

First Gentleman Arroyo to Become the First Filipino Cosmonaut? - MabuhayRadio

Written by Poet-pundit Fred Burce Bunao

Tuesday, 30 October 2007 01:21 - Last Updated Tuesday, 30 October 2007 01:39

"Bunaoisms" Column

There is an urgent crash program in the Philippines after the Malaysian Federation sent its first cosmonaut to space. After Dr. Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor, an orthopedic surgeon and university lecturer from Kuala Lumpur, touched down in Kazakhstan with two Russian cosmonauts, the Arroyo Dispensation embarked on a project to put a Filipino in the International Space Station. Why, if the Malaysians could do it, why can't the Filipinos?

Here is part of the story of the Malaysian pioneering spaceman: QUOTE. Shukor was selected from among 11,000 Malaysian candidates to fly aboard the ISS in a deal his government arranged as part of a \$1 billion purchase of Russian fighter jets. Shukor was returning to Earth from an 11-day trip to the [International Space Station](#) (ISS), accompanied by outgoing station commander Fyodor Yurichkin and flight engineer Oleg Kotov, who both completed 197 days in space. UNQUOTE.

To read the article in its entirety, please click on this link <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21437010/>

Is there truth to the rumor that First Gentleman Mike Arroyo has volunteered to become the first Filipino cosmonaut? As the news continued to spread like wildfire in Metro Manila, Opposition leaders welcomed the supposed volunteer work or plan of Atty. Arroyo.

In fact, there is an unconfirmed report that Minority Leader Sen. Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr., will introduce a resolution in the august hall of the Philippine Senate that would thank the First Gentleman for his efforts in putting the Philippines on the space map. It was reported also that the resolution would urge Mr. Arroyo to break the space record for staying at the International Space Station. It seems that the Philippine Opposition leaders want the First Gentleman to stay in space orbit until June 2010, just after the presidential election would have by then held. It was reported also that even the senators supporting blindly the President have agreed to urge the First Gentleman to accede to Senator Pimentel's group request to shoot for the space record in flight longevity. The pro-Arroyo senators refuse to admit, however, that the absence of the First Gentleman from the country (and Earth) would help the President avoid some controversies like the multimillion contracts with some Mainland-Chinese companies that some Philippine government entities entered into. Critics said that the First Gentleman was allegedly behind the

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no-public-bidding deals. The pro-Administration senators say reportedly that the International Space Station might be a perfect place for an "unofficial" exile for the First Gentleman.

There are, however, problems that the First Gentleman faces if he indeed shoots for the moon, oops, space. He may be too fat, oops, muscular for the Soyuz TMA-10 space capsule that he has to ride to reach the International Space Station. But Filipino physicians said that the rigorous training cosmonauts undertake would in fact help the First Gentleman shed off excess weight and be in perfect health, despite the heart-bypass surgery that he recently underwent.

In the meantime, critics of the Arroyo Administration are attempting to pass a petition that would make operational a suggestion that a www.mabuhayradio.com reader wrote in the "Users Comments" after the article, "How Iraq Can Solve America's Problems." To read the article, please click on this link <http://www.mabuhayradio.com/content/view/234/51/>

In the said article, a reader posted these comments: QUOTE. Iraq can solve also the problems of the Philippines. How about ending the Anti-Nepotism Law of the Philippines and sending First Gentleman Mike Arroyo as Philippine ambassador to Baghdad? And sending First Sons Mikey Arroyo and Dado (sic) Arroyo as Filipino consuls general to Tikrit and Basra? Perhaps we can send also the FG's brother, Cong. Iggy Arroyo, as trade attaché to Iraq. They should be sent to Iraq without any bullet-proof vests or armored cars -- and without bodyguards. UNQUOTE.

But then, as wags and pundits in the Filipino-American community and in Manila opine, the International Space Station may be a safer and more historic place to visit or work than Iraq. # #

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