Holy Father's good health and complete healing."

In an interview with *The Bedan* performer Ignasi Prunés de Riba stated that, "It has been such a pleasure to share this concert with the Young Voices of the Philippines. It's not very common to find choirs as exceptional as this one—with such wonderful voices, a clear timbre, and strong musicality."

"For me, it has been like a miracle to perform with them. Also, performing alongside my father has made this experience even more special. This is something I will always cherish. So, all I can say is thank you, Manila. Thank you, Abbey. Thank you, Philippines. I hope to see you again," he expressed.

Concluding the event, Dr. Vizconde-Roldan conveyed, "The songs that we sing are expressions of our faith. They are our prayers. So, if we can move even one person to pray because of our singing, we have accomplished our mission. We're very blessed and very grateful for this opportunity."

Photo by Veronica Balbin

# JBLC inaugurates Social Justice Center for women, children, PDLs

▼ Rcee Tenefrancia

AIMING TO PROMOTE a “more inclusive and empowered community,” the Junior Bedan Law Circle (JBLC) formally launched its Social Justice Center through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signing and conference at the Abbot Lopez Hall last February 27.

The Social Justice Center comprised of three flagship projects, namely: “Project Eva,” a program that addresses the challenges and issues faced by women; “Lingkod Laya,” a platform for Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs); and “Handog ng Pag-asa,” an activity that supports the children of the underprivileged sectors of the community.

During its launch, the inaugurating activity featured two prominent speakers: Shan-nen Carreon from the Institute of Solidarity in Asia and an alumna from the Department of Legal Management, together with former Gabriela Women’s partylist Representative Emmi de Jesus.

In her opening remarks, Carreon tackled

misconceptions about feminism, emphasizing that “it is a movement for all genders, not just women.” She also highlighted the challenges of engaging with certain sectors, particularly local government units (LGUs), that remain “resistant” to progressive gender policies.

While she acknowledged that the fight for gender equality would be “long and arduous,” she noted that society has made strides, and although there is still “much work to be done, meaningful change is underway.”

Rep. de Jesus spoke on the current societal issues about women and the statutes that give them assistance and protection by firstly discussing “how a bill becomes a law.” She then proceeded by tackling the many impediment gaps that occur in the legislative processes—which hinders or slows down the passing of the bills.

She continued her talk by discussing some of her notable legislative contributions about the divorce bill and other feminist codes such as passing the laws of Expanded Maternity Leave Law, and the Safe Spaces Act.

In an interview with *The Bedan*, Rheanna Yazmin Melanis, the activity chairperson of

the event, shared how JBLC “dreamed big for the launching of the Social Justice Center.”

“We contacted the Department of Justice, the Supreme Court, and larger organizations related to law, women, and children. However, *marami ang nag-decline kaysa sa nag-accept*. But we are really grateful to those who accepted,” she said

Melanis and team then alternatively looked for a closer option. “That’s why we collaborated with Manila City Jail, the Department of Justice Office of the Prosecutor of Manila, Gabriela Partylist, and the Humanitarian Legal Assistance Foundation.”

She claimed that through the Social Justice Center, the JBLC makes a “tangible impact” by “identifying what needs to be done for the community” despite the doubts whether they could establish or sustain the project.

“That’s always the problem with organizations when it comes to activities. I think they should look into their hearts to understand what’s at their core. That way, it wouldn’t just be about helping them, but also about helping others,” added Melanis.

(with Paris Isaac Falcone)



JBLC pose for a photo opportunity after the launch of the Social Justice Center at the Abbot Lopez Hall

Photo by Rizian Balleta

## TR advocates for accountability in 2025 nat’l budget discourse

▼ Jake Ellis Evangelista

STEPPING TOWARDS A more accountable and transparent government, The Republic (TR), in partnership with the San Beda Economics Society (SBES), hosted “Beyond Numbers: A Political Discourse on the 2025 Philippine National Budget” at the Abbot Lopez Hall on January 30.

The forum focused on the complexities of the National Budget, focusing on its impact on education, health, and the broader political economy.

Dr. Rommel F. Linatoc from the Bureau of Treasury (BTr) provided an in-depth discussion on the technical aspects of the 2025 national budget, detailing the budgetary process and key allocations and priority sectors.

Dr. Linatoc also explained the implications of budget deficits, the importance of proper fund distribution, and how government agencies ensure fiscal responsibility. Additionally, he addressed concerns over the reallocation of funds, par-

ticularly reductions in social services, which have sparked debates over transparency and efficiency.

The event’s second speaker, Mr. Karlo Abadines, a graduate of Development Studies and an advocate for citizen empowerment, emphasized the role of youth in governance and electoral reforms. He underscored the importance of youth participation in national conversations, stressing that awareness and involvement in fiscal policies could drive meaningful change.

Mr. Abadines also discussed the significance of holding elected officials accountable, urging students to scrutinize government spend-

ing and promote responsible governance.

In an interview with *The Bedan*, Faisal Armano, Activity Co-Chairperson and TR Vice Chairperson for Programs and Community Engagement, explained that the forum aimed to “educate students about the nation’s financial allocations, especially in light of growing concerns about transparency.”

“There have been discussions about the vagueness of the 2025 national budget. Sectors like Phil-Health have been defunded, and as students, we have a role in scrutinizing and participating in these issues because this directly affects our future,” said Armano.

The discourse tackled student engagement in governance, emphasizing critical analysis and active participation. Beyond voicing opinions, he encouraged students to take initiative in holding the government accountable.

“We fight for what is right, and this discussion is a step toward a more accountable and transparent government,” he emphasized.

Abadines also reaffirmed the power of informed citizenry. “We are not just recipients of government policies; we are stakeholders. If we want better governance, we must be vigilant, ask the right questions, and demand accountability.”



Photo by Nathaniel Soriano

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In response, the SC President stated that they only learned of the budget deduction of 855,000php from the SAF on the same day of the mentioned SOC General Assembly.

“During that day *na pinaparequire ang mga estudyante na magbayad ng tickets for Pista, ‘di po namin alam na required pala,*” she reiterated.

Okol also added that she messaged Prof. Marvin Reyes, PhD, the Prefect of Student Activities regarding the conduct of ticket sales.

“*Sabi niya sa akin that this is a tradition, ‘just make sure to disseminate properly to the students’. Sabi ko hindi po ‘yun pwede, so I raised that this Monday that kailangan mag release ng memorandum si Dean.*”

In a letter addressed to Rev. Fr. Placido Ma. B. Acta, OSB, the Vice President for Finance, the SC was seeking clarification on the 855,000php deduction from the SAF as only 780,000php would be deducted from the raffle tickets.

Alongside this were other queries in the

letter such as the exact amount to be returned to the SAF, and the day in which it will be reimbursed.

With this, Dean Christian Bryan Bustamante, Ph.D, spoke on behalf of the ticket sales during the assembly.

“The selling or buying of tickets by all stakeholders of the University was already a tradition when I was a student here,” said Dean Bustamante, emphasizing the mandatory nature of its purchase.

However, he expounded that, due to the ticket purchase being pulled from other college’s SAFs, the Accounting Office subsequently consumed the funds of the CAS.

After consulting with the Accounting Office, Dean Bustamante clarified that the arrangement in the CAS was different, prompting the SC and OPSA, OPSD to remind all class advisers to submit ticket sales on or before February 21.

Coincidentally, Dean Bustamante released a letter last February 20 stating that “all members of the community, adminis-

trators, faculty, non-teaching personnel, and students are required to purchase the tickets,” setting the deadline for the payments on February 21.

The same letter also details that if the student “does not want” to pay for the tickets, they should return the unused tickets to their respective class adviser, putting into question their status of being “mandatory.”

As of April 2, only Php 201,150 has been returned to the SAF, and the tickets are still currently being processed to reimburse the remaining amount deducted.

In light of these matters, *The Bedan* has interviewed Enrique Bonete, SBP Chairperson, on his thoughts and the party’s stance regarding the criticisms posed by the now-elected Internal Vice President from the slate.

“To give you the facts, this was raised by Gab *noong* February *pa, ang sinabi niya na wala masyadong nagarwa, ayun kasi ‘yung naramdaman niya* as an ordinary student,” he said. With this, Bonete then was “reminded

of his time” as an SC officer, highlighting the necessity of openness towards criticism.

“We always side with the students because we are the student’s council. We are the voice of the students,” urging that this should set the precedent for succeeding SCs.

Nevertheless, he acknowledges the necessity of getting both sides of the equation, and emphasizes that he does not say these against the outgoing council nor the school admins. “This is the stance of our party, *ayaw namin iretract ‘yung statement kasi ‘yung ‘yung totoong nangyari,*” Bonete concluded.

Conversely, while raising the same assertions of open communication, Okol reiterated how one must not “discard, disregard nor discriminate” an organization that they will eventually be a part of.

“You will also inherit the same problems and same struggles, let’s help each other, let’s educate each other, let’s get into a more in depth discussion rather than performative,” she closed.

(with Aliyah Aya-ay)

## BBS conducts first off-campus conference

▼ Jake Ellis Evangelista

“ROLLING THE DICE towards success,” the Bedan Business Spectrum (BBS) held its first off-campus conference at the Claro M. Recto High School (CMRHS) last February 19, providing students with insights about business and leadership.

The seminar sought to “empower aspiring student entrepreneurs with knowledge in leadership, business development, and entrepreneurial success.” According to BBS Executive Secretary and Activity Chairperson Enzo Ochoa, CMRHS was selected as the host school “upon the recommendation of the Community Engagement Center (CEC) and in alignment with BBS’s goal of extending business education to a broader student audience.”

“*Gusto namin ‘yung* community engagement is aligned also with the organization, which is ABM (Accountancy, Business, and Management) students’ *yung nasa* seminar,” added Ochoa. Moreover, he emphasized that this alignment ensures the activity remains significant to the students’ future endeavors in business or their college lives.

The conference’s guest speaker Iane Tabor, a fourth-year student from the Department of Legal Management and Bedan entrepreneur, shared his personal story of being in the business world, tackling the key traits of an excellent leader and hoping to inspire the students to develop their leadership and entrepreneurial mindset.

Reflecting on his Bedan experience, Tabor said, “*Sobrang mal-*

*aking bagay talaga na* I was given the opportunity to be a scholar in San Beda... The connections I made in San Beda, not only in my Legal Management course but also through various organizations, really helped me establish my business.”

He also emphasized the role of leadership in business success. “In businesses, it’s all about how long you can keep it going,” adding that “You always need a team, and leadership skills are essential in guiding that team toward achieving your vision.”

Following this was a student business pitch activity that challenged the students to showcase their skills and market themselves effectively. “*Ginawa namin parang* business pitch, *pero hindi lang* about business, *kundi makabuo rin ng* bond between the students and the volunteers,” Ochoa explained.

Through this initiative, BBS continues to “fulfill its mission of fostering business education and leadership development among students.”

“We want to create opportunities where students can apply what they learn in business and leadership, regardless of their background,” added Ochoa.

(with Joaquin Zacchary Tadeo)



BBS conducted their first off-campus conference at the Claro M. Recto High School Photo by Diane Francisco

## TR, Active Vista bring Martial Law documentary 11,103 to Bedans

▼ Nathaniel Jacob Soriano



TR pose for a photo opportunity at the Abbot Lopez Hall

Photo by Nathaniel Soriano

“UPHOLDING NATIONAL MEMORY through visual storytelling,” The Republic (TR), in collaboration with Active Vista, and Storytellers Inc., featured a special screening of the Martial Law documentary “11,103” in commemoration of the 1986 EDSA People Power anniversary at the Abbot Lopez Hall, February 21.

Setting an avenue for Bedans to delve into the lived experiences of Martial Law victims, TR, the official organization of the Department of Political Science of San Beda University (SBU), organized the event to “stir political discussion, and highlight the crucial role of events leading up to the People Power.”

“*Nagpo-provide siya sa atin ng* factual narrative... *habang meron pa tayong mga* living proof *na bubay pa* [ang mga Martial Law victims], *mas maganda na* *naikukwento nila ‘yung mga* experiences nila, *na later on, maipa-pass on rin natin sa* next generations,” Angela Correa, Activity Chairperson and TR Secretary-General, told *The Bedan* in an interview.

The documentary tackled the impact of Martial Law on the nation, the dangers of historical revisionism, and encouraged historical consciousness to “allow students to reflect on the film’s relevance to the country’s current political landscape.”

Speaking on the title of the film “11,103”, Correa explained, “[The title] refers to officially recognized human rights violations *na na-compensate sa* ill-gotten wealth from [former] President [Ferdinand] Marcos. *Na-align siya sa* core objectives ng event to highlight the resilience *ng* ML survivors *at i-educate ‘yung* Bedan community on the historical and present-day implications *ng* state violence.”

In light of issues on disinformation and lapses in the education sector, Jhillian Escuro, Program manager for Festivals and Outreach of Active Vista, emphasized on the importance of film screenings to address misconceptions on the true events of ML.

“*Nagiging important ‘yung* screening itself... *para napa-process nila, nakakapag-tanong sila sa* Martial

Law survivors *mismo nung panahon na ‘yon. Kasi parang* *nach-change ‘yung* narrative. *Kasi kung galing sa* *lolo’t lola nila, na ‘Ay, hindi, sinasabi lang nila ‘yan. Mura nga* *bilihin noon, eh, ‘iba kasi na marinig mismo nila sa* *mga taong naka-experience o naging biktima ng* Martial Law,” Escuro explained.

Nilda Giocada-Fullon, a Martial Law survivor, denounced the human rights violations caused by the abuse of power by state forces, identifying parallels between her experiences during ML to the current situation of the country.

“With respect for human rights, there are so much violations during Martial Law [that still exists] today,” she emphasized.

Moreover, she likened prior crony politics to today’s political dynasties, providing, “*Mahirap ngayon eh... bakit? Kasi kinontrol ng* *uulang pamilya. Kung nung panahon ni* Marcos they are all cronies... *ngayon, ganun pa rin naman eh... now we have the* political dynasties.”

Leaving an impression on participants of the screening, Aldrich Rivera, President of Bedan Advocacy and Consciousness Society (BACES) who was in attendance, recounted how the documentary had impacted him.

“It is our duty to make sure we don’t forget first *‘yung* EDSA and *‘yung* horrific history *ng* Martial Law, if we forgot about those, possible *lang na* *maulit ‘yung mga nangyari* before,” he reflected.

While initially scheduled on January 31, the screening was postponed to February 21 due to the Pista ng Santo Nino sa San Beda 2025 celebration.

(with Maria Jamille Perolina)

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mate concerns. Furthermore, he stressed that environmental problems will not wait for good governance, stating, “*Ang susunod na* *politika sa bansa ay politika ng* *kalikasan.*”

D’Angelo, who echoed the same environment-driven sentiments, stressed the need to address the ongoing climate crisis in the country while placing another emphasis on animal welfare as a swipe to sitting officials. “*...dala ko rin ang* *welfare ng mga hayop, sapagkat ang hayop dapat* *alagaan, pero ang hayop na nasa gobyerno dapat* *na nating tanggalin, ngayon na.*”

Adding to the call for systemic change, both De Guzman and Espiritu denounced the existence of political dynasties, focusing instead on a politics that caters to the marginalized communities instead of the elite. “*Politika ng* *masa, politika ng mga mamamayang* *pinagsasamantalaban at hindi* *politika ng mga elitista, ng mga* *dynastiya, trapo, at mga magnanakaw sa* *gobyerno. Yun ang bagong politika natin,*”

said De Guzman.

“*Ang mga bago na madadala natin sa* *senado ay ‘yung oomph! ‘Yung oomph!*,” Espiritu remarked.

For his part, De Alban, offering his expertise as a lawyer and professor, called for judicial reforms, pushing for increased funding for the courts to expedite cases, expand judicial capacity, and ensure the safety of witnesses and to alleviate corruption.

Castro, who advocates for a “politics of true change,” believes that the Makabayan coalition’s purpose is to serve the people in the pursuit of a national democracy. Moreover, she emphasized how their unity is based on genuine reforms rather than personal interests.

“*Di kami matutulad sa* *UniTeam na isang taon pa lamang, punit na,*” she said, drawing a sharp contrast between their coalition and traditional political alliances.

Meanwhile, Valbuena, pushing for the welfare of the of Public Utility Vehicle (PUV) drivers amidst the jeepney modernization program, challenged the prevailing corruption of the current administration, saying “*Merong pang* *lumalaban habang nandidito kami, gumitna kayo sa* *kalsada, sasagasaan namin kayong mga* *korap sa gobyerno!*”

Martinez, on the other hand, highlighted his extensive legislative experience, positioning himself as a qualified candidate based on his track record. “*Hindi man* *ako sikat, pero ang resume ko, karapat-dapat* *para sa senado ng Pilipinas.*”

For Casino, the country needs senators who are not affiliated with political families, expressing his disconnect from these dynasties. “*Kailangan natin ng* *mga senador na hindi abente ng mga bilyonaryo, ng* *mga haciendero, ng mga* *foreign interest. Kailangan natin ang* *senador na hindi* *maka-Duterte at Marcos, ngunit makabayan* *at makamasa.*”

Maza called for a shift in the country’s foreign policy, advocating for independence and non-alignment in international affairs. “...there is such a thing as an independent foreign policy. *Panahon na* *para tumindig tayo sa* international community *na kung saan tayo ay equal sa* *labat ng bansa* *kabit maliit tayo.*”

Finally, Danilo Ramos framed the new politics as one rooted in the ordinary people, particularly farmers, who should have a place in the Senate, asserting that “*Ang* *bago ay taumbayan sa* *senado. Ordinaryong* *tao, magsasaka, itanim sa* *senado, taumbayan* *ang panalo.*”

#### Round 1

In the first round of the selected topic portion of the event, Arambulo, De Guzman, De Alban, De Castro, D’Angelo, and Casino were asked, “*Ano ang inyong* *pananaw ukol sa* territorial integrity *ng* *ating bansa* *pagdating sa* West Philippine Sea (WPS).”

Arambulo, De Guzman, and De Alban stressed to fight for the claim in the WPS through “diplomatic” and “peaceful means.” De Alban also yearned for an “independent foreign policy,” sharing the same sentiments with De Castro who also believes removing Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) sites will help resolve the problems in WPS.

D’Angelo, on the other hand, pointed out that it is the Filipino’s “Constitutional Rights” to claim the sea, and to establish a treaty to preserve its natural resources.

Casino, agreeing with each candidate’s stance, leaned upon a question “how do we build a credible defense?” to which D’Angelo responded, “*Magagawa natin* *‘yan kung pauunlarin natin ang sarili nating* *industriya.*”

Later on, Cabunegro and Arambulo were asked, “*Ano sa tingin mo ang* *karaapat dapat na* *solusyon* *kaugnay sa* *proteksyon ng* *ating* *maritime*”

waters *habang isinaalang alang ang relasyon ng Pilipinas sa nasabing mga bansa?*"

Cabunegro supposed that maritime waters are a "shared resource." "*Ang kapitbabay sa ASEAN ay dapat magkaisa.*" Arambulo added that it is clear to strengthen national security without depending on China and the United States of America (USA) that only seeks to loot from the Philippine natural resources.

(by Rcee Tenefrancia)

## Round 2

During the second round of the Selected Topic portion, Cabonegro, Espiritu, Valbuena, Martinez, Maza, and Ramos, were asked, "*Sang ayon ba kayo sa pagpapatalud ng Social Amelioration Program? Oo o hindi at bakit?*"

The Social Amelioration Program, as presented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), aims to provide financial assistance to less-fortunate Filipino families.

The aforementioned candidates shared the same sentiments in favor of the program. However, they mentioned that it must have limits and that it should not be used as a political patronage, being set as an alleyway for politicians to "vote-buy" instead of being deemed as a genuine assistance. Moreover, Maza says that it "should be distributed through agencies" and not merely from one sector of the government.

(by Manssel Jianne Latonero)

## Round 3

The third round of the election debate continued without conflicting stances among the candidates. Opening the segment, a question on the minimum qualifications required by officials holding positions in government was asked given the current proliferation of corruption and political dynasties in Philippine politics.

Kicking off the question-and-answer portion, Arambulo, expressed the importance of sincerity to serve the people. "*Unang una sa labat... ang pinakamahalaga sa labat, yung sinceridad, na tayo ay, itataguyod natin yung interes ng ating mga kababayan,*" he said.

Concurring with Arambulo, de Guzman, expressed a need for mass leaders in government to genuinely address issues faced on ground, saying, "*Hindi political dynasty... hindi trapo... hindi politikong bilyonaryo na ginagamit lang ang pera para manalo. Kinakailangan, galing sa banay ng mga lider ng masa.*"

Holding a similar stance was Castro, to which she added that for her, the current requirements prescribed in the constitution were fitting.

D'Angelo concurred with the constitutional requirements but centered more on the lack of their implementations, stating, "we just need to... retain the existing qualification, but implement the law." Similarly, Casiño stated, "*Wala po akong nakikitang problema sa kasalukuyang minimum requirements*" but mentioned two additional provisions that he would like to propose. First, a prohibition against political dynasties, mentioning the present Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) law that possesses a stipulation against political dynasties that is absent in other positions in office.

Second, Casiño proposed a waiver on bank secrecy, saying, "*Dapat labat ng tatakbo, ibubukas nila, o papayagan nila na buksan 'yung kanilang mga bank accounts,*" to allow swift investigations on instances of unrevealed stolen wealth, as well as to better safeguard the election process.

With regard to divulging a candidate's statement of assets, liabilities, and net worth (SALN), Atty. de Alban forwarded the need for open SALN to prevent instances of amassed ill-gotten wealth that could be spent on election campaigns. He also added the need for open drug testing to be taken by candidates.

(by Nathaniel Soriano)

## Round 4

For the fourth cycle, Cabonegro, Espiritu, Valbuena, Martinez, Maza, and Ramos were the selected candidates to discuss the controversy of the economic laws concerning neoliberalism and the privatization, deregulation, and free trade it upholds.

Cabonegro associated his answer with environmental issues. "*Ang problema sa power towards renewable energy, mahal-privatized kasi. Kaya 'yong*

base load capacity *natin sa renewable walang gustong mag-invest kasi nag-hands off ang gobyerno.*" He further claimed that the Philippines is being left behind in renewable energy. Due to lack of time, Cabonegro expressed his dismay in being unable to tackle the issue with food.

Meanwhile, Atty. Espiritu said, "*Ang ginagawa nila, itong mga bilyonaryong ito, kumikita lamang sa pagpa-privatize ng airport, ng ating mga daanan, ng ating mga tollgate, ng ating mga tubig.*"

Valbuena emphasized the need for cybersecurity instead of targeting privatization. He also raised concerns about jeepney modernization and the oil deregulation law, stating "...*dapat maibasura itong oil deregulation law na 'to... dahil kapag tumaas ang produktong petrolyo, domino effect ito hanggang sa pagkakaroon ng mataas na implasyon.*"

Martinez took a different stance, weighing in the supposed benefits of liberalization and privatization.

"*Kung hindi natin kaya ba't natin ipipilit? Pero kung kaya naman natin, ituloy natin ang pagpapalago nito,* and of course, government should always exercise oversight functions *para hindi umabuso kung sinuman ang mga kumpanya na nagpa-privatize ng mga government institution na ito,*" he asserted.

Maza, disagreeing with the previous statement, firmly remarked, "*Hindi nito pinaunlad ang ating ekonomiya, hindi nito pinaunlad ang ating bayan,*" believing that multinational corporations and other capitalists are the country's accomplices in implementing the neoliberal policies.

For Ramos, "*Malaking epekto sa mga magsasaka at pati barwag 93% ang asin, inaangkat sa China at Australia-hindi ang tugon ay import liberalization. Palakasin ang lokal na produksyon ng pagkain, hindi importasyon para sa atin.*"

Valbuena and Casiño also confronted the matter of added taxes on pollutants, single-use plastics, and carbon emitters.

For Valbuena, tax should be added on the pollutants. "*Doon sa mga gumagamit lang naman nito, kung hindi ka bibili, hindi naman ikaw ang mag-aambag doon sa taxes nito.*"

In contrast, Casiño responded that this is a false neoliberal solution. "...*sa usapin ng plastics kasi kung talagang masama ang plastic, eh 'di pagbarwal mo. Pero sasabihin nila, hindi lalagyan lang natin ng tax. Ano'ng epekto niyan? Hindi hibinto 'yung pag-produce ng mga nakakasirang plastic sa ating environment.*"

Casiño jokingly remarked that the plastics that should be banned are those that are two-faced, which Valbuena suggested removing them instead.

Finally, D'Angelo strongly advocated for a ban on single-use plastics. Meanwhile, Roy Cabonegro suggested using Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) as a transitional measure, shifting the burden to producers. However, Cabonegro ultimately agreed with D'Angelo that pollutants must be banned.

(by Thirdy Pabilico with Maegan Belicena)

## Round 5

The fifth cycle of the debate continued with the question of what the three sectors of interest the senatorial hopefuls will prioritize in the national budget and why. Arambulo, De Guzman, De Alban, Castro, D'Angelo, and Casiño were the senatorial hopefuls called to address the question.

Arambulo opened the discussion addressing the agricultural sector with food security as the focus. Second, he highlighted the health sector and the removal of funds this sector faced in the recent budget hearings. Lastly, he mentioned the education sector, and the budget cuts and lack of facilities this sector currently faces.

Leody de Guzman shared the same sentiments, mainly highlighting education and the need to allot six percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) into meeting educational needs. For the agricultural sector, he proposed tripling the allocated budget to meet not just food security, but food sovereignty for the nation. His last sector of concern is the industrial sector, highlighting the need for a self-sufficient industrial sector that is less reliant on foreign trade and products.

Following this, Atty. de Alban spoke on the need for a higher funded judiciary system as a solution for corruption in our country and efficient legal processes.

He followed by citing education, specifically the higher education development fund to address training in the public and private education systems and special education. His last sector of concern is the health sector, citing the need for better health infrastructure funding after the experiences of the pandemic.

Meanwhile, Castro's main sector of concern is education, citing the use of six percent of the country's GDP to be allocated for education and hiring 30,000 new teachers and 24,000 principals in public schools. Next is health, tackling concerns of out-of-pocket payments for patients in public hospitals. She concluded by addressing the need for food security in the agricultural sector and the elimination of confidential funds in the national budget.

D'Angelo, on the other hand highlighted a climate resilience-focused budget to prepare for future climate-related calamities. He further added by recalling the need for a properly funded agricultural sector in tackling food security, and the education sector.

Lastly, Teddy Casino first cites the education sector, specifically targeting the quality of education in our country through raising the wage of teaching personnel. He further added to this by proposing an expanded free education program from basic to tertiary levels. He ended by sharing similar sentiments toward the agriculture sector and food sufficiency.

During the face-off segment of this cycle, Ramos and D'Angelo were asked about foreign investments and the contribution of amendments to related laws toward the national employment rate.

D'Angelo shared that "one hundred percent of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is okay, but not for all sectors." He stated that social services such as water, media, and energy should remain in control of the country.

For Ramos, FDI and Charter Change (Cha-Cha) is not a viable solution for the country. Citing historical developments with foreign investors, he stated that land reform and national industrialization through the agricultural sector are better solutions compared to FDI.

(by Mika Isidro)

## Round 6

In the sixth and final cycle, selected senatorial candidates shared their stances on Vice President (VP) Sara Duterte's impeachment trial that was followed by a face-off between Atty. Espiritu and Cong. Martinez regarding the death penalty.

Candidates Cabonegro, Maza, and Ramos pushed for VP Duterte's impeachment. Atty. Espiritu, also in-favor for the impeachment, asserted its "imperativeness," considering how "the moment *na may kapasidad tayong garwin 'yan, diyang magkakaroon ng totoong accountability.*"

Valbuena, conceding to VP's impeachment, added that President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. should also be held "accountable," citing the Php125 million confidential fund issue.

Meanwhile, Cong. Martinez admitted that he had "not signed the impeachment complaint against the Vice President," arguing that "these things could be a vicious cycle *nang gantiban sa politika*" which may "hinder political stability."

Cong. Martinez and Atty. Espiritu later discussed the issue of imposing the death penalty in the Philippines in the face-off segment of the said cycle.

Cong. Martinez expressed his opposition, citing "the sanctity of life." Contrarily, Atty. Espiritu, challenged the death penalty, deeming it as "anti-poor." He further called for "revolutionary justice" and the "cleansing" of corrupt public officials in the pursuit of reforming the Nation's justice system that he described as favorable to those in power.

Other senatoriables like Valbuena also advocated for the death penalty, whereas some, like Atty. De Alban, opposed.

"Given the circumstances of the Duterte Presidency, I think we are on the brink of desperate measures... to protect the state and to protect the youth," Cong. Martinez further argued.

"That is simply hypocritical and inconsistent," Atty. Espiritu responded.

(by Gian Marcel Chiu with Prince Piolo Tagarino)

## What is the first thing that you will do as a senator?

Nearing the end of the debate, the 12 senate hopefuls were asked one final question: what would their first action be if elected as one of the senators of the Philippines.

Arambulo shared that his first undertaking if elected senator would be revitalizing the fisheries sector devoid of any monopolistic control from both foreign and domestic. According to the candidate, this is done through strengthening the rights of fisherfolks and protecting the environment, among others.

For Cabonegro, first he plans to strengthen one of a senator's task of oversight to ensure the proper implementation of laws. Second, he plans to prioritize the funding of environmental programs since "*kulang na kulang 'yung resources natin.*"

De Guzman, on the other hand, highlighted four points. First wanted to enact a law to ensure that provincial labor workers receive equal wages to their counterparts in Metro Manila. Moreover, the senatorial candidate also expressed to eradicate contractualization "*sa pamamagitan ng pagbuwag sa mga manpower agencies.*" De Guzman also planned that only the wealthy be taxed. And finally, he is determined to abolish the political dynasties proliferating in the country.

Sharing the same sentiments as De Guzman, Espiritu contended that, if elected senator, he plans to legislate a law ensuring the "abolition of political dynasties in the country"—with a twist: "*gagamitin natin ang prestige, resources, [and] influences ng Office of the Senate upang mag-organisa ng kilusan sa labas, anti-dynasty movements sa labas.*"

For De Alban, the first thing he would if elected would be "data-gathering," underscoring its significance to serving as the basis for long-term legislation.

Valbuena, on the other hand, asserted the genuine modernization of jeepneys emphasizing the need for a corruption-free process. Visibly agitated, Valbuena further insisted that the overall manufacturing of jeepneys should be led by the Philippine industry, rather than relying on foreign entities like China.

Castro, if elected, affirmed three points. First, that six percent of the Gross domestic product (GDP) would be utilized for the budget of the education sector. Second, that Php50,000 would be the starting pay of public educators, being on par with their private counterparts. Third, repealing the anti-terrorism law, rice liberalization law, and the abolishment of the confidential funds.

For Martinez, he underscored that before assuming as a senator, "*[dapat] maintindihan mo kung ano ang trabaho mo sa Senado...para pagdating mo sa plenaryo, 'pag nag-debate na kayo, hindi ka mukhang katawa-tawa sa mata ng tao.*"

D'Angelo, understanding that "*ang bubay at kinabukasan ng mamamayang Pilipino ang kalikasan,*" he insisted that, as a could-be-senator, he would declare and legislate laws for climate emergency. Moreover, he also proposed a thorough review of all environmental laws in order to design a comprehensive Philippine environmental code. And finally, D'Angelo asserts to create solutions solving the food crisis.

For Maza, she maintains the advocacy on the protection and empowerment of the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). This, Maza claims, can be done through abolishing mandatory payments, aiding OFWs-in-distress, conducting investigations in all government agencies that deals with the OFWs, and echoing the sentiments of OFWs, "*trababo sa Pinas hindi sa labas.*"

Casino, if elected, would remodel and improve the orientation of the Senate Office—one that is an extension of labor movements, peasant movements, urban poor movements, student movements, youth movements, women movements, and other forms of movements—emphasizing a term "*na talagang tumutugon sa mga pangangailangan ng [mga] mamamayang Pilipino.*"

And finally, for Ramos, he asserted that he would continue advocating for the interests of the Filipino people. In the specifics of legislation, Ramos, if elected, would propose a genuine agrarian reform bill, providing lands for farmers, strengthening the rice industry development act, repealing the rice tariffication law, and that the General Appropriations Act (GAA) would be for the Filipino people.

(by Gian Marcel Chiu)

EDITORIAL

# Beautiful little fool

DAISY, IN THE famed novel *The Great Gatsby*, once famously remarked that “I hope she’ll be a fool—that’s the best thing” to capture the bittersweet refuge that oblivion offers in the face of a loveless marriage. Her words were not a prescription for society, but a subtle acknowledgement that, despite everything, truth remains something the heart continues to yearn for.

And so, the familiar narrative remains intact. A number of hopefuls rise from the community in a bid for servant-leadership under the College of Arts and Sciences’ (CAS) Student Council (SC). Said aspirants, with their differing ideologies and varied platforms, become defined and divided in respective political colors.

But what is clearly eerie in this political story is the deafening silence of the college’s premier electoral board in regard to the batterings and complaints between parties happening behind the public eye. Realistically speaking, an election season that is devoid of any grievances and condemnations rarely occurs. And yet, formally publicizing these disputes, while true that it contributes to the political drama, is, nonetheless, essential in manifesting the conduct of transparency and accountability all throughout this already complex period.

The complaints submitted by certain individuals and political parties, along with the board’s corresponding resolutions, are expressions of the richness of elections. These exchanges demonstrate how party ideologies, the often “creative” arguments raised by complainants, and the stipulated rules and regulations come together to uphold fairness and objectivity, whether addressing the most outlandish accusations or technical concerns. By making these resolutions freely accessible, the board reaffirms its commitment to transparency, accountability, prioritizing an informed public, and the consistent application of laws and regulations—principles that were noticeably lacking during the election season.

In the absence of said principles, a host of issues emerged to fill in the void left by an opaque electoral process. Disinformation remained rampant among the Bedan community, drawing out inconsistencies and vagueness from the credentials of the candidates to the alleged violations during the campaign period. Amidst these challenges, the community turned to the electoral board, hopeful that due process and fairness would prevail. However, until the board would come to release and publicize the submitted complaints and their corresponding resolutions, the allegations would remain just that—unverified claims without the weight of official scrutiny.

Time and time again, the proverb of “ignorance is bliss” has resonated with many, as it suggests that joy and solace can be found in remaining detached and unaware of the truth. However, such an outlook must never be incorporated in political institutions, whistleblowers, and watchdogs where transparency, accountability, and an informed public must always take precedence. They are the pillars contributing to the stability of the community. In its absence, public trust and civic engagement would be badly compromised.

Politics and especially the election season is already complex to begin with. Hence, for good governance to flourish within the Bedan community, it is imperative that its guiding principles are actively upheld by all members, and most critically, by the community’s watchdogs. The inconsistencies and shortcomings often seen in national politics and electoral process should serve not as models, but as cautionary tales urging us to pursue a higher standard of integrity and justice in the spirit of servant-leadership.

EDITORIAL CARTOON BY ZEN MARGARET TERROBIAS



*In necessariis, unitas; in opinabilibus, libertas; in omnibus, caritas*

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TUGSTUGSTUGSTUGS!!! Psh. Tik. Tak. Chk. Chk. Boom!

Yow yow yow, kAmUsT@h pOhZZ?! dis Drummer Boy iZzZ b@cKk!!! Ang pinaka-maingay, pinaka-matapang, at pinaka-walang prenonng tagapagkalampag ng chismis sa Bedan community. walang tago-tago, walang lusot-lusot!

**Escándalo! Cheaters.in.Da.Lion’zDen?**

Luv izz in da air this Valentine’s here in SBU! Isang magandang opportunity to look into if marunong nga ba magmahal ang mga Bedista? Whisper in da streets, Bedans aren’t good in the sheets... and by sheets kasi I mean records.

As your ever-vigilant Drummer Boy, I’ve scrolled through meticulously examined receipts deep in the trenches of Bedan life. Don’t get it twisted. Personal life is personal life I know, and ur Drummer Boy doesn’t claim to be a campus cupid, pero dapat yata the institution starts checking kung paano nga ba mino-model ng students and faculty ang love life nila.

Because let’s not forget: LOVE is a hallmark of Benedictine Education. Who would want to enroll at a school full of cheaters and walking red flags? Am I right?

**Nasaan ang mga Bedista nung EDSA 2025?**

Napansin ng tambolistang ito how eerily quiet the Bedan halls have been. Once a Mendiola stronghold of protest and purpose, SBU seems to have traded its boldness for aesthetics. Angas ng mga pubmat about the commemoration of EDSA People Power, oo. Pero... iyon na ba talaga iyon?

History tells a different story. A time when Bedans walked alongside the masses, fists raised, voices loud. A time when the admin, yes, the admin, reportedly encouraged students to march, to join rallies, to stand with the people. My 1986 Bedizta frennies, legit eyewitnesses, swear by it. San Beda was alive then. Principled. Now? Sa mga isyung pambansa, lalo na tungkol sa pang-aabuso ng kapangyarihan, sa pagbabalik ng mga bangungot... asan kayo?

SBU has bred legends. Leaders. Lawmakers. And yes, even polarizing figures. But that legacy wasn’t built on silence. It was built on standing firm when it mattered. So I ask again, are Bedans done fighting? Or have we become too comfortable? Too curated? Too... compliant. Valentine’s reminds us of love. But EDSA reminds us how powerful love can be when it is radical, when it is sacrificial, when it is loud. If you claim to can’t afford to uphold your principles at a time like this, huy, Bedan, baka kailangan mo nang gisingin ang puso mo.

That’s itt aking mga ka-Bedizz! Always remember that everything you’ve read are definitely straight up facts onliiii! I swear on my scout’s honor, eks ma heart, ask niyo pa my trusty tambol! Please drop your drummie some juicy deets anytime cuz ur t4mb0l1st4ng c0olkiD never rests in the pursuit of truth \*wink wink\* and para next taym, ready for showtaym! Just reach out thru: <https://thebedan.com/contact-us/drummer-boy/>

And if i were u, id pass this on, ‘cause if you ignore what’s happening in our community, you’ll be surprised with how fast the truth catches up with you!

Stay tuned, stay aware, and most of all, stay loud.

Chk Chk Boom! Boogsh! Skrrr! Catch ya on the flip side, mga bedizz! Byeeeee!

Drummer by the Flagpole is a long held and deeply cherished *The Bedan* tradition. Drummer Boy is celebrating his 35th anniversary this year.

**Who is Drummer Boy?**

The answer may be found in the September - October 2007 issue of *The Bedan*: “Many have asked who he really is. But more than the question of who writes Drummer Boy the question we must ask is why he writes. And what will happen if he stops to write. He writes because we need him to write for us. He writes because some of us are ashamed to question the wrongdoings around us. He writes for freedom. He writes for you. He writes for us. Drummer Boy is each and everyone of us.”

Contact: <https://thebedan.com/contact-us/drummer-boy/>

**THE GREATEST MAGICIANS have something to learn from Mr. Mistoffelees' Conjuring Turn - PRESTO! Yet amidst all that glimmer and grandeur, he remains genuinely unseen and unheard. Veiled from the ever-piercing glow.**

For the entertainers, they bask under the radiance of sweet ecstasy, beloved by all those who meet them. Even when spawned into a territory of burning torches, game masters and players, and a perpetual race pursuing the imminent future—they thrive perfectly, favored both by bosom friends and complete strangers.

But behind closed doors, an entertainer is a sham constantly living a life akin to that of a masquerade. They grace people with their antics, flaunting the facade, and hiding the shame concealed under their heavily weighed masks. Only then, when the crowd disperses to oblivion and the sole echo of solitude reverberates across the room, can the false pretense be put to a halt.

**MR. MISTOFFELEES**

they stand bare, alone, and utterly silent before the secrecies cloaked in the incandescence of the limelight. The reality devoid of the spotlight, I contend, is as cruel as it gets. For into this great unknown lay one's concealed darkest dreams, unwinding fantasies, and defenseless senses. These somewhat shameful secrets revel only in the absence of the public eye, sustained and animated by forthright candor. Yet, to reiterate, truth, its black, white, and gray areas in-between, can only truly manifest itself in a secluded reverie.

And so, as the hour calls for truth, to finally face the music, the entertainers—stripped of the facade, laid bare in the essence of being human—become but faces



**GIAN MARCEL CHIU**

in the crowd. Yet still, even when swallowed by the tide of thousands, the hunger to be seen and heard lingers before them, reaching for a certain somewhere where certainty dwells, where freedom welcomes them, and where they may finally stand, wholly and human.

I would beg to contend that in pursuit of this shared reverie, the search for a certain someone is equally imperative, which thus highlights the necessity for immersion and integration. Truth be told that the crowd of thousands is a powerful force to be reckoned with. The fear and excitement of being sent to an unfamiliar territory where souls in all creeds and backgrounds intertwine is a tempest of longing and discovery—a dance between



*Welcome to the island of misfit toys! Where to be human is neither sin nor shame, where truth is not hidden but heralded, and where all rejoice in the embrace of an authentic self, woven together in genuine belongingness*

the unknown and the boundless possibilities.

As such, for the trembling entertainers: don't let fear be the chain that binds you, nor the shadow that dims your pursuit of light. Surrender to the embrace of the community, merging your spirit with the vibrant pulse of shared souls as you pursue the dawn of tomorrow.

And perhaps, amidst the intricate melody of unity, a kindred spirit will rise from the crowd—someone who could lift you off the ground, carry you to uncharted realms, and set you soaring on the wings of possibilities toward your longed-for reverie. Welcome to the island of misfit toys! Where to be human is neither sin nor shame, where truth is not hidden but heralded, and where all rejoice in the embrace of an authentic self, woven together in genuine belongingness. All this awaits only if you're someone ready to be found.

Oh! Well, I never! Was there ever a cat so clever as magical Mr. Mistoffelees?

**BELIEVE ME WHEN I say this: your time in San Beda won't be as fulfilling as it could be, and it may never truly feel like home. It's only when you embrace both the triumphs and the heartbreaks that come with being a Bedan that you'll truly understand what it means to be part of this community.**

I'll admit, San Beda wasn't my first choice of university. Nothing could have prepared me for the whirlwind of events that brought me to where I am today—not even 17-year-old me, who would have scoffed at the thought of staying in Mendiola for a few more years.

Yet, life does not tread a single path. After a failed application and a blatant disregard for my future, I found myself stepping into San Beda as a last-ditch effort to salvage my wounded pride.

**INTEGRATION AND BEYOND**

**RIVERCHILD**

I was unenthusiastic. Believing that I was settling for less than what I envisioned, I pledged to go through the motions of being a college student without thinking much of it. I was to become a "normal" Bedan, no more, no less.

Perhaps, this is when I would come to realize just how mistaken I was. A great deal of this became clear when I encountered strangers who would soon become some of my closest friends.

Afterwards, I started to stay, even a few minutes longer, and those minutes turned into hours, until I found myself deeply involved in conversations, activities, and



**THIRDY PABILICO**

moments inside the campus that I never would have imagined doing in the first place.

Contradictory as it may seem, I found solace in the very connections I had forged, even as I worked tirelessly to confront the overwhelming responsibilities that come with being a student and campus journalist. Through it all, I came to realize that San Beda has become somewhat of a familiar home to house these experiences.

For some inexplicable reason, there is a certain magnetic pull within this institution that draws people together, and in this we start to acknowledge the allure of



*Rather, it felt as if truly becoming a Bedan was revealed to me through the relationships I formed in this community, which I have come to recognize as a part of my own.*

the University from an outsider's perspective.

Where am I getting at? I do not mean to bore you with overused slogans or ramble further about why San Beda is the best place to be. Rather, it felt as if truly becoming a Bedan was revealed to me through the relationships I formed in this community, which I have come to recognize as a part of my own. And I hope, dear reader, that you'll come to realize the same in your own time.

Therefore, I encourage you to step beyond your comfort zone and embrace both the highs and lows of being a Bedan—especially in this year's Integration. After all, true fulfillment lies in the memories we create and the bonds we forge in this cherished community, for at the heart of it all is the true essence of being a Bedan.

**ONCE UPON A February, back in grade school, our class visited a traveling planetarium, which was of course, an inflatable dome set up in a public school's multipurpose hall. And as the cosmos revealed itself above us, we dreamed, "Gusto ko maging astronaut!" Now, I wonder if that same yearning to reach for the stars still linger in the hearts of children.**

Astronomy, at least to some of us, was once just another page in a science book. The idea of a boundless and infinite universe tickled the imaginations of many young minds. Still, however, it remained a distant thought, abstract, like something that was proven by science but we could only dream about.

Yet, even then, there was something about outer space that made us believe we were capable of far more than our small world could ever show us.

**BIYAK SA BITUIN**

**G. GERILYERO**

And so, we did what any children would do: imagine. We drew stars in the margins of notebooks, traced constellations, connected patterns that promised something greater, something out of this world.

However, for the Filipino youth, especially to those not born with a silver spoon, you grow up with the bittersweet understanding that some dreams are simply too far to touch. To be an astronaut? In a country like the Philippines? A bit of a stretch, no?

These "impractical" dreams have long been familiar with the unyielding "no." The constant reminder that some things are just not meant for us. But, even in the face of that "no,"



**RIZIAN VENIZ BALLETA**

Filipinos have always found ways to make the impossible possible.

Young Filipino students, with hands that are familiar with not having enough, have crafted telescopes from plastic bottles, mapped lunar eclipses on scraps of cardboard, and prayed to asteroids in hopes that the universe will remember their names.

Yet, despite all that ingenuity, the lack of opportunity drops us back into the ground, ears to the floor, mocking us to touch the same grass our ancestors tended.

As other countries pour millions into their space programs, Filipinos still make do with outdated textbooks.



*Most young Filipinos just can't afford to reach for the stars...*

While observatories continue to expand in other parts of the world, we can't even get a stable internet connection in our rural schools. Most young Filipinos just can't afford to reach for the stars as reality has a cruel way of chastening those who are less fortunate, no matter how vast their potential may be.

It may sound naive, even out of touch, to the jaded adults who've forgotten how to dream, but in 2025, there is something so sinister and disheartening about how it feels wrong and idealistic to say that the dream of becoming an astronaut is unattainable.

I do hope that those who guide the learners of today give time to celebrate those who dare to reach for the impossible, the teachers who transform ordinary classrooms into DIY galaxies, the parents who scrape together what little they have to give their children a shot at something greater.

### CUB'S ROAR

THE FIRST FEW steps consist of hesitations, for the lions and lionesses in sight are far more majestic and fiercer, with their roars echoing globally as the den has done its job once again in producing a regal pack. R.I.P Emily Dickinson, when shall it be my turn?

Truth be told, I was never the type to identify with the school I belong to. They are merely tools one uses to carve their skills and competencies, to be a ladder in achieving the life they aim to settle for. But as I slowly wander through, coming out in a big city with a faraway life, I emerge like a newly birthed bird with shattered shells all around and a nest unfound.

It was then when I stumbled

#### DICKINSON

upon this Lion's Den that intimidates but impresses. People embed the word "community" in your heart and mind, smiling proudly at their new cubs. Being told the tales of rivalries and controversies within my first few steps, this was when I was awakened, realizing that this would be my life for the next years, that I was never a newly birthed bird, but a cub trying to achieve her true roar.

With each day passing, my



#### MANSSEL JIANNE LATONERO

heart beats closer to finding the red in my blood. Those that came before me may not have had the chance, but their souls have been far more integrated than I am, but who am I to tell, for my journey had just begun. The legacies that continue to unfold are something that I wish to uphold, along with my spirit attached with dedication, despite the blemishes that make it hard to be polished. But more than that, it was every obstacle that made me falter, every challenge that made me tear, and each day



Love's greatest act was to exist not only between people, but within their work as well.

that made me persevere that truly made me understand that to be here is not just to exist and be stagnant, but to progress and grow.

Afterall, the den does not simply house lions—it molds them.

With the once-lost tradition setting its tracks to ignite the essence of being a Bedan with the people much closer, may it be a deafening reminder that this is place is not merely an institution, not a place where names are placed in tarpaulins and written in records then soon folded and forgotten, but rather a stepping stone to duplicate legacies that have bloomed from here on now.

BEING STUCK IN college when others are entering the next chapters of their lives can be tough, but you're tougher.

Another year has passed by, and it seems about time for that looming specter of reality to pay its annual visit. That dreadful reminder that you are stuck in what should have been a supposed passing breeze, four years of course still being a significant amount of time, that sadly is not your personal circumstance. An uncertain number of additional years still await you, aggravated by the perceived successful college stories of friends and random mutuals on social media. An aggregation of envy-inducing posts flood your timeline – graduation pictures, successful job applications, stories of "what for me is next in store as I become another cog in the capitalist machinery?" – add on to that dreadful feeling of being glued to the floorboards of life, frozen in time, or to sum it up in just one word, stuck.

The usual demands of society insist that students finish their

### AT YOUR OWN PACE: MUSINGS OF A DELAYED COLLEGE STUDENT

#### SIFR

degrees within a fixed period, but that is not always the case for many. Others stay longer for deciding to transfer schools, or for shifting, others may experience setbacks in keeping up with academic demands, while others may take a deserved and understandable leave of absence for other personal matters. Despite all these valid causes behind why one may remain at an apparent stalemate, being delayed in college still carries with it heavy feelings of guilt or shame. It may seem impossible to rid oneself of these troubling sentiments, but a few guiding ideas may help one ease the burden of thought, or eventually even lead to finding solace within oneself.

Firstly, a supportive foundation, be they friends, family, or even those with similar experiences, can help with that feeling of isolation. Having the



#### NATHANIEL SORIANO

right people there to depend on will allow you to open up about troubling thoughts, to be vulnerable without judgement, and provide sincere and genuine company throughout your lengthy journey. The right people embody a gentle reminder that you are not fighting this personal battle alone.



While your situation may seem inescapable at the moment, the truth is as long as you continue walking the road to a not-so-distant finish line, no matter how small the steps may be, you will eventually reach where you have to be. All at your own pace, you will be alright.

Next is to view things from a kinder perspective. In a fast-paced society that tends to romanticize the grind, it may seem as if we have to constantly be achieving something in order for our lives to be worthwhile. This idea may worsen an already vulnerable position of not graduating on time. Instead, try to remind yourself that it is okay to run into a few road bumps, the reality is that no one is perfect. Everyone grows at a different pace, experiencing things from a different context, not

everything has to be your fault. Allow yourself time to rest before fighting once again.

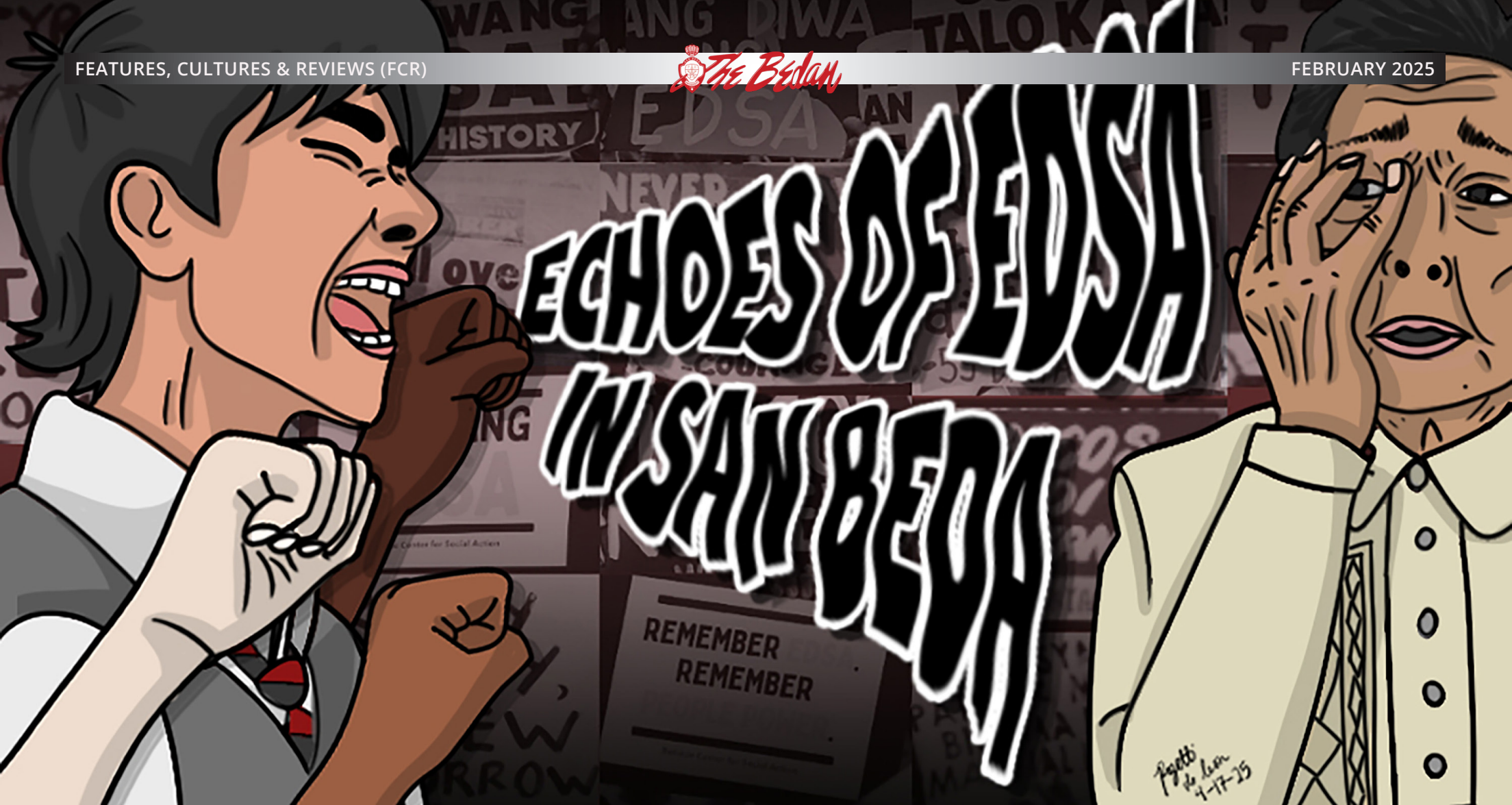
Lastly, make the most of what you have at the present. What time has been taken away; you can reclaim through opportunities that time has given you. Despite it seeming as if you have lost more time through your extended stay in college, quite the opposite can, as a matter of fact, be inferred. You can use the extra years as an opportunity for exploration and growth, joining organizations (\*cough join The Bedan \*cough) or trying out new things you never thought you would be capable of during those moments of doubt. Maximizing the remaining years of your slight detour, is another way to make your experience all the more meaningful.

While your situation may seem inescapable at the moment, the truth is as long as you continue walking the road to a not-so-distant finish line, no matter how small the steps may be, you will eventually reach where you have to be. All at your own pace, you will be alright.

## KOMIKS

WEAR YOUR STATUS PROPERLY!  
ni Rcee Tenefrancia





# ECHOES OF EDSA IN SAN BEDA

▼ Rizian Veniz Ballea

Art by Rozetti Jena De Leon

**AS HISTORY REFLECTS ON NEARLY FOUR DECADES SINCE THE PEOPLE POWER REVOLUTION, IT IS VITAL FOR THE BEDAN COMMUNITY TO RECOGNIZE SAN BEDA UNIVERSITY'S (SBU) PART IN THAT LEGACY. A LEGACY THAT NOW CALLS UPON THE BEDANS OF TODAY TO CARRY FORWARD THE SAME COMMITMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES' ENDURING STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY.**

As Filipinos know, the People Power Revolution, an uprising that erupted along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) in Metro Manila from February 22 to 25, 1986, was the culmination of years of resistance against the Marcos dictatorship. Fueled by the proliferation of human rights abuses, corruption, and economic decline, then ignited by allegations of electoral fraud in the 1986 snap elections, millions of Filipinos rallied to reclaim democracy, ultimately forcing the Marcoses into exile.

## Patterns of truth in the eyes of Mendiola

In a conversation with esteemed Bedan alumnus, Mr. Samuel Caesar “Porky” Porcalla, a former Editor-in-Chief of *The Spires* and a contributor to *The Bedan*, reflected on the realities of the Bedan experience during the turbulent times surrounding the People Power Revolution of 1986.

“If we go back in history, Martial Law was really the dark years, ‘yung tipong lahat ng tao takot, lahat bawal. Ang daming rules, and bawat salita mo, kailangan mong bantayan. Lahat ng sinasabi mo, dapat puro papuri sa administration. We were made to believe na maganda ang buhay during Martial Law—until namatay si Ninoy noong 1983. That was the turning point. *D’un nagsimula ang mga* uproars from all sectors of society,” he narrates.

Mr. Porcalla, who graduated from high school in the same year, recalled the political shift from Martial Law to the revolution, saying “Our batch *kasi*, we graduated high school in 1986. Back then, ‘*di pa talaga kami* well aware of our political atmosphere. All we know is that *lahat ng mga* books *namin* in school had to be approved by the administration. *Hindi ka pwedeng basta nalang mag-pupublish* without their approval.”

The propaganda-driven environment also shaped the students’ understanding of their world.

“*Lahat ng* propaganda materials *noon—before and during* Martial Law—*na naabutan namin nung* grade school and high school, *puro tungkol sa* New Society or *Bagong Lipunan*. How great the Philippines was *daw, kung sino raw ang mga* heroes, *ano raw ang mga* natural resources *natin*, at ‘*yung mga malalaking* infrastructure projects *noong panahon ni* Imelda. *So, halos lahat ng tinuturo sa amin, puro* propaganda,” he explained.

“As grade schoolers or even high school students, we were just fed whatever information we were given,” Mr. Porcalla said, remembering how schools seemed to have this one-sided narrative of history.

A pivotal moment came however when Mr. Porcalla enrolled at San Beda. “Fortunately, we enrolled in San Beda, ‘*yung* transition *ng* 1986 People Power Revolution. *So, alam naman natin na* San Beda is right in front of Malacañang and most of the rallies happen just outside our gates—*sa* Mendiola. *So, ‘yung ganong* awareness, *nagbago ‘yung itsura ng pananaw namin* that time *sa mga nangyayari*. *So, malaking tulong na* exposed *kami at nakita namin ‘yung* transition,” he noted, emphasizing how essential this exposure was in shaping the Bedan community’s understanding of the political climate.

## San Beda at the forefront of activism

During the tumultuous 1980s, San Beda emerged as one of the most progressive schools, actively engaging in rallies and political movements. Mr. Porcalla reminisced, “San Beda, actually, during that time, was one of the progressive schools. Generally, *tayo ‘yung* forefront *ng* mga rallies *din*. *Kapag nag-rally ang mga* Catholic schools, San Beda was one of the first to join.”

The true heart of the activism, however, came from the students and faculty who were committed to social change.

“*Dati kasi kami, nagkukwento kami* sa professor, ‘*Sir, may rally po sa ganito, sa Friday, pwede po kami sumama?’ Sasabihin niya, ‘Attendance lang tayo, tapos after, pwede na kayong humabol.’ Parang ganun. Kasama pa minsan ‘yung professor,”* Mr. Porcalla enthusiastically shared.

“We had the support then. *Minsan mag* room-to-room *kami, iikot kami sa* third floor, fourth floor, *tapos sa* kabilang building *para sama-sama kami*. *Tapos, grabe, talaga, lumabas kami na ganon, may pulang bandila ng* Student Council (SC) *at* San Beda. ‘*Yung* passion and zeal *na ‘yun* before *makikita mo* talaga. *Kapag sinabi mong* boycott, boycott. *Suportado rin ng mga* pari... *Pero ‘yun, kailangan namin magpakita din na buo ‘yung* community for fighting legit issues,” Mr. Porcalla narrated further, noting that organizations like the League of Filipino Students (LFS), the Student Christian Movement (SCM), and the College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP) were also particularly active, with many of their leaders being Bedans.

“*Kaya ganun ka* self-aware ‘*yung mga* Bedans *noong* araw. And it translated also to *The Bedan*. Mostly, ‘*yung* content *ng The Bedan* was social critique *at* mga legitimate issues in life, *tulad ng* tuition hike, oil price hike. *So, ganun*. Now, every Tuesday *tumataas ang gasolina, krudo*, every Tuesday. *Noong araw, tumataas lang ‘yan ng* 25 centavos,

*Welgang Bayan na ‘yan. 25 cents lang ‘yan. Ngayon, piso na, dalawa, balewala na.”* he recollected.

Mr. Porcalla also noted how the desire to take part in the discourse about pressing issues was one of the reasons behind the origin of *The Drummer Boy*, a section in the *The Bedan*’s publication that served as the mouthpiece of the students, addressing grievances within the institution.

San Beda, through its students and faculty, developed a culture of radical accountability, becoming a powerful force for change during a critical period in Philippine history—championing the ideals of democracy, social justice, and fostering a generation of activists committed to confronting oppression even in their daily lives.

## Keeping the spirit of people power alive

The conversation then shifted to President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s decision not to declare February 25 a national holiday this year.

“Actually, *ang nakakatakot dito* is historical revisionism. *Ang masaklap, binibigyan tayo ng* period of history *na ginagawang optional*, which shouldn’t be. *Kasi* by law, *dapat ang* February 25 should be celebrated commemorating People Power,” Mr. Porcalla said.

He asserted that many of the same individuals involved in the 1986 Revolution are still in power today, making it understandable why they might seek to reshape the historical narrative to align with their current interests.

“*Ang nakakatakot* is that they’re changing the narrative. *At sa* youth, *nawawala na ‘yung* essence *ng* People Power. *Kasi* every time *na may* bagong administration, *iba na ‘yung* perspective.”

Reflecting on the current generation, Mr. Porcalla expressed “uncertainty” about their engagement with the past, saying “With the new generation, I can’t really say if they still have that same zeal. *Kasi, hindi ko alam kung anong mga* issues ‘*yung* pinaglalaman *nila ngayon*. *Iba ‘yung* issues *namin nung* panahon *namin.*”

On the other side of the coin, Reuben De Leon, External Vice President (EVP) of the Bedan Advocacy and Consciousness Enhancement Society (BACES), offered his perspective on the differences between the spirit of activism during the People Power Revolution and today.

He observed a shift in public consciousness, saying “Back in 1986, there was a strong

collective spirit. People believed in their power to make change and took action despite fear and uncertainty.”

“Today, while we still have the power to shape our nation, many have become disillusioned. Misinformation spreads faster, trust in institutions is weaker, and elections sometimes feel more like popularity contests rather than a fight for real leadership.” De Leon exclaimed.

He lamented that some people now take democracy for granted, forgetting that it was won through courage and sacrifice. “The spirit of EDSA shouldn’t just be a memory. The challenge for us today is to reignite that sense of responsibility to be active participants in shaping our country’s future.”

Both Mr. Porcalla and De Leon, when asked how the younger generation can ensure that the lessons of EDSA remain relevant, collectively emphasized the importance of “awareness, advocacy, and action.”

“It starts with education. We need to be aware of our history, use that awareness to advocate for democracy, and turn advocacy into action,” De Leon explained. “That is the essence of my organization, BACES. By staying engaged, making informed choices, and taking action, we can ensure that the spirit of EDSA is never forgotten.”

Mr. Porcalla shared similar sentiments, stressing, “*Syempre, kung may* strong educational system *tayo at ang* history *ay nakalagay sa* forefront, *dapat ‘yun ang* nasa academic curriculum, history. *Dapat ito ang* core *natin.*”

“Apart from that, of course, ‘*yung* history books—they’re part of history. We can still actually reignite that fire and zeal. *Malaki talaga ang* role *ng* Bedans, *lalo na kung maikukuwento ulit ang mga* kwento *nila, ‘yung* pagiging *bayani* *nila noong* panahong ‘*yon*. *Maraming personalidad na* Bedista *ang kasama sa* struggle *ng* People Power, as in *marami,*” added Mr. Porcalla, underscoring the pivotal role of Bedans in preserving and sharing the stories of their involvement in the revolution.

Mr. Porcalla then looks to the Bedan community with expressed hope as he concludes, “We can only do so much. *Hindi natin kayang buhatin* lahat. But we can start the spark. Ignite it. *And then* tignan *mo—marami ang* susunod. It will catch fire.”

(with Prince Piolo Tagarino and Benedict Asher Ugaddan)

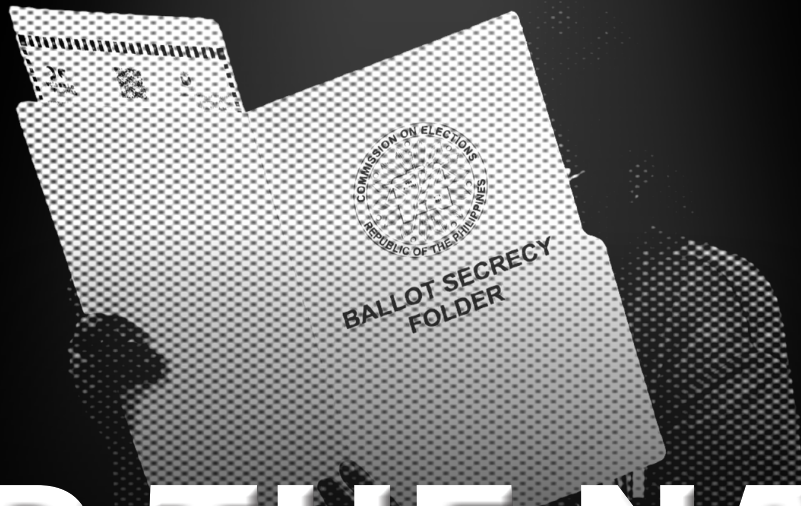


Photo composite by The Bedan and courtesy of CNN World

# BEYOND THE NAMES: WHO'S WORTH YOUR VOTE?

▼ Paolo Vital

**IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN— THE CAMPAIGN SEASON. LIKE A NEVER-ENDING PIESTA, THE AIR IS FILLED WITH NOISES FROM BIG-TIME POLITICIANS, CELEBRITIES-TURNED-CANDIDATES, AND POLITICAL DYNASTIES ALL FIGHTING FOR ATTENTION. BUT WITH MORE OF THE YOUTH BECOMING POLITICALLY ENGAGED, IT'S CRUCIAL TO CUT THROUGH THE SPECTACLE AND TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT TRULY MATTERS: THE PLATFORMS OF THOSE VYING FOR OUR VOTES.**

With the nation divided along partisan lines, let's take a closer look at the factions vying for seats and the platforms their senatorial candidates bring to the table, from two of the leading partylists, the Alyansa and the Makabayan parties, as well as notable senatorial duos fighting for their respective advocacies.

## ALYANSA PARA SA BAGONG PILIPINAS

Forward, forward—Forward together! The frontrunner coalition in this midterm election is also the only one fielding a full Mag-ic 12 senatorial slate. Dominated primarily by incumbents, this alliance aims to carry on the Marcos administration's agenda. Its lineup includes the following candidates

**Benjamin "Benhur" Abalos Jr.**, former Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), who is known for his tough-on-crime platform. He kicked off his senate bid with an advocacy for energy, value-added tax on power grids and pushing agricultural reforms. "We will tackle a lot. First is electricity, checking the VAT and the grids. Second is agriculture, we will look into our farmers," said Abalos when he filed for candidacy.

**Abigail "Abby" Binay**, the three-term Makati mayor, leverages her background in equitable healthcare and education, with precedents being set through the Yellow Card program, which offers health services to Makati's residents, and Project FREE and Project FEED, providing students with free school supplies and healthy food respectively.

**Pia Cayetano**, beginning her political career as the youngest elected female senator in Philippine history. Much like Binay, Cayetano centers her advocacies upon the improvement of health care and education, being the author of Republic Act (RA) 10152 - the Mandatory Infants and Children Immunization Act. Lastly, she noted the role of public universities in fostering future healthcare officials, pushing for budget allocation through both health and education sectors.

**Panfilo "Ping" Lacson**, former Chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP). Ping Lacson harbours a firm stance on law enforcement and governance issues - criticizing the war on drugs and its alleged reward system and authoring the Anti-Red Tape Act and the National ID Law, intending to make government processes and transactions

more convenient. More notably, Ping Lacson is a co-author of the Anti-Terror Act of 2020, which sparked criticism with its potential for red tagging.

**Francis "To" Tolentino**, current Senate Majority Leader and seeking re-election, finds his advocacies in international affairs, being vocal about the 2016 Hague ruling which affirmed the Philippines' diplomatic victory over China in the West Philippine Sea and authoring the maritime zones bill.

## TAUUMBAYAN SA SENADO: KOALISYONG MAKABAYAN

The Makabayan bloc brings together a dynamic mix of veteran activists, labor leaders, grassroots organizers, and progressive lawmakers, united by a shared commitment to social justice, labor rights, and national sovereignty.

In representation of the Makabayan coalition, **Liza Lagorza Maza** asserted that "kami ay nagpapanukala ng pambansang demokratikong plataporma para sa immediate relief, sa kalayaan at sa demokrasya," during the Alto Broadcasting System-Chronicle Broadcasting Network's (ABS-CBN) Harapan 2025.

With a record of pushing for protection of the underprivileged during her tenure in the House of Representatives as a delegate of the Gabriela Women's Party, her deep roots in the women's movement and her long history of championing gender equality, social services, and anti-poverty programs highlight the coalition's intersectional approach to governance.

**Teodoro "Teddy" Acevedo Casiño** is a politician and an activist who represented Bayan Muna Partylist in the House of Representatives. Known for his advocacy on human rights, social services, and economic reforms, his legislative track record includes pushing for measures that protect marginalized communities, co-authoring laws such as the Public Attorneys Act of 2007 and Rent Control Act of 2009

**Danilo "Ka Daning" Ramos** serves as the current chairperson of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), the largest farmers association in the country. At the announcement of his senatorial bid, he carried the banner "Magsasaka, itanim sa senado" pushing for

agricultural programs for the benefit of farmers and Filipinos.

**Ronnel Gondraneos Arambulo** is a fisherman, environmentalist, and activist currently serving as the Vice Chairperson of Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamalakaya Pilipinas (PAMALAKAYA-Pilipinas). He has led protests against large-scale reclamation projects like the Manila Bay Reclamation and the Bulacan Aerropolis which threaten fisherfolk livelihoods and marine ecosystems. Arambulo also fights against the entry of foreign commercial fishing vessels, advocating for stronger government support and protection for small-scale fishing communities.

**Francisca "France" Lustina Castro** is an educator, trade-union activist and serves as a representative for the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) party list. She pushes for the increase of the wages for professions such as teachers, pushing that "ibigay 'yung sapat na suweldo na nakabubuhay," during the 2025 Harapan.

## KIKO-BAM

Seeking a senate comeback, the **Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan** and **Paolo Benigno "Bam" Aguirre Aquino IV** pair, typically known as KiBam, set their campaign in October last year called "Mga Kaibigan," which aims to "unite Filipinos around the platform of transparent governance, economic recovery, social justice, and youth empowerment."

In an interview published under the Inquirer, Aquino banners towards hot topics such as gender equality through the Sogie Bill and divorce albeit with reservations and standing against the removal of term limits and Mandatory Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). Whilst Kiko Pangilinan underscores where his past candidacy as Vice President failed as a point of improvement, urging his base that "hugaw natin aawayin 'yung iba 'yung pananaw o kontra sa atin. Kumbinsihin natin, ligwan natin, ipalam natin sa kanila, ipaabot."

## LAKAS NG MASA

Bannering the slate Lakas ng Masa, the Luke-Leody duo champion themselves upon

the rights of the working man. Despite their loss in the 2022 National Elections, they nevertheless persist in the upcoming elections of 2025, supported by an ever-present online base of the youth and progressive groups.

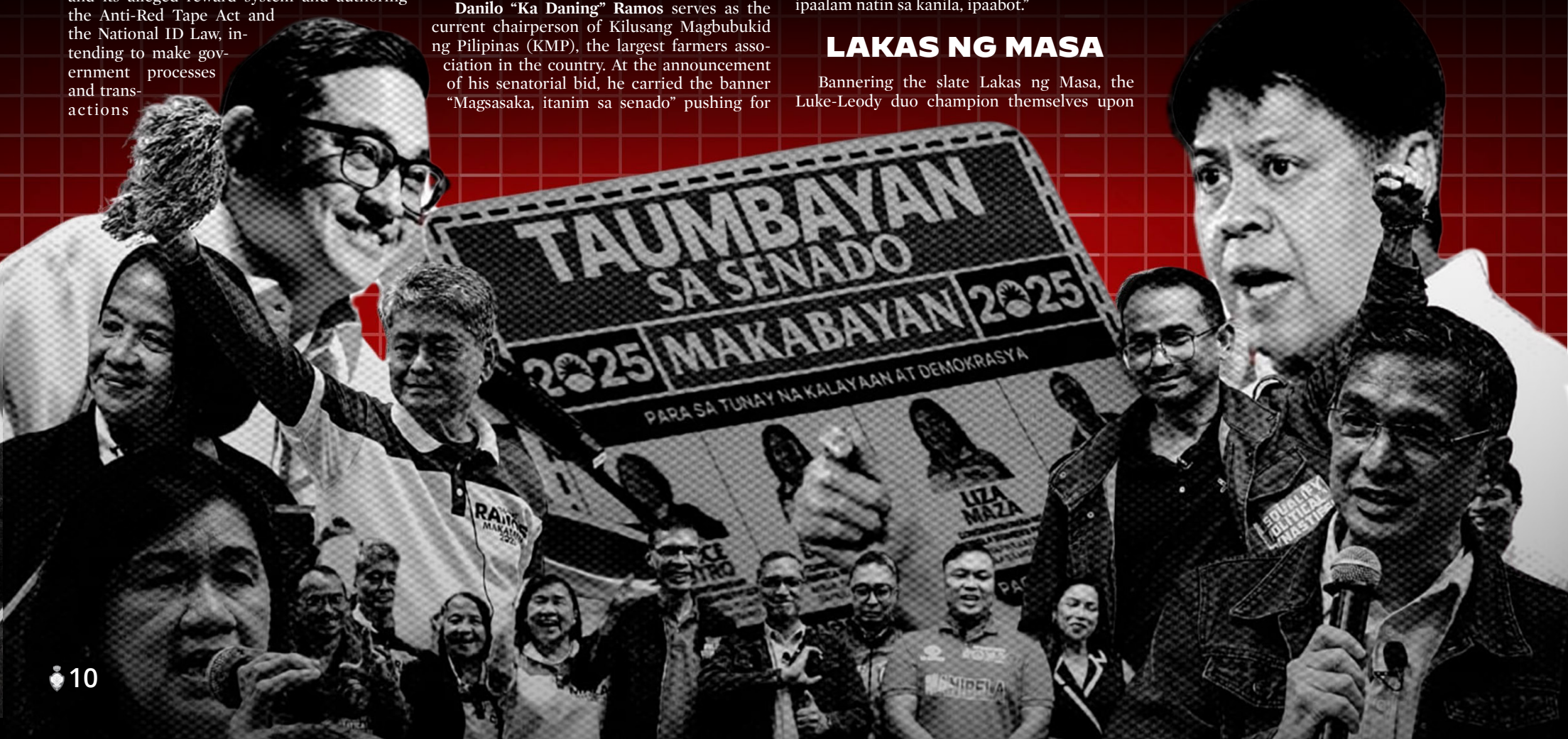
Leading through example, **Atty. Renecio "Luke" Espiritu** has asserted that "ang suporta na nakukuha ni Luke Espiritu at Leody de Guzman, pag sinuportahan yan, kasama diyan ang paniniwala at pag-aadhere sa prinsipyo, mas malakas na klaseng suporta yan." Currently, he is a labor lawyer and human rights advocate, making a name for himself with his fiery rhetoric and unwavering commitment to defending workers' rights.

**Leodegario "Ka Leody" De Guzman** currently serves as the current chairperson of Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, a socialist federation of militant trade unions. His decade-long fight for workers' rights has made him a respected figure in the labor movement and beyond, reflecting his candidacy as a broader push to place workers at the center of governance, ensuring that the backbone of the Philippine economy—the working class—finally gets the representation it deserves.

And that's a wrap! Will we opt to reinforce the status quo by voting for the incumbents or a new wave of leaders who promise change? These may not be all the senatorial candidates for the upcoming elections, but this is where our duty as responsible voters enters the fray: we need to make educated decisions, to look beyond the spectacle, critique their platforms and never forget history.

Every ballot cast is not just etchings on paper, it is our statement as the people for a shared future, as such, whether the outcome be for better or for worse, it is up to us to decide.

(with Paris Isaac Falcone and Myrna Ydwina Xialea Pelayo)



# CONSTITUTION with Love

▼ Gian Marcel Chiu

**LOVE, IN ALL ITS COMPLEXITIES, ISN'T DEVOID OF ANY SORT OF CONTENTION. OFTEN IT IS SEEN AS AN INTIMATE DANCE BETWEEN TWO SOULS, SWAYING AS IF THE NIGHT WON'T COME AGAIN. BUT THERE IS SOMETHING PROFOUNDLY POWERFUL IN VIEWING LOVE NOT JUST AS A QUIET AFFAIR, BUT AS THE EMBER THAT IGNITES A MOVEMENT, THE SPARK THAT SETS THE WORLD ABLAZE.**

Scrutinizing the Philippine Constitution is like returning to one's heritage—the basics, the outline, the foundation of where one started. The Philippine Constitution stands as the nation's ultimate safeguard and the foundation of the people's collective aspirations, rights, and responsibilities. Like its constituents, it continuously evolves to meet the changing needs of Filipino society. It grows with the Filipino people, like a shapeshifting heart of fervor.

## WHERE IT ALL STARTED

Ever since acquiring Philippine independence, the country has had several constitutions throughout history—each reflecting the country's socio-political landscape at that time. The Malolos Constitution of 1899 was the first Philippine constitution and the first republican constitution in Asia that was drafted and adopted by the First Philippine Republic.

Under the Commonwealth era, the 1935 Constitution was enacted, laying the groundwork for Philippine democracy and preparation for the country's full sovereignty. Later, the 1973 Constitution came into play during Ferdinand Marcos's regime, which legitimized martial law and centralized power under his rule.

After Marcos' dethronement during the 1986 First People Power Revolution, the Filipino people reclaimed democracy, which later led to the drafting of the 1987 Constitution. This document then remains as the supreme law of the land, enshrining human rights, democratic values, and national sovereignty, all in the name of security against past oppressions and certainty of ensuring the nation's future.

## AS THE PEOPLE'S VOICE AND SHIELD AGAINST OPPRESSION

Throughout history, the constitution has served as a bulwark against tyranny; Like how the 1987 Constitution, for an instance, was born from the struggles of the Martial Law era, aiming to prevent the abuse of power and safeguard democracy.

"The Constitution was a product of its time," said Iane Tabor, a Fourth-Year student from the Department of Legal Management. "Having gone through years of oppression, of violence, and of corruption, from the government, I believe they [the framers] were really driven by love and passion for the betterment of the country," he adds, exclaiming how its provisions on human rights and due process were meticulously crafted to prevent the recurrence of dictatorship.

Via Clerigo, another Fourth-Year student from the Department of Legal Management, shared the same sentiments, underscoring the Constitution's protective nature, particularly in response to historical abuses. She pointed out how the verbosity of its provisions was intentional, designed to prevent any loopholes that could be exploited by those in power.

"If you actually look up the history of basically our government, *itong naging 1987 Constitution natin* basically, it has become more of a manifestation. *Naging result ito ng takot...sa naging mess na binigay sa atin ng Martial Law.*" she explained.

Despite these securities, political realities often challenge the Constitution's effectiveness. Tabor highlighted, as an example, the issue of political dynasties—how, in spite of the provisions and laws to ensure its criminality, "*dahil sa self-interest ng mga politicians, hinaharang talaga*, when it comes to... one example would be anti-dynasty provisions."

Aldrich Rivera, another Fourth-Year Legal Management student, further expounds on this issue by highlighting how Article II, Section 26 prohibits political dynasties. "This is a non-self-executing provision," he says, ultimately concluding that abuse of power and other underlying issues are "not the constitution's fault," rather, on the "lawmakers." Provisions, like anti-dynasty efforts, would succeed depending on the "vigilance and activism of the people."

## AS THE GUARDIAN OF SOVEREIGNTY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Article I of the Philippine Constitution clearly defines the Philippines' national territory, emphasizing its importance in geopolitical conflicts. It shows where the power resides and it clearly defines where the Filipino people stand. Moreover, Article II, Section 1 explicitly settled the sovereign state of the country, by which "sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them."

Clerigo noted how the Constitution defines the country's national territory with clarity, emphasizing its significance in ongoing geopolitical conflicts. She took pride in how detailed the constitution is, saying "Very specified *kung ano ba 'yung specific parameters involving sa territory natin. Ano ba 'yung mga definition ng bodies of water or other parts ng island na considered talaga na national territory natin* and mind you, *may difference pa* between archipelago and territory." This clarity, Clerigo noted, is essential in disputes like the West Philippine Sea, where legal principles derived from the Constitution bolster the Philippines' claims against foreign encroachments.

Beyond the specifics, Rivera also noted how "unique" the Philippine Constitution is, as it "even touches [on] human rights, social justice and love," which "continues to inspire nationalism," that further strengthened sovereignty and national identity. Moreover, citing Article XII on National Economy and Patrimony, Rivera also explained how vital ownership is in strengthening the sense of nationalism, pointing out the 60-40 rule on foreign ownership of public utilities and land to illustrate the constitution's reverence to ownership.

The Constitution also mandates environmental protection as part of national development. Clerigo stressed the importance of securing both territorial integrity and cultural legacy and how the Constitution contains provisions on preserving culture and environment. However, she posits that the Constitution doesn't work alone. "*Para ma-reinforce natin 'yan, kailangan [protektahan] din natin 'yung mga natural reserves natin. 'Yung culture natin kailangan may certain agencies established for it para ma-promote, at the same time, may mga certain laws na dapat magabide sa 1987 Constitution,*" she added.

## AS THE FRAMEWORK FOR RIGHTS, DUTIES, AND SOCIAL BALANCE

The Philippine Constitution is more than just a document of legal framework—as it embodies the nation's heart and soul, safeguarding the balance between individual freedoms and collective harmony. Article III, the Bill of Rights, for an instance, protects preeminent freedoms like speech, expression, and assembly. But, as the saying goes, with great power comes great responsibilities."

Rivera sampled how freedom of speech, while a cornerstone of democracy, can be misused through libel laws to suppress truth and silence critics. "I share the same view as Justice Leonen that libel should not be a criminal offense but a civil one," Rivera explained. He argued that treating libel as a civil offense would prevent politicians from weaponizing it against journalists while still holding people accountable for harmful speech.

The Constitution does not just guarantee rights, it also defines the responsibilities of every Filipino. Tabor argued

the importance of knowing and understanding constitutional rights, pointing out that "ignorance of the law excuses no one." He emphasized that awareness empowers citizens to challenge injustices and resist manipulation. Engaging in democratic processes, such as voting and holding leaders accountable, is part of this responsibility. Tabor reminded that the Constitution serves not only to protect but also to guide Filipinos in their role as stewards of democracy.

Clerigo highlighted the Constitution's role in maintaining social balance by ensuring that freedom doesn't infringe on the rights of others. "The Constitution ensures that our freedoms are protected without compromising order," she noted. She explained that limits on speech, for example, prevent chaos and protect public welfare. Understanding the boundaries of these freedoms allows citizens to exercise their rights responsibly while respecting others. Ultimately, the Constitution creates a foundation where both individual liberties and collective stability thrive side by side.

## AS A LIVING DOCUMENT THAT EVOLVES WITH THE NATION

The 1987 Constitution emerged from a time of political suppression—a response to the abuses of the Marcos dictatorship and a symbol of the nation's renewed hope for democracy. Tabor reflected on how the Constitution was meant to be a transitional document, not necessarily a permanent one. "This Constitution wasn't really meant to be used as long as it has been," he said, acknowledging that some provisions now feel outdated. The ongoing conflict in the West Philippine Sea, for example, reveals the need for more adaptive policies to address modern geopolitical threats. The Constitution's ability to adjust to the country's evolving challenges depends on both legislative action and public awareness.

Political dynasties remain one of the Constitution's most glaring inconsistencies. Rivera and Tabor both pointed to Article II, Section 26, which calls for the prohibition of political dynasties. However, because it's a non-self-executing provision, it requires Congress to pass a law for it to take effect—something lawmakers have consistently failed to do. The Constitution sets the moral standard, but its success relies on the integrity of those entrusted to implement it.

The Philippine Constitution is more than a legal framework—it is a profound expression of the nation's collective hopes, struggles, and love for the country. It reflects the hard-fought victories of the past and provides a roadmap for future generations. As Chito Gascon once said, "The Constitution can only serve as a guidepost towards a free tomorrow." Its strength lies not just in the text itself but in the actions of the people who live by it.

To truly honor the Constitution is to engage with it—to understand its provisions, uphold its values, and demand accountability from those in power. Loving the Constitution means recognizing its imperfections while striving to improve it, ensuring it remains a beacon of justice, freedom, and unity for generations to come.

(with Dianne Magallon and Joaquin Tadeo)

# THE LOVE WE FOUND (OR DIDN'T) ALONG THE HALLS OF *San Beda*

▼ Mika Emmanuel Isidro and Jake Ellis Evangelista

BEHIND THE WALLS OF SAN BEDA LIVES THE EVERYDAY COLLEGE STUDENT—JUGGLING CLASSES, DEADLINES, AND ORGANIZATION WORK. BUT BEYOND THE HUSTLE LIES SOMETHING JUST AS REAL: THE QUIET, PERSISTENT YEARNING FOR CONNECTION, AFFECTION, AND LOVE.

Whether it's the pride of wearing red or the strong sense of camaraderie, love in San Beda often comes with its own set of expectations—and a fair share of stereotypes. Is it true that Bedans are all about loyalty, ambition, and school spirit? Let's dive into the world of Bedan relationships through the eyes of couples who met here, a non-Bedan who fell for one, and singles who revealed what they look for in a partner.

## FROM ORG MEETINGS TO FOREVER: BEDAN COUPLES SHARE THEIR FIRST BEGINNINGS

There's a reason "Bedan meets Bedan" is practically a campus cliché: same class, same orgs, and more. For Jaira Paglicawan and Gavin Cocjin, first-year students from the Department of Legal Management, it started with a glance, casual talks, and nonstop chatting ever since.

"I already knew him from friends," Jaira shared. "But we didn't really talk until we became classmates. I noticed he'd look at me during recits, but I tried to brush it off. I was focused on academics and my role in the SHS Student Council—love life wasn't in the plan."

Cocjin, however, had his eyes set. "She was the first person in class who caught my attention. I had trouble focusing because I kept looking at her."

However, the turning point came in the form of an organizational recruitment. "He messaged me about recruitment, and we just clicked," Jaira said.

In San Beda's close-knit community, it didn't take long before classmates caught on. "Nothing stays lowkey in Beda," she explained. "People love to tease, especially if you're in the same section. Suddenly, you're the 'power couple,' even if it's only Day 3."

Being in the same school and class worked in their favor. "We studied together, reviewed before exams, even celebrated org wins and academic achievements side by side," Cocjin shared.

Nonetheless, dating in a school like San Beda comes with its own mix of perks and pressures.

"There's this stereotype that classroom couples fizzle out after graduation... You don't want to flop in class while your partner is watching," Jaira expressed.

Still, both agreed that the shared Bedan experience brought them closer. From late-night organizational duties to spontaneous food runs after class, every moment solidified their bond.

"We remind ourselves that while our relationship exists within the Bedan community, it's still ours. And that's what keeps it strong," said Cocjin.

## HEARTS ACROSS CAMPUS: WHAT IT'S LIKE TO DATE A BEDAN

For some, dating a Bedan offers a window into a unique campus culture shaped by discipline, passion, and tradition. Vincent Casimiro, a Mechanical Engineering student from Mapúa University (MU), experienced this firsthand through his relationship with Akisha Mangila, a freshman from the Political Science Department.

"She has so much pride in being a Bedan," he shared. "They have strong traditions, and their discipline stands out, especially in juggling schoolwork and org life. During events like the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), their school spirit is on another level."

Quenielle Espectacion had a similar impression. Though not from San Beda herself, she was immediately struck by the energy of the Bedan community through her boyfriend, a Human Resource Management student.

"The way they organize events like the Santo Niño Festival—it's all so well-planned. His friends are very hardworking and determined. And even though they clutch sometimes, they always pull through."

Being in interschool relationships, both Casimiro and Espectacion acknowledged the differences in their personalities and school environments.

"We're opposites in many ways," Quenielle admitted. "He's more outgoing while I'm more reserved. But we've learned to communicate, compromise, and grow together. Even if we don't always agree, we prioritize understanding each other."

For Casimiro and Mangila, coming from different campuses wasn't a challenge—it was an opportunity.

"We don't let school culture divide us," Mangila said. "Instead, we learn from it. What matters is trusting your partner, being responsible, and making sure they feel valued."

Both agreed that San Beda's environment influences its students in meaningful ways. "Being a Bedan shaped

how he views love and commitment," Espectacion said. "He's seen how relationships work through his peers and picked up on what matters—respect, maturity, and consistency."

## SINGLE AND REFLECTING: WHAT A BEDAN WANTS IN LOVE

Some Bedans are still waiting on love—or figuring out what it means to them. For Leo Felonia, a student from the Department of Political Science, it's not about whether someone comes from the same school, but about shared values.

"I prefer someone who's politically and legally knowledgeable, family-oriented, and kind—not just to me, but to everyone around them," he shared, emphasizing that what matters more than where they study is who they are as a person.

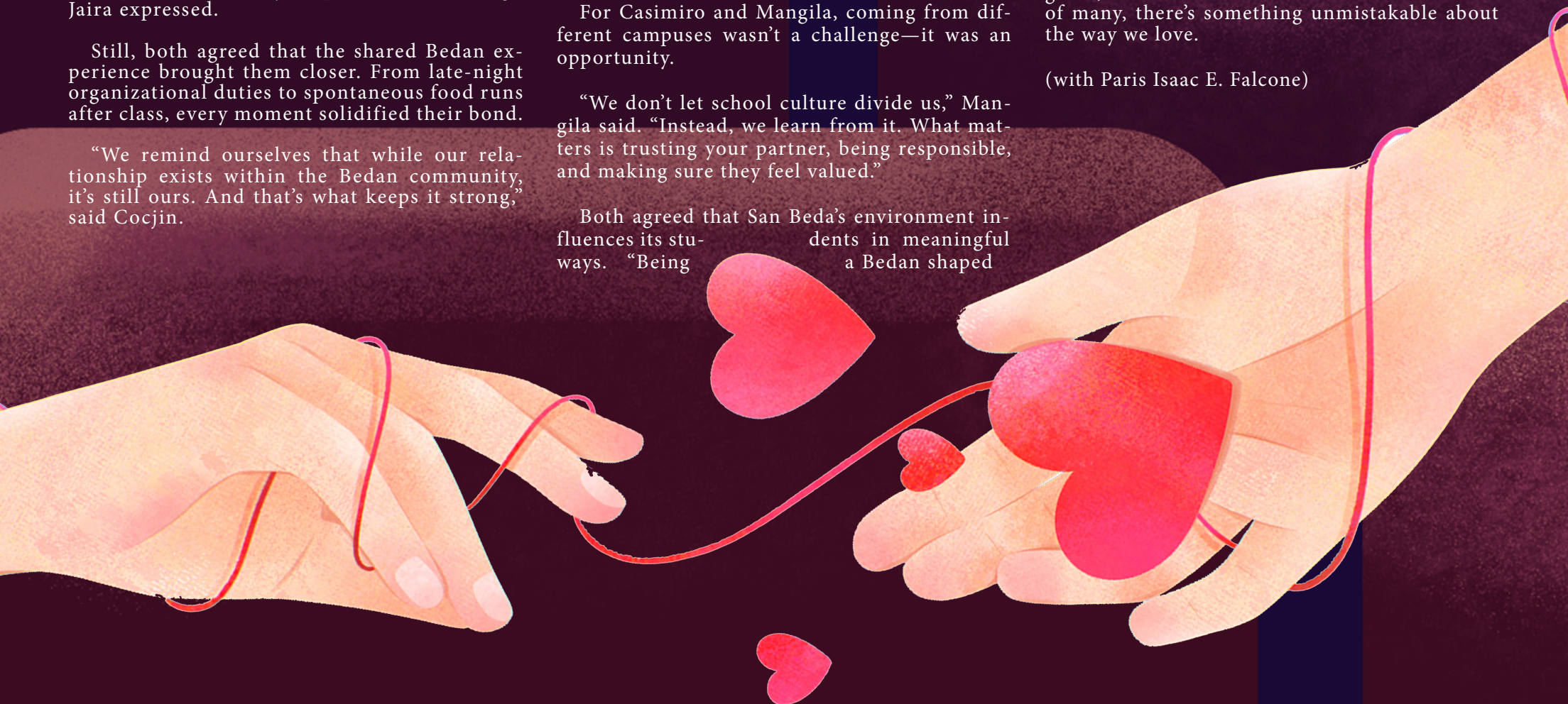
When asked whether Bedans reflect the traits he values, he responded, "Some do. I've seen Bedans who are genuinely respectful, passionate, and driven in everything they do." He also noted that many Bedans are often too busy with their responsibilities—whether it's academics, organizational work, or leadership roles—which can make dating difficult.

As for stereotypes? He's heard a few: "Some say Bedans—especially from PolSci or Legal Management—are walking red flags," he admitted. "But at the same time, people say Bedans are passionate. I agree with that."

Despite these traits, Leo encourages others not to write Bedans off too quickly. "Don't be afraid to try dating a Bedan," he added. "Many are proud of who they are and how they love. They're worth getting to know."

Whether it's one of the three or something entirely unexpected, the Bedan spirit lingers. It weaves itself into glances across the hallways, bonding through struggle, and quiet gestures in classes. Love finds its way in a campus filled with ambition and tradition, not because of the grind, but often because of it. And in the crowd of many, there's something unmistakable about the way we love.

(with Paris Isaac E. Falcone)



# LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX EDUCATION, BABY!

▼ Rizian Veniz Balleta

**RESISTANCE PERSISTS ACROSS THE PHILIPPINES' SOCIO-POLITICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SPHERES AS CONFLICTING IDEOLOGIES SHAPE THE DISCOURSE ON SEX EDUCATION. AS SUCH, THERE REMAINS ONE QUESTION: HOW CAN POOR YOUTH REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH BE ADDRESSED WHILE RESPECTING THE NATION'S CONSERVATIVE VALUES?**

The 2021 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Study (YAFS5) conducted by the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) has tied the exacerbating issues of adolescent pregnancy, the prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), sex-based violence, and sexual identity crises to the lack of comprehensive sex education (CSE).

In a nutshell, sex education covers a broad range of subjects including human anatomy, reproductive health, contraception and disease prevention, consent and relationships, gender identity, sexual orientation, and violence awareness—all within the social science spectrum.

Several countries, like the Netherlands for example, have effectively leveraged sex education to address issues stemming from its absence. Nations that implement CSE have shown success in fostering a well-informed youth. However, in the Philippines, implementing CSE is still a hot debate even with evidence-based data.

## The bill and the backlash: What's holding us back?

With the rising rates of teenage pregnancy in the Philippines skyrocketing the country to be on top of Southeast Asia's highest teenage pregnancy rates, lawmakers have proposed Senate Bill No. 1979 (SB1979), or the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Bill which seeks to establish CSE within schools, expanding adolescent-friendly health services to combat rising pregnancy rates and STIs.

However, around January 2025, the bill faced a wave of opposition amplified by a video under Project Dalisay, an initiative led by the National Coalition for the Family and the Constitution (NCFC), a faith-based group, seeking "to safeguard the sanctity of the Filipino family and the innocence of our children."

Most critics argue that CSE encourages promiscuity and clashes with religious values, a stance echoed by several legislators and President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who condemned the bill as "abhorrent" and vowed to veto it.

The bill's proponents, however, remain steadfast, citing statistics that refute these claims. A UNESCO global status report found that 85% of 155 surveyed countries with CSE policies reported positive impacts on youth sexual health. The data speaks for itself: when young people receive medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education, they make safer, more informed choices.

## Voices from the classroom: What educators really think.

Acknowledging the efforts made, the Department of Education (DepEd) has integrated sex education through Department Order No. 31, s. 2018, in accordance with the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012, ensuring its inclusion across grade levels.

But not all educators share a favorable stance on the Order. *The Bedan* spoke to Cristina S. Tingabngab, a school principal overseeing three clusters in Talisayan, Misamis Oriental, on the matter.

"Children are vulnerable to abuse as they are innocent. Their characteristics are playful and curious. What if they mimic what they are taught and use it to bully others? The inclusion of sexual orientation is already present in learning competencies such as Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC) and Science. I think that's enough for children to know how to protect themselves," she argued.

Tingabngab further asserted this sentiment, stating, "A religious country like the Philippines should be firm in protecting lives, no? There should be no abortion and no contraceptives because that is contrary to the mandates of our God Almighty. Perhaps the solution is to strengthen parental guidance and religious youth activities rather than introduce sex education at an early age."

Tingabngab's stance is only a piece of the friction that the CSE discourse encounters. While research does lean towards CSE, the reality of implementing it in the Philippines is far more complex.

## From this on forward

Like a light in the dark, rising beneath adversaries, the World Health Organization (WHO) continues to advocate for the early introduction of developmentally appropriate sex education, emphasizing its role in reducing teenage pregnancies, STIs, and gender-based violence.

Sex education is a recognized human right, essential for informed decision-making, as per UNESCO that states that under the international human rights law, "states must demonstrate that they have taken steps to fulfill their obligations to ensure the right to health, and the related rights to life, non-discrimination, education and information by removing barriers to adolescents' access to sexual and reproductive health information and providing comprehensive sexuality education in schools that delivers accurate and objective information and is free of prejudice and discrimination."

WHO stands that equipping Filipino youth with accurate, comprehensive, and judgment-free information on sexual and reproductive health is a step toward empowering a generation to make informed choices, break cycles of misinformation, and address pressing public health challenges.

With the Philippines having one of Southeast Asia's highest and rising teenage pregnancy rates—including thousands of births among girls aged 10 to 14 and some under 15 experiencing multiple pregnancies—urgent state intervention is necessary to address this crisis and implement lasting solutions.

The divide on this matter reflects a solid manifestation of the nation's ongoing struggle to attain progress in the context of the growing needs of the youth. As contentions rage on, the focus remains on identifying effective solutions that empower the youth, the hope of the nation.

(with Samantha Calderon and Prince Piolo Tagarino)



# UNFINISHED BUSINESS: YUKIEN ANDRADA AND JOMEL PUNO'S EXTENDED SWAN SONG

▼ Thirty Pabilico and Mika Emmanuel Isidro  
Photos by Nathaniel Jacob Soriano

AFTER LEADING SAN Beda to its 23rd title in Season 99, Red Lions standouts Yukien Andrada and Jomel Puno aren't quite ready to conclude their collegiate chapters just yet—not after a disappointing early exit in the league's centennial season.

Fueled by the sting of heartbreak in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Season 100 seniors' basketball tournament, Andrada and Puno have set their sights on redemption as they gear up for one final hurrah with the Red Lions in Season 101.

## SCORES TO SETTLE

Fresh off a Cinderella run that ended their five-year title drought, the Red Lions entered the Season as the favorites to claim the NCAA title in what was arguably its most historically remarkable year. However, not every team is destined to finish their journey with a fairytale ending.

Despite barely making the final four, the Red Lions' quest to defend their championship ended at the hands of the Benilde Blazers.

"It was a big influence on me, how we ended Season 100, especially [seeing as] we lost really big against St. Benilde, and that's not how we really want it to end," said Andrada.

Puno, who missed the chance to play for the Red Lions' final game due to an injury, echoed Andrada's sentiments, saying "Obviously the way it ended was very bitter for me because I got injured in the last game of the Season before I could help the team play in the playoffs, and the way we lost against Benilde was something San Beda is not used to."

This far from ideal result fueled both Andrada and Puno's resolve to make things right in the next season.

Entering his second year as the Team Captain, Andrada reflects on the maturity he developed from Season 100, which have shaped the adjustments made heading into Season 101.

"I've learned a lot from my past season. That's the biggest thing I have learned from Season 100 coming into [Season] 101. I know what to do now, I know what needs to be done in order to be successful as a team," he expressed.

Meanwhile, Puno shared that his decision to return is driven not only by his own goals but also for the Bedan community, coupled with his desire for redemption.

"So, I felt like I still had to do school and I talked to my family, I talked to some coaches and I felt like I wanted to come back not only for myself but for the community and obviously for redemption to take back the crown," said Puno.

## THE PROS CAN WAIT

Both players were not shy in expressing their professional career prospects heading into Season 100. Despite offers from professional teams after the Red Lions' Final Four exit, Yukien Andrada shared his main priority before heading to the pros.

"[A]fter the season there were a lot of professional teams that contacted ... nag co-contact sa akin to play for them, but you know, kasi meron parin akong studies here in San Beda.

"I still have one more [semester] and I prioritize also education, so I want to finish my studies first before going to the professional leagues. So, that's why I decided to play one more year for San Beda and play professionally after this last season for San Beda."

On the other hand, Jomel Puno's collegiate career plans came with the notion of a two-year playing stay with an eventual move to the professional ranks.

Widely planned for by the coaching staff, he expressed the coaching staff's reaction to his change of plans. "Me and [Yukien] talked about transitioning to the pros, also that's why the coaches were surprised because I was pretty much set even coming into Season 100 that it was gonna be my last year."

Lastly, Jomel also spoke about what he needs to take his game to the next level.

"I guess just playing and being able to see how I do in certain situations, because obviously I had a plan, but being able to go through problems, challenges, barriers, helped me understand what I need to grow and I feel like I still need a little bit more experience, and a chance to push myself harder before fully transitioning as a pro player," he emphasized.

## LEGACIES IN THE MAKING

Despite being integral players in the Red Lions' Season 99 championship, Season 100's devastating exit provided a huge asterisk on the collegiate legacies of Andrada and Puno.

Not wanting to end on a sour note, Andrada expressed the importance of leaving a positive legacy before transitioning to the professional leagues.

"Siyempre, very very important yung college legacy ko kasi ... ayun nga katulad ng nang yari samin sa Season 100, *parang ang pangit* if I'm gonna end my college career in that note na losing really big," he emphasized.

"It was a big disappointment talaga and then coming into a professional league, parang hindi 'yun ... for me it's not, hindi siya mangandang image or hindi siya magandang tignan na papasok ako ng professional na nilaro ko pa hindi maganda."

Speaking about his legacy, Puno spoke on his basketball journey in the Philippines and the importance he gives to San Beda and the Red Lions coaching staff.

"I just gotta remember not to be selfish because coming into the Philippines I was just fresh, I didn't know what to do and I felt like San Beda was a family to me. They helped me grow and prosper as a player in the Philippines. So, I felt like I owe it to them to have respect and just stay and be able to learn from there, especially playing under coach Yuri [Escueta] and Coach Norman [Black]," said Puno.

"Coach Yuri learned a lot from Coach Tab [Baldwin], one of the best coaches in the Philippines, and Coach Norman, obviously you guys know his past. So, I feel like I was able to learn a lot to build a foundation for me to play in the pros."

## SIGHTS SET FOR SEASON 101

On the hunt to reclaim glory back to Mendiola, Yukien Andrada and Jomel Puno add their talents to a Season 101 roster full of fresh faces. Jomel Puno spoke on the new additions eligible for the next season.

"Even though we lost a few players, I feel like all our key players are still here. Plus, we have new really talented players also

from North America. We got a really strong point guard, Jimmy [Reyes] from L.A. and we got really strong wing player just like me named Janti [Agjanti Miller], so I feel like these two could come in and help right away.

"There's also some key additions with height and length from Team B, so I feel like our team is definitely gonna be stronger than last year," he added.

Renewing his duties as team captain, Yukien Andrada shared what the Red Lions faithful can expect in the team their preparations for Season 101. "They can expect more of a cohesive team, more of a well-gelled team, and also, there are gonna be a lot of new recruits that are coming in that are really ... really great players.

"We're gonna really play hard this preseason to get the momentum that we need for the upcoming Season 101."



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Despite these struggles, the head coach remains "optimistic" about the team's potential, noting that while the rookies are still adjusting, they have shown great effort, assuring that the team "will fight and give a good game."

"Kabit hindi pa sila ka-polished katulad nung mga nawala, ang maganda [ay] very hardworking talaga sila," he attested.

For Team Captain Eldwin Escosora, his final NCAA season comes with the responsibility of leading a team filled with new faces.

"Kailangan ko pa mag-step up sa pag-lead ng team especially kasi meron kaming mga rookie," he said.

Entering his final NCAA season, Escosora seeks to set an example for the younger players, noting that his leadership must not manifest inside the field but also outside.

"Gusto ko lang na makita nila sakin na 'yung pagiging captain is 'di lang sa loob ng field, but about rin siya sa labas," he highlighted.

Reflecting upon their past success, the team does not consider the pressure from being last season's champion to be a burden, but as something to further strengthen the players.

"We wanted to live with it kasi dun kami titibay eh, kung papaano namin mahahandle 'yung pressure," said

Head Coach Pedimonte.

He further asserted their winning mentality of improving with every game, saying "[We're] not looking ahead *dun sa* championship, we want to strengthen the players game by game."

With the pressure of being defending champions, Pedimonte acknowledged that every team will be aiming to dethrone them. However, he remains confident in the Red Booters' ability to rise to the challenge.

"We work very hard in preparation. We put value. *Ang masasabi ko talaga* is this team will do their best to defend the crown," he affirmed.

(with Maria Jamine Perolina)

# Lady Red Spikers earn podium finish; Red Spikers place fourth in Season 100 Beach Volleyball

▼ Mika Emmanuel Isidro and Veronica Balbin

AFTER SECURING A spot in the final four in the last match of the elimination round of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Season 100 Beach Volleyball Tournament, the Lady Red Spikers finished as second runners-up, while the Red Spikers ended their season in fourth place after both squads failed to overcome a twice to beat advantage in the semi-finals.

The NCAA Beach Volleyball tournament was held last February 4-9, at the Sands Court, Subic Freeport Zone.

## Lady Red Spikers' path to the podium

The Lady Red Spikers, led by Angel Habacon and Reyann Cañete, secured a final four slot after a 2-0 victory against the Arellano University (AU) Lady Chiefs with set scores of 21-13 and 21-17. The Lady Red Spikers finish the elimination round in fourth place with a 6-3 record.

In the semifinal match-up, the Lady Red Spikers faced first-placed Lyceum of the Philippines University (LPU) Lady Pirates. With the Lady Pirates in a twice-to-beat situation, the Lady Red Spikers failed to force a rubber match, losing in straight sets with set scores of 8-21 and 23-25.

The battle for third match saw the Lady Red Spikers matched up against the Emilio Aguinaldo College (EAC) Lady Generals. The Lady Red Spikers took the first set with a 21-17 set score. EAC forced a deciding set after taking the second set with a decisive victory over the Lady Red Spikers.

After losing the second set with a score of 12-21, the Lady Red Spikers secured a podium finish as second runners-up with a 15-10 third-set victory.

## Red Spikers' journey to the top 4

Moving on to the Men's division, the Red Spikers were represented by Axel Book, Aidjen Rus, and Eduwin Kassim. The final match of the elimination round saw the Red Spikers falter against the AU Chiefs with a game score of 1-2. Despite the loss, the Red



Photo courtesy of GMA Integrated News

Spikers secured their spot in the final four as the fourth-placed team.

The semifinal match-up saw the Red Spikers face the twice-to-beat EAC Generals, who swept the elimination round with a 9-0 record. The Red Spikers failed to force a deciding game, losing the match with a game score of 0-2. This loss saw the Mendiola-based squad square off against Season

99 Beach Volleyball Tournament Champions, the University of Perpetual Help System Dalta (UPHSD) Altas.

The Red Spikers took last season's champions to the distance in the battle for third match, faltering in three sets with a game score of 1-2. Despite the loss, the Red Spikers ended the Season 100 Beach Volleyball Tournament in a top four position.

# Payosing, Torculas swap places in collegiate San Beda-UP "trade"

▼ Mika Emmanuel Isidro

SEASON 99 FINALS' Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and San Beda Red Lions stalwart, James Payosing, and University of the Philippines (UP) Fighting Maroons cager and University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) champion, Aldous Torculas are set to swap places after announcing respective transfers.

After playing a key role in the Red Lions' NCAA Season 99 championship run, the Season 99 Finals MVP became the subject of transfer rumors following the team's success.

Averaging 9.6 points and 12.0 rebounds during the three-game series, Payosing received offers from both NCAA and UAAP programs but ultimately decided to stay for the Red Lions' championship defense in Season 100 of the NCAA.

After confirming his return, Payosing posted averages of 7.32 points, 5.32 rebounds, and 1.58 assists per game in what is now his final season of the NCAA after the Red Lions' final-four exit at the hands of the De La Salle - College of Saint Benilde Blazers (DLS-CSB).

Due to residency rules of the UAAP, Payosing will serve his residency year for the UP Fighting Maroons this 2025. He remains eligible for two playing years in the UAAP and is set to make debut in the league's Season 89 Basketball Tournament.

A day after James Payosing's transfer to the UP Fighting Maroons, hometown UP



Photo by Nathaniel Soriano and courtesy of UAAP Media Team

cager Aldous Torculas, announced his departure from UP and has committed to the San Beda Red Lions and the NCAA.

A product of the University of the Philippines Integrated School (UPIS) Junior Fighting Maroons, the six-foot-four 20-year-

old spent three seasons with the UP Fighting Maroons.

Torculas posted averages of 3.87 points and 2.33 rebounds per game in his recent and now last UAAP 87 championship season with UP.

The UAAP's eligibility rules influenced Torculas' decision to transfer to the NCAA via the Red Lions, where transferring within the association grants a two-year deduction from playing year eligibility along with one-year of residency.

Moreover, citing aspirations for professional basketball after his collegiate career, San Beda's history of producing and developing established players in the professional ranks also contributed to Torculas' transfer to the Lion's Den.

His move to San Beda ensures that his two years of playing eligibility remain intact after he serves his residency year this 2025.

Expected to suit up for the Season 102 of the NCAA, he joins the likes of Daniel Marcelo from Centro Escolar University (CEU) and Dominic Saragumba from Eastern University in the United States – both currently serving their residency year.

With the departure of a key figure in the Red Lions Season 99 championship victory in Payosing, Torculas adds a much-needed championship pedigree and experience to the San Beda Red Lions.

## San Beda Red Booters eye centennial glory

▼ Paolo Vital

EYEING CENTENNIAL GOLD, the San Beda Red Booters are gearing to defend their title as they enter Season 100 of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) on March 22.

Since claiming the championship in Season 99, the team faced various challenges such as the absence of key players and a limited number of pre-season games.

Among those who left was Season 99 best goalkeeper Jhon Betanio, who turned professional. Another key player, Yuan Reña, is unable to play due to academic reasons.

"Yung dalawang player na 'yun, sila yung pinaka-key nung campaign nung Season 99, especially nung crucial stretches nung competition," said Coach Pedimonte, highlighting their absence being felt

throughout their pre-season games.

Initially, the team had joined in different preseason leagues. First of these was the Men's Open which involved different Football Clubs, but this was eventually cut short due to challenges in securing a venue for the games.

The team had also opted to participate in the Division 2 league, a competition also participated in by the Red Booter's rookies and the junior team. However, this was also stopped due to calendar shifts in the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP).



Photo by Nathaniel Soriano

As a recourse, the team has been relying on pre-season tune-up games to prepare. "We tried to look for friendlies,

lahat ng way na pwede naming magawa para makahanap kami ng games," Pedimonte added.

## WE HAPPY FEW



**HINENI  
MIKA ISIDRO**



*No matter what walk of life, problems, struggles, and status, we Bedans welcome one another with arms outflung.*

**FIRST THINGS FIRST:** Rest in peace, Uncle Phil. “We few. We happy few, we band of brothers. For he to day that sheds blood with me, shall be my brother.”

The student population of the College of Arts and Sciences can be considered small compared to other universities. The various departments in our college share the same building, classrooms, professors, and other facilities.

We few. We may be seen as few, but this is plenty enough for the Mighty Red School. Despite this, San Beda has been and remains more than just a footnote in Philippine society.

Icons in sports, media, entertainment, and politics (despite a few bad apples) have called the Lion’s Den their home. Members of a pride that embodies what we must be as Bedans.

We happy few. We happy few cherish the moments that bring us together with an extra sense of passion. Victories and setbacks in the NCAA are given great attention because we see what that student-athlete has been through in and out of the classroom.

Exam top-notchers and exemplary students are friendly faces that greet us with a smile on our way to the same classes that bring us sleep-less nights of frantic reviewing.

Proud alumni look on at us with the knowing feeling that we are living on what they have left for us.

We band of brothers. We band of brothers and sisters is currently in a state of disarray. Even with the shared nature of our college, we are compartmentalized. Interactions between departments are scarce, and friend groups find themselves only sticking to each other in and out of the University.

For he today that sheds blood with me, shall be my brother. For him and her who sit in the same classrooms as me, walk the same halls, and proudly sing one hymn; we now find ourselves facing a new horizon.

The ultimate equalizer is making its long-awaited return to the University. Even though it has a 2025-appropriate facelift, the essence of Integration remains the same.

A welcome to San Beda University, something that is much-needed for those who still don’t find this place as their second home.

Being welcomed home is not just accepting the walls that shelter us, it is knowing and loving the family that we become a part of.

To all of us who will experience Integration, use this time to reflect on what makes us Bedans. Use this time to fully immerse yourself in the culture and values that we share and uphold beyond the gates of Mendiola.

The thought of experiencing Integration may give us more questions than answers, it may spark fear rather than excitement, but let me share with you a piece of my heart.

We few. We happy few facing Integration are now brothers and sisters, fearing neither fire nor blood in the challenges that life throws at us.



# SPO RTS

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Photo by Rizian Veniz Balleta

## Season Pass proceeds awarded to Lady Red Smashers after historic title

▼ Rizian Veniz A. Balleta and Rcee Tenefrancia

**REAPING THE REWARDS** of their triumph, the San Beda Lady Red Smashers received a share of the proceeds from the alumni-driven Red Lions Season Pass Program, with the turnover ceremony attended by University Rector-President Rev. Fr. Aloysius Ma. A. Maranan, OSB last February 27.

This came about after the Lady Red Smashers dethroned the San Sebastian Lady Stags Badminton Team last December, making history by claiming their first-ever National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) title.

Recognizing their historic feat, Season Pass Program Director Ryu Policarpio and Red Lions team manager Jude Roque presented a Php100,000 check for the Lady Red Smashers, a portion from the Php2,000,000 funds raised during the Red Lions Season Pass Program.

The Season Pass Program was a fundraising effort powered by alumni and fans purchasing exclusive access to NCAA sporting events. Priced at Php20,000 per holder, the program sold all 100 allocations, successfully generating proceeds to support other sports programs in need.

Initially launched to support the Red Lions basketball team, the program has since broadened its commitment to San Beda’s athletics community, extending its benefits to multiple sports programs.

During the turnover ceremony, University Rector-President Rev. Fr. Aloysius Ma. A. Maranan, OSB, formally received the donation alongside the Lady Red Smashers and Coaches Ronald

and Rocky Magnaye, reinforcing the University’s ongoing commitment to athletic excellence.

Team Captain Isabella Pollentes, who is set to graduate this year, conveyed, “Being part of this team is a huge responsibility, but it’s also incredibly fulfilling. Winning the NCAA title was the culmination of years of sacrifices, adjustments, and perseverance. I cried; the whole team cried because that was our motivation all these years.”

Fr. Maranan also expressed, “We are so grateful to the group, especially for Ryu [Policarpio], for supporting and working their best to come up and achieve the purpose and goal of this project. And at this moment, we have gone beyond the expected result because we are not only supporting basketball, but right now, they have shared for the good of the women’s San Beda badminton team,” applauding everyone who contributed to such feat.

“The important thing is, we bring the fullness of the sports program that will really catapult San Beda to greater heights, not only for San Beda but also for our players, so that in their personal lives, they will truly be blessed,” Fr. Maranan added, expressing hope that this initiative will continue to benefit more student-athletes in the years to come.

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