

JGL Eye

By JOSEPH G. LARIOS

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Maria Venus Raj's Miss(ed) Opportunities

C HICAGO (*jGLi*) – My *kababayan* (region mate) Maria Venus Raj from the Bicol Region was an answer away from becoming the third Miss Universe from the Philippines but she just panicked big-time with her answer.

For her performance, I am adding an award to her as the “Miss Congeniality Universe” instead of just the fourth runner-up honors.

Venus Raj's Miss(ed) Opportunities - MabuhayRadio

Written by

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There was no doubt that many things must have been going on in her mind as she turned to face the question from actor and beauty-contest judge William Baldwin: "What is one big mistake that you've made in your life, and what did you do to make it right?"

And her answer: "You know what, sir? In my 22 years of existence, I can say there is nothing major, major, I mean problem that I have done in my life," said Venus Raj with a wide smile on her face, adding that she thought it was a "great questions."

There was no doubt that Miss Raj was under tremendous pressure of putting a brave face in the light of the tragedy that befell her best friend and mentor, 2009 Miss International semi-finalist Melody Gerbach, who died in an accident a few days before the pageant.

But for a cum laude graduate, Miss Raj was expected to do better than she did. As the Bible says, "for those much is given, much is expected" (<http://bible.cc/luke/12-48.htm>).

She should remember that as a contestant, she should be ready to answer "canned questions" with "canned answers" anytime.

The question posed on her was eliciting an answer that should inspire the youth, who look up to her as their role models.

NO READING OF HER MIRANDA RIGHTS, EITHER

Miss Raj should not be nervous with her answer because she was not being asked by a police or an inquest fiscal, who would arrest her if she gave a wrong opinion.

All she had to do was to remember one of her mistakes, revisit it on the spot and remember how she corrected her mistake and how she was able to avoid the same mistake.

She does not even have to mention her mistake.

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By telling Mr. Baldwin “there is nothing major, major, I mean problem that I have done in my life,” she suddenly went on a denial mode that speaks volume of her insincerity and her mental dishonesty.

She should have said, “like any human being, I am not perfect. I have had my shares of mistakes. But I make sure that after I reviewed my mistakes, I make sure that I will avoid the incidents that caused my mistakes.” That is all the judges and millions of viewers needed to hear from her.

The pageant also made a genius out of my friend, former Philippine President Joseph E. Estrada, who has been criticized for delivering gibberish English. As a result, Mr. Estrada has preferred to speak in his native Tagalog although Mr. Estrada speaks good English.

But in answering his critics, Mr. Estrada said the trouble with these Filipino Anglophones (English-speaking Filipinos), “akala nila ang pag-e-English ay ang kaisang-isang paraan na makakatulong sa problema ng ating bayan.” (They thought speaking English is the only key to solve the problem of a nation.)

“JOSEPH ESTRADA” EFFECT

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If you noticed during the pageant, Miss Mexico Jimena Navarrete needed an English translator posed on her by Olympic gold-medal figure skater and judge Evan Lysacek to answer the question: How she felt about unsupervised Internet use among the young people.

Miss Navarrete's answer: "I do believe that Internet is an indispensable, necessary tool for the present time," she said through an interpreter. "We must be sure to teach them the values that we learned as a family."

Without speaking English, Miss Mexico was able to deliver her message – the populist answer from a populist question and went on to win the 2010 Miss Universe.

She did not need English to win the coveted title. She only needed a lot of common sense that Mr. Estrada wanted to tell the English-loving Filipinos that is needed to solve the nation's problem. In this case, the winning Miss Universe's question. # # #

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