

## PERSONAL DAILY PHOTODOCUMENTATION REPORT OF EXPERIENCES/REFLECTIONS

(Submitted to MAAP President VAdm Santos,  
Head of Mission Capt. Torralba thru Cdr Cesista,  
N8 Head Capt Villa, N9 Col Parreno  
and NAVRESCOM Commo Millan)



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY and PERSONAL NOTES

This paper is not a technical or a formal report, rather a summary report with observations and reflections of my day to day activities thru photo documentation (photos speak a thousand words ) from November 25 to December 21, 2011, which I would like to share to my superiors who were responsible for making all these happen in my lifetime. All the activities were memorable and indeed a rewarding experience for me as reserve officer with a rank of Lieutenant Commander (LCDR). I was told that this was also first in the history of Philippine Navy that a reserve officer was allowed to participate in the LIMA 2011 Exhibit. Similarly, this was also my first time to have joined a Navy logistic vessel and to have travelled via ship in such a long period of time (almost a month). Throughout the long journey, I have learned and respect the organization, the unique set-up of the ship, the capability of the ship and its crew, the culture on board, the happy and sad side of the seagoing life. On board, I had reflected, participated, contributed, learned, bonded with co- crews thus made my life and the others productive, enjoyable and entertaining throughout our 26-day voyage.

I thank the good Lord for His Divine Intervention, made possible by his great creations (FOIC VADM Alexander Pama for his General Order, MAAP President Vadm Santos for his approval, N8 former Head Capt Mercado, N8 incumbent Head Capt Villa, N9 Col Parreno, N3 Capt Amba, NAVRESCOM Commo Millan, ViceCom RADM Cortez, Commo Tejada and LCDR Estrella for their recommendations). Special Thanks to FOIC Pama and ViceCOM Cortez, Head of Mission Capt Torralba, Ex-CO CDR Cesista, LC 550 CO CDR Arnel Teodoro, PS35 CO CDR Paba, LCDR Estrella for their admirable leadership. Now, the more I appreciate and admire my boss VAdm Eduardo Ma R Santos, AFP (former FOIC of the Philippine Navy) who once in his lifetime had assumed the respective roles of the above mentioned senior navy officers. Now I realized, why whenever senior officers passed by, everybody are in attention and always asked permission before entering, leaving or even in making statements. Indeed, it is very difficult to be a navy personnel, much more, handling sensitive and respectable position as LCDR, CDR, CAPT, COMMO, RADM, VADM and most especially being a FOIC. In my almost 26 days on board the ship, I have also learned that behind those great men in uniform, they are also great people with kind heart. It also validated my belief that those people place in high positions are placed in a position based on the disposition of their decision and are also blessed as they have certainly reach said position based on set criteria and most importantly– the will of the Lord due to important mission they have to accomplish.

My commendation also goes to the staff of CO Arnel Teodoro namely: Exec Officer Lt Jacob and to his seven officers namely: Operation Officer Lt Ayad, Deck Officer Landicho, Engine Officer Aclan, Gunnery Officer Lt Casamura, Mess Officer Ens Palancia, Supply Officer Lt Arabbi, Damage Control Officer Lt Laja I have observed their respect and adherence to the directives of the CO and have been actively reporting to EO and CO form time to time to keep the boss informed at all times. They have also been actively performing their respective line of duties. Whatever instructions or directives by the CO, they adhere to orders, aware that the CO has all the right due to Command responsibility because safety of the ship and its men are at stake. I also have learned a lot about their roles on board and was allowed to observe them in their actual duties.

I also realized the difficulty that one must undergo to reach the officers' ranks: rigid trainings, years of experience, series of tests undergone, and series of assignments accomplished (Physical, Mental, Intellectual, Emotional, Psychological, for the total Development of Navy Staff as gentleman and an officer. The others I may accomplish however, the physical aspect, I can never accomplish, hence will definitely quit and will not make it in Navy. Just glad that there is reservist program, for those who can contribute to the Philippine Navy in some other ways (even if I cannot be good in saluting, running, marching etc but can still wear the various smart Navy uniform with pride)

The more I appreciate the initial rank of LCDR bestowed upon me on May 5, 2005 (5-5-5). Indeed a great honor to be part of the Philippine Navy which I intend to keep and do good things for the Philippine Navy to live up to the privilege and honor provided me and to prove that the good decision of making me one of the reserve officer (thru former N9 head Capt Apostol, PN (Ret) and former NAVRRECOM head Col Ferrer in May 2005) and the honor to be part of the LIMA 2011 Phil contingent as per recommendations by Phil Navy Bosses which were considered by FOIC VAdm PAMA administration and approved by my Boss MAAP President, former FOIC, shall never be in vain. Just like what I have done for MAAP and other associations or institutions I am connected or have been connected with, I intend to come up with funded project proposals (Education and Training) as part of MAAP extension services initiatives for the Philippine Navy being its reserve officer, that is cost effective. This is to be noted by MAAP President who approves my participation at LIMA 2011, prior to submission to N8. This will be an **off-shoot of my participation to LIMA Exhibit 2011**. A seminar-workshop on the use of GIS Technology as a tool to enhance the decision making capacity of the navy **for a more relevant defense and security force** with my target for submission to N8 not later than end of January for implementation on **March 26-29,2012**.

I also value my Navy superiors, co-workers (already cited above) and new friends at LC 550 (Rev Fr Melchor Fernando, Lt Navarro, Capt/Dr Joan Cornista, Ltsg Dr. Aspiras, Lt Taguinod, Lt Villamora, Lt Antonio, Lt Flores and Lt Abiso, PO3 De Los Reyes etc too many to cite) and from PS35 (CO Cdr Paba and Dr. Karen Mosing). Likewise, my new international friends which I have gained from the Exhibit both in Langkawi and Lumut Malaysia who provided their respective brochures, business cards and company tokens. They are too many to mention but special mention to Ziggy and his family, the owner of D Aquarian Services for having toured me to and nearby towns namely Manjung etc and his wife Angelita a Filipina nurse, who cooked special Malaysian spaghetti, native dessert and had packed fresh durian, fruits like mangosteen, longgan and rambotan. The son also gave us T-shirts and stickers. Brought us also to supermarkets and dried goods stores for our pasalubongs. Malaysians are very much like Filipino in terms of hospitality and generosity. I hope that I may also have the opportunity to do the same for them or to other Malaysians in the very near future. It felt so good to be in a foreign country with such pleasant people who invited me, brought me to nice places particularly their home to feel Malaysian courtesy of the family.

My memory is never short. The good memories shall forever rekindle in my mind and heart. On official business, this 2011 **LIMA EXHIBITS** had made me a better Director for Research, reserved Officer of the Phil Navy and I believe has also further enhanced my total personality, widened my horizon and perspective in life:

With LIMA EXHIBITS as the acronym, let me briefly cite 12 insights:

**L LEARNED** the organization, facilities, military protocols, navy facilities and equipment, naval and merchant terminologies aboard naval warship and had accomplished the 7-page questionnaires as regards familiarization of the LC 550 (navy logistic support vessel). Most importantly learned new innovations in maritime and aerospace, needed for the modernization of Philippine Navy. Having learned on what to bring belatedly, my extra big luggage of civilian clothes and shoes that would last for a month with no need for laundry were not used on board, because only one luggage were used. Only three sets of uniforms were used as shown on photos for 26 days – Khaki, undress white and coverall navy blue. Only t-shirt, leggings and shorts are applicable to wear within the navy blue coverall. In Malaysia, only pants and no skirts were allowed for ladies. It's a big savings to work on board with no problem to wear, no accessories and with only one hairstyle.

**I INTERACTED or networked** with various kinds of people both local and international and gained new friends and contacts in the process which is good for global research as the institutions and people met came from varied institutions (local government agencies, educational sectors like universities and training institutions, business sectors and navy/police agencies etc)

**M MADE** another first as accomplishment in the history of my career as the first research director and reservist officer (LCDR) sent on a Philippine Navy vessel for a mission at LIMA 2011 and the first reservist to be a SHELLBACK. (Intended for highly selected Organic Navy Personnel as participants but in 2011, it was first time to include a reservist officer – Thanks to N8 for having recommended me and I also noticed that none from N8 organic navy personnel but there was organic navy representative from other units like N3, N1 etc, hence had ensured that their recommendation for my participation be considered)

**A ACCOMPLISHED** the seagoing officers logbook (thus recorded my steaming time). This was duly signed by the Commanding Officer as LCDR as proof of my active duty on Board the LC 550 (partly synonymous to shipboard training but this one is in a naval logistic support vessel not merchant ship).

**E EARNED** the SHELLBACK title after having passed the **zero equator** and had successfully undergone the usual navy ceremonies (with King Neptune and David Jones characters). A rare opportunity as I was told that not all Navy personnel are accorded such privilege and experience with a King Neptune certificate. Hence, an additional collection to my honors/awards. At MAAP, there are now two SHELLBACKS (VAdm Santos, the IDOL and me). According to those who had worked with Adm Santos as their FOIC, he was known in Philippine Navy as IDOL (meaning a man to emulate because of characteristics they idolize).

**X EXPERIENCED** tour of Malaysia for FREE inclusive but not limited to LIMA exhibition in Langkawi Island in Kedah Royal Malaysian Navy in Lumut at Perak and Kuala Lumpur, as an added bonus in addition to the experiences as an officer on board, wherein respect and treatment to an LCDR, even if just reservist has also been accorded to me with due courtesy and respect.

**H HANDLED** happily the task assigned to me in addition, instead of just being a mere observer or shiprider, I actually joined the ADT (actual duty training) to learn and experience new things that are being done by officers on board which were passionately accomplished as it was first, not part of my regular tasks. **Anything first is always exciting.**

**I IMPRESSED** with how the navy vessel with 262 men on board was manned not by a master mariner but by a Commanding officer with a rank of Commander (a Professional Engineer not a BSMT graduate), how the officers of LC 550 with its Executive Officer Lt Jacob worked as a team and report to the CO timely so he be kept informed at all times. When the radar bogged down, the engineer immediately was able to repair it and make it functional. Also witnessed that the order of the CO was followed in toto and where in look out for the logs that are scattered on sea, to avoid these to reach the ship's propeller. I salute: Head of Mission Capt Torralba, Ex CO Cdr Cesista, LC 550 CO Cdr Teodoro and PS 35 CO Cdr Paba, my superiors for the entire 26-days journey with them.

**B BECAME** more appreciative of the Navy (local and international) as a unique profession or career and admire the more those with the ranks of LCDR, CDR, COMMO, RADM, VADM and FOIC, positions earned and accorded only to selected few and appreciate the initial rank of LCDR accorded to me. For the first time in my life, felt what it was to be an LCDR for 26 days, having accorded the same due respect and treatment as an organic navy personnel.

**T TRAINED** with NOBC trainees on the following: 3 types of communication namely SEMAPHOR, FLASHING LIGHT and FLAG HOIST, PLOT CHARTING of the ship etc. I have learned to navigate. and can compute the position of the ship.

**S SNAPSHOTS** with Dignitaries and CEOS as well as the booths and places I had been (my gratitude to **PO3 De Los Reyes, official photographer of PN**, having been assigned in my team When he learned that my boss was his former FOIC, he was always ready to snapshots the various memorable moments even my funny and senior moments within and outside the vessel , so felt I was a FOIC as my team ( e.g. **PO3 Ballenas, PO3 Perdon , Ens Pormiento** helped me carry my bags and all the brochures / gifts /tokens provided to me and to them by each of the 60 companies visited at their respective booths.

For every great opportunity, there is a corresponding responsibility that goes with it. Hence, this is my pledge. Being grateful, deserving, confident and motivated as I am, the amazing privileges and opportunities granted me by MAAP and the Phil Navy shall serve as reminder and driving force for me to do good and to do better to the best of my capabilities and thru God's help and overflowing grace. Indeed this once in a lifetime rare and unique experience shall serve as my inspiration to be a productive and nurturing human being as God's instrument for His greater honor and glory. I saw and felt God's power and love in this 26-day journey and words are not really enough to express them.

## INTRODUCTION

Ably led by head of mission (HOM) Capt. Virme P. Torralba, I, **Lcdr Angelica Baylon, PN (Res.) had the privilege and honor to join the** Philippine Navy (PN) contingent composed of 262 officers and enlisted personnel (from the Naval Education and Training Command, Fleet Training Center, Philippine Navy Auxiliary Reserve Unit, Naval Modernization Office, Naval Doctrines Office, and the Naval Special Operations Group ) dubbed as Naval Task Group 80, under the operational control of the Fleet-Marine Ready Force (FMRF ) **Commander, Commodore Jaime S. Bernardino** who organized the send-off ceremonies with **FOIC Vadm Alexander Pama as GOH and Speaker** at the Capt Salvo Pier, Naval Base Heracleo Alano, Sangley Point, Cavite City.

Transported by the PN's Jacinto Class Patrol Vessel (BRP Emilio Jacinto – PS35) and one Logistic Support Vessel (BRP DAGUPAN CITY – LC 550), after the send –off ceremonies on **Nov. 26, 2011**, we (262 officers and enlisted personnel) immediately had sailed off to Langkawi, Malaysia. Acknowledged by the Royal Malaysia Navy (RMN), the **Philippines was the first to arrive** in Langkawi Malaysia on **Dec 5, 2011**.

From **Dec. 6-10,2011**, we actively participated in the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace (LIMA) Exhibition 2011 wherein a series of conferences, exhibitions and demonstrations were participated by international exhibitors immediately followed the opening ceremony.

Indeed, LIMA 2011 series of exhibition has proven once again, as an excellent platform for aerospace and maritime manufacturers and related industries that displayed and promoted the latest aerospace technology to senior government officials, both civil and military and leaders of industries all over the Asia Pacific Region. It has uniquely showcased both the aerospace and maritime industries in these fast-expanding Asian commercial aviation, airport and defense markets. Aside from witnessing recent technological advancements, LIMA had been an avenue of cultural exchange, training opportunity and learning experience for us and all the international participants.

### 1st Day – November 25, 2011 (Friday)

#### Approval as LIMA 2011 Participant and Boarding at LC550

Reported to MAAP President ( Vadm Eduardo Ma R Santos, AFP (Ret) the former FOIC of PN, recent accomplishments at the DRES and succeeding plans and coordination done on research with external agencies that would form part of MAAP accomplishments on research - and extension services under his good leadership. Then with the 5 minutes allotted to me (considering that time of the Boss is very limited), I finally reached the final important objective with a question to the Boss *“Sir, if in case my name is included in the General Order Approved by FOIC Pama (from Nov 25- Dec 17) as one of the participants in the LIMA Exhibit 2011, will he approved ?* The President said yes provided that the order by FOIC be shown to him and other supporting documents because there should be clearance from both the Philippines and Malaysia. The problem is that PLDT is not working hence MAAP has no internet connection and FAX not functional. With hope that my LIMA participation will merit kind approval from the boss, I prayed and coordinated with various agencies N8, N9 and NAVRESCOM. However all big bosses at PN were having meetings and only received texts belatedly, hence coordination was done with the respective ensign on duties thru personal mobile phone and smart broadband. Thanks to **Ens Roxas and Ens Pascual** for all the needed supporting documents that were emailed on **Nov 25, 2011** which formed part as attachments to my request letter for official business as MAAP DRES Director and PN reserve officer. Finally, on my third attempt and visit to the office in the afternoon of the same day, I finally receive his precious signature of approval on my accomplished OB form request. I was so happy and can only utter thank you to MAAP President a couple of times until I went out of his office and immediately left MAAP Bataan. Drove and passed by Louise Restaurant in Balanga Bataan in connection with the **Bataan University Town Fellowship Dinner** hosted by the Provincial office. Handed the MAAP Certificate of Appreciation and token to the **Balanga City Administrator Rudy Mesa** as he was in Singapore when MAAP President hosted the post AM-FUF Evaluation Committee Meeting at MAAP.



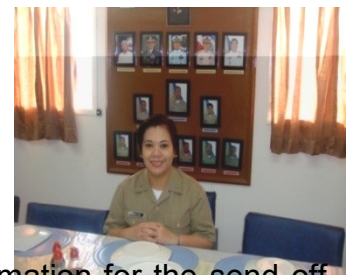
### 2<sup>nd</sup> Day -November 26, 2011 (Saturday) ( Sangley Cavite)

#### Send-off Ceremonies and Departure

Arrived at Sangley Cavite early in the morning via NAVRESCOM Service and had breakfast at the navy warship Bacolod City LC 550's wardroom. Met **Lt Flores** and learned house rules, protocols and wardroom etiquette like *“Permission to enter the wardroom Sir and Request permission to join the table Sir and one will not eat unless the Senior officer starts etc”*



Thru the kind suggestion of Lt Sandra Laja, Ens Baldovisa accompanied me to buy other navy accessories (white belt, Athletic uniform, Navy Cap). The rest are not available, nevertheless I am grateful for the following: Lt Pebbles Navarro for lending me her over-all navy blue uniform (Ens Margo Casamura also offered to lend) and Lt. Laja for her white shoes.



Listened to the instruction for all shipriders and practice the formation for the send-off ceremonies Met and had the opportunity to talk to other former Commanding officers of Navy vessels like CO Teodoro, Cdr Cesista, Capt Villa, Capt Alano, Capt Amba etc.



**Send-off ceremony.** It was announced the importance of LIMA 2011 exhibit which initially the Philippines participation for 2011 was almost not push through but finally is realized, even in a week short notice due to the efficient coordination by concerned staff with the General Order signed by FOIC Pama only on the **evening of Nov 25.**

The GOH and Speaker FOIC VAdm Alexander PAMA, PN greeted each and every one of the participants. When FOIC was trooping the line and had reached my line, he said that it was good that Vadm Santos approved my participation. My response was, *“very grateful to you Sir for having considered me in the list. He approved Sir because the General Order comes from FOIC VAdm PAMA and my boss Adm Santos supports any activities that the PN deems needed and necessary and also for the professional growth of its MAAP staff.”* FOIC congratulated me and extended his warm regards and thanks to VAdm Santos.

Photo with the **Head of Mission Capt Torralba**



(L-R Ltsg Dental Dr. Aspiras, Ltsg Flores. Me, Capt Medical Dr. Joan Cornista, Lt Col Fr Melchor Fernando and Head of Task Group Cdr Cesista.

Fixed things and familiarize with some protocol within and outside the wardroom, bridge etc. The LC 550 Exec Officer Lt Jacob upon instruction of CO Cmdr Teodoro handed me a **7-page questionnaire Ship Familiarization** with an instruction to fill-up all the blanks provided to familiarize myself about the ship ( PN Logistic Support Vessel ).

The questionnaires have been accomplished which contained my answers as regards LC 550: **Ship's Characteristics, Compartmentation, Deck Fitting and Equipment, Weapons, Engineering, Operations, Mess and Supply and Organization.** After my 26-day participation onboard, EO Lt Jacob and CO Cdr Teodoro had signed my seagoing officers' logbook **on December 21, 2011** at the port of Sangley, Cavite where the Bacold City LC 550 docked.

Photo shows the **seagoing officers logbook** being handed by LC550 CO Cdr Teodoro., which must be accomplished on board the LC550. I must be ready and prepared for all the activities on board.

Also on photo was Head of Mission Capt Torralba.





**3<sup>rd</sup> Day- November 27, 2011 (First Sunday of Advent)**  
**1st Sunday Mass on Board the LC 550 Mark 13:33-37**  
**“Need for Watchfulness”**

**Rev. Fr. Melchor Fernando** emphasized Adventus – Advinere which means coming as this first Sunday of Advent invites us to look back with gratitude to the Lord’s first coming, the incarnation, God becoming man like us and at the same time, invites us to look forward in HOPE, for his second coming as He promised. While waiting, we must stay vigilant, responsible and be prepared at all times. He cited classical examples like

Manny Paquio and May Weather who remained champions because of their preparation and being vigilant at all times. Making sure they are physically, mentally, psychologically and spiritually prepared in all their fights. In the same manner, he said, our



**Phil Contingent must also be vigilant, responsible, disciplined and be prepared in showing and doing goodwill in Malaysia as an ambassador of our country.** Photo above shows LCDR Baylon, PN (Res), for the gospel reading and seated was LTCol Fr Mechor Fernando, PN. The **Head of Mission Capt Torralba** after the mass was also called to deliver his message to all the participants.

He express his high hopes for the success of the mission and reiterated the homily of the chaplain for all of us to be vigilant and prepared as the success of the mission call for the active participation by all of us carrying the name of the PN as part of the Philippine contingent .

Attended a briefing conducted and led by **Cdr Cesista** for Task Group Heads (former CO of 2009 LIMA) on what are expected of us. He said that the cut of time for reporting is 3pm everyday so that the HOM and the incumbent CO of the ship may be aware of the status of the ship at all times. We were also advised to come up with our respective daily journal of activities.



**Photo** From L-R: LCDR Estrella, CO Cdr Teodoro, ExCO Cdr Cesista, Ltjg Arabbi, LCDR Baylon, HOM Capt Torallba, Ltsg Dr Aspiras, Ltsg Navarro, LtCol Fr Fernando, Capt Dr Cornista, Ltjg Retaga and Ltsg Flores.

**4<sup>th</sup> Day –November 28, 2011 (Monday)**

**Ship Familiarization on Bridge:** Went to the Bridge and familiarized with the various people responsible on Deck. There were 8 namely: Officer on Watch (OOW), Bosun Mate Watch (BMW), Trottell man, Steerman or Helmsman, Quarter Master, Radar Watch, Radio man and port /starboard lookout). Photos show, I had familiarized with the various equipment on deck. There was **NO Captain or Master Mariner**. Learned that in the Navy, it is the **Commanding officer (CO)** who man the navy vessel. Very impressive when I learned that the CO is not a BSMT graduate but an Engineer with a rank of Commander in the Philippine Navy. Also learned that my Seaman’s book which was **renewed on Nov 22, 2011** by MARINA, has **of no use** in the navy ship as they are using the **Seagoing officer’s logbook** that documents their steaming duties. When entering the Bridge *“Permission to lay up the bridge Sir or lay down the bridge Sir”*



**Noted the captain's order for the day,**  
*Keep an alert and fast watch. Read, understand and adhere with the Captain's Night stand order. We are now transversing on the seas of Sabah, North Borneo Island*



*These places are famous for floating logs hence assure that your lookouts are properly doing their jobs. Be cautious when challenged by Malaysian authorities although we are sailing an international waters. The BMW and AOW to inspect their Area of Responsibilities (AOR) every 30 minutes, give emphasis to safety of ships especially the floating logs. Happy sailing and be safe always. CO CDR Teodoro in all journey, implored God blessings for the BRP Bacolod City under*

his command responsibility. **Witnessed** also the turn over of duties to the next team every 4 hours. Then, I lay up the Bridge after dinner to observe if the orders of the Captain that day were properly carried out. Indeed there logs seen floating and the ships were able to change its course to avoid the floating logs which can harm the ship if its propeller is hit . **Photo shows** with LC 550 CO CDR Teodoro on radio , talking with PS 35 CO CDR Paba asking the condition of the lady doctor who suffered seasickness and was on dextrose. Kiddingly CO of PS35 said " ok ciya , *Inubos niya ang baon niyang dextrose* ( She is fine consuming all the dextrose and medicines she brought ). He was just making fun of the situation . A **humorous story** during the long



### **5<sup>th</sup> Day –November 29, 2011 (Tuesday)**

#### **Ship Familiarization on Engine**

Learned that there is no Chief Engineer. Engine room is also ably led by Engr./ Officer Lt Aclan.



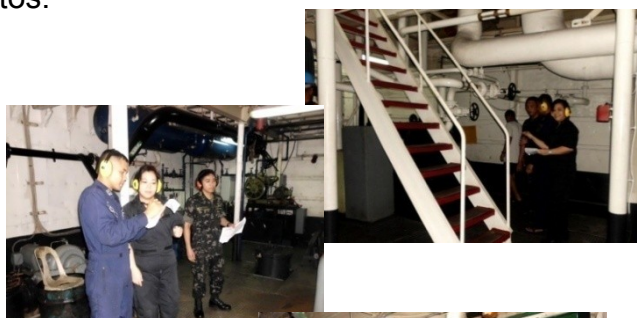
journey on board to make us laugh,





Along with the two observers, we had familiarized ourselves at the Engine Room and took photos.

**Entrance to the Bow Throster** with stairs going down to the Engine Control Room (ERC) and the various Engine Equipments and Machineries (hot and noisy), except the ERC (with air condition)



**Main Auxiliary Starboard**



**Ballast Pumps**



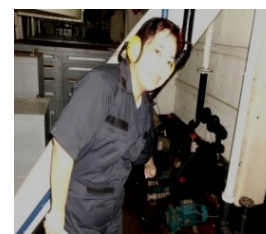
**Saltwater pumps**



**Putting Chemical**



**Sewage Treatment**



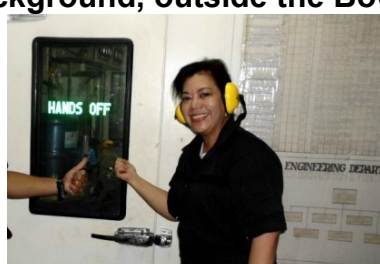
**Purifier- Fuel (2) and Lube**



**Inside the Engine Room Control with ERC Engineering Officer Lt Aclan**



**Outside the Engine Room Control Bow Ramp as the Background, outside the Bow throster**



### Bow ramp throster



### Bow Ramp motor



Attended the lecture and communication exercises led by **Ltjg Annonuevo**. Starting with **Semaphor**, **Flag Hoist** and in the evening was **Flashing light** .Joined demonstration of Semaphor signaling with **NOBC students**



In the evening, observed at **Deck**. Photos with Exec Officer Lt Jacob and Lt Laja



### **6<sup>th</sup> Day- November 30, 2011 (Wednesday)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Mass for the November celebrants Mathew 4:18-22 (gospel reading) "The Call of the First Disciples"**



**Rev Fr. Melchor Fernando** cited what Jesus said "*Come after me and I will make you fishers of men*". In one way or another, he said, we too have been called by our Lord. Some are called to be skipper or Commanding officer of the ship. Another is as Head of Mission and we also have our task group Commander, Medical, Dental officer or our sailors, crew members, shipriders/observers of the Langkawi Maritime and Aerospace 2011 Exhibition. We may not have sophisticated vessel and equipment to display, he said, nevertheless the Lord is not asking us to do spectacular accomplishments. We just have to carry our cross or responsibilities assigned to us as an ambassador of our country in this mission. Just remember we are called and chosen by the Lord for this mission. He also offered the **mass for the November Birthday Celebrants (Cdr Cesista and 4 others)**.



After the mass, the **Head of Mission Capt Torallba** in his message reiterated the message in the gospel and quoted some advise from. **Rev Fr Fernando** and reminded as the **Dos and Dont's in Malaysia** so us to be guided as we are representing not only ourselves individually but the entire PN contingent, hence we must observe proper decorum at all times.



We shared snacks (nilagang saba and freshly cooked rice cake) while watching the **practice of the Philippine contingent presentations** for LIMA 2011 ( led by the Marine core band and cultural dance presentation by the PMMA new graduates (NOBC) currently undergoing training on board BP 550.

Also **joined the singing** with the BRP 550 officers and marine corp band (Joined Cdr Cesista and Ltjg Estrella, Rev Fr Teodoro and Ltsg Flores etc)



Attended the **lecture of the plotting exercise experts** led by **Cdr Cesista** , Ltjg Taguinod



**Plotting exercise** is a tool to see the overall surface air, underwater and air selection. It assists in the control of surface, direct air weapons and to navigation. Learned as well the functions of plotters etc which is interesting but need to be done otherwise, might forget (though I have saved the lectures on my computer in case needed in the future, a few review with contact numbers of my trainers will refresh the lectures learned).

Went to the Bridge and observe the **Flag hoist exercise** with the PS 35 patrol vessel with the NOBC students (trainer was **Lt Annonuevo** of 1<sup>st</sup> CI Annonuevo, MAAP brother



class 2012)- photo





### 7<sup>th</sup> Day -December 1, 2011 (Thursday)

My First Callisthenic Day (for physical fitness of the ship riders led by Cdr Cesista, PN with the SWAG team led by Lt Villamora as the lead trainer for “Kalas Buto”



### Meeting of LIMA Task Force Officers

This was conducted in the afternoon. Presided by **Cdr Cesista**, he presented the agenda to the Head of **Mission Capt Torralba** namely: Schedule of events, status of provisions, health concerns, preparation for Langkawi, list of attendees and participants (maximum of 60 including officers), usherettes for the



**Ltjg Bob Antonio** presented the schedule of events. He and **Ltjg Taguinod** were assigned as guide of the Royal Malaysia Navy (RMN) protocol officer, who may brief the officers of the various activities expected at Langkawi. **Capt Torralba** instructed the team to prepare the talking points with the protocol officer for PN guidance like: activities that are optional and/or required for all to attend, restrictions, dos and donts, positions of the ships, possible participation of PN band vis-à-vis other bands present, contact numbers etc and provide billeting to the RMN protocol in case he may opt to stay with the PN contingent in the entire duration of the activity, although in previous years, the RMN protocol officer was fetched by his co-officers from other participating ships.

**Capt Torralba** also provided instruction to all concerned to require the students/trainees to write reaction papers, to collect brochures. Information and needed data and take pictures which shall be consolidated to form part of the report.



**Ltjg Antonio** also shared that lunch time in Malaysia is at 1300H; hence, PN Contingent may have the option to bring money for lunch, or go back to the LC 550 for lunch. **Capt Torralba** advised that there should be proper accounting of PN contingent everyday. **Capt Cesista** said that can be finalized once we have determined from the RMN protocol officer the transportation schedule because there is no other place that PN contingent to go. **Capt Cesista** suggested that everyone should maximize their stay productively while in Malaysia

In the entire duration of stay at Langkawi from Dec 5- 10, all shall be wearing white (pants, and the ETD on Dec 12 for Lumut is 1800H. The attire in Lumut would be Khaki Navy uniform and undress white for the dinner in the evening

The following updates were reported by the following: **Mess officer Palencia** reported that the food provision could last until Dec 25, hence no problem. Capt Torralba suggested to involve the other two reservists being cooks at merchant shipping, in the enhancement of food preparation. Cdr Cesista asked for the status of the food and suggested to prepare the menu in accordance with the easy to perish foods like fish/vegetables with meat as the last having a longer shelf life when frozen. **Executive officer Jacob** reported the status of the fuel with still 1.014,000 liters The LC 550 consumed 500-600 liters/hour (inclusive of the machineries/equipment of the vessel) enough to last the entire duration of the voyage and that the patrol vessel PS35 can be refueled by LC550. There is also no problem with the machineries **Capt Joan Coronista**, the medical doctor reported that there were no problem with the students/trainees However probably due to temperature changes. 6 consulted with minor health problems The Weather conditions is fine according to operation officer **Lt Ayad** and that he will be checking the weather forecast daily and update the task group.

Went to the bridge in the evening to observe once again. **Photo with NOBC trainees and officers:** Lt Laja, Lt Palencia, Lt Casamura and Ens. Peralta



**8<sup>th</sup> Day -December 2, 2011 (Friday) passed the Singapore Strait – busiest port**

Observed at the Bridge in the morning. **On photo** was Head of Mission Capt Torralba and at center Cdr Cesista, the former Commanding Officer of LC 550 for LIMA 2011 The Commanding Officer (Cdr Teodoro) by the minute was checking the status of the vessel LC 550 – the speed, the course, mark heading, course overground etc. Everyone was on the lookout and working as a team in the Singapore Strait (busiest port).



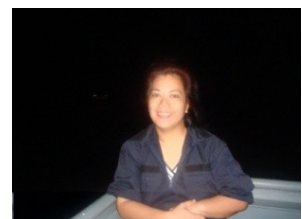
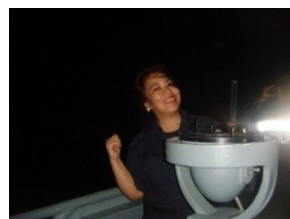
When CO (synonymous to Master Mariner) gave a directive “Steady Course 267”, the Helmsman or steerman repeated the directive “ Steady Course 267 aye aye Sir” which the CO acknowledged by saying “very well”, while the others are also providing reports by the minute to keep the CO properly informed at all times.

When the CO Teodoro, between 9 to10 am, learned that the Harbour Pilot in Singapore is a friend , he suggested that I may greet him on the radio communications (Channel 16 and 20) to be able to greet good morning to a good friend in Singapore (Harbour Pilot) just to be known that I was passing the Singapore Strait with the Philippine contingent as I said *“Singapore Pilot, Singapore Pilot, This is Phil Navy Warship LC 550. Please acknowledge over, When Acknowledged, I send my respect and greet-*



In the evening, the X band radar bogged down. It was good that on board was an efficient electro technician in the person of **PO3 Pangan**, who repaired and made the radar functional once again.

Observed on duty at night on the bridge. The ever efficient **CO Teodoro** and his executive Officer Jacob was again on bridge checking the status of the vessel. Commendable as well was the **operation head Ayad** and his three expert men under him namely: **SM1 Pascual**, the chief quarter master who is expert on plotting the course (measuring the longitudes and latitudes) and encoding the same on to the computer (GPS), **PO2 Cofirme**, the chief radar man and **PO3 Quima**, the chief radio officer responsible for the communications.



## 9<sup>th</sup> Day December 3, 2011 (Saturday)

Its Callisthenic day once again (every Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday for physical fitness).



**The 4<sup>th</sup> Mass** offered in celebration of the 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BRP LC-550 is for the faithful. (Fr Melchor mentioned me as major (LCDR) Angelica who he observes as very happy to be included along with the organic personnel as shipriders for the 2011 LIMA Exhibit)

## Mathew 9:35-10:1 5a6-8 “The Twelve are sent”



The chaplain pointed out that after the 8 days of journey of LC 550, we must be at home, feeling “Bagus” (Malaysian term meaning good) and be with one with the vessel (pag maalon – swing with the ship and pagkalmado– enjoy the sail) and so with gratitude to the captain of the vessel and its crew as we celebrate the 18<sup>th</sup> B-day of LC 550, we thank God in this Mass today. Fr Fernando provided a brief well-researched history of LC550 such as: In 1991- LC 550 was built by Moss Point Marine Inc at Escatapua Missipi, USA thru FMS ( Foreign Mission Sales), in 1993 July 1st was its Christening at Missisipi ( BRP Bacolod City) and on 25 Sept, it departed from Missisipi so that on 03 Dec 1993– she was committed to the PN with serial LC 550 assigned service force Phil Fleet .We were de-



lighted to hear that LC 550 had rendered numerous services such as : 1. Goodwill tours to 8 countries including Malaysia 2. Sail lift Transport Mission, military exercises, disaster relief operation to all Phil Ports of call. Hence, due to these good services in the Phil Navy, the ship was awarded .



## Kahusayan Award “ K Award”

The chaplain reiterated that we are thankful and salutes the 28 skippers, officers, crew members, sailors who in one way or the other have contributed for the maintenance of this vessel through her 18 years service in our country. At present, he said, the LC 550 is outstandingly manned by 9 officers headed by Cdr Teodoro and 66 EP (enlisted personnel) – and had enjoined us to give them a round of applause as we sang Happy Birthday to LC 550. Rev Fr Fernando also prayed for the December birthday celebrants led by LC 550 Supply Officer Lt Arabbi. The CO Capt Teodoro was called to speak and spoke highly of the 18<sup>th</sup> year old BRP LC 550 and its accomplishments (awarded: **PN Service of the year Kahusayan Award “Award ”**) for good services





After the mass, all shipriders shared the nilagang kamote and saba and joined the marine corp band in singing as they practice for the Philippine contribution at LIMA 2011 fellowship night in Langkawi Malaysia.



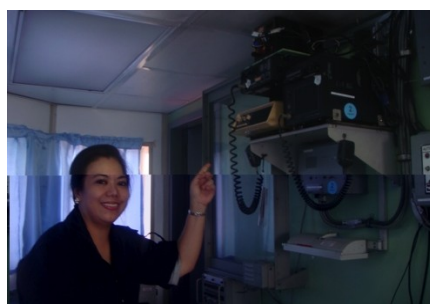
Capt Torralba also sang with the Marine Quartet band while Lcdr Estrella, Fr Lt Col Melchor and myself joined.



1500H, was the firefighting drill with NOBC students. Observed that the Damage Control Officer Lt Laja supervised the fire training Drill



Once again lay up the bridge to observe  
The CO efficiently manned the vessel with all the duty under his command



**10<sup>th</sup> Day- December 4, 2011 (Sunday) - Safe Arrival at 0900H at Porto Malai Langkawi Malaysia and First Joint Mass of LC550 and PS 35**

***As it was my first time in Malaysia, then a brief information would be of help***

The **Type of Government** is Federated Constitutional Monarchy, the Religion is predominantly Sunni Muslim (60%), Hindu, Buddhism & Christianity, the **population** is 25 million, ethnicities: Malays, Bumiputra, Chinese and Indian, the **currency** is Malaysian Ringgit (1RM= Php13.00) but in Malaysia as **Php 16 = 1RM** and the **languages** are Bahasa Melayu, English, Mandarin Chinese and Tamil.

Some **Useful Phrases in Bahasa Melayu** that I familiarized myself and which I had used in Malaysia were as follows: **Selamat Pagi** - "Good Morning", **Selamat Petang** - "Good afternoon/evening, **Selamat Malam** – "Good Night", **Apa Khabar?** "How are you?", **Khabar Baik** – "I'm fine", **Ya** – "Yes", **Tak** – "No", **Bagus** – "Good", **Mari Makan** – "Let's eat", **Berapa** -"How much", **Di mana tandas?** – "Where is the rest room?", **Bila** – "When?", **Maafkan Saya** – "I'm sorry/ Excuse me", **Selamat Tinggal**–"Goodbye".

Langkawi is known as the "*Jewel of Kedah*". It comprises a group of 99 tropical islands lying off the northwestern coast of Peninsular Malaysia, about 30Km from Kuala Perlis and 51Km from Kuala Kedah on the mainland. Main island is known as Pulau Langkawi. The islands are shrouded with an intriguing heritage of myths and legends that features ogres and gigantic birds, warriors and fairy princesses, battles and romance. Langkawi has been accorded the geopark status by UNESCO for its beautiful geographical heritage of stunning landscapes, karts, carves, sea arches, stacks, glacial drop stones and fossils. With a geological history dating back 500 million odd years, the islands contain unique rock formations that imagination and baffle the mind. **Langkawi** is from the old Malay meaning "eagle". Langkawi is one of the most popular resort and tourist destinations in Malaysia. Some of the popular places to go would be the Duty Free Stores, the LIMA Expo and Eagle Rock for some hiking.

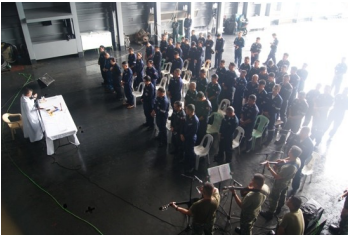
We were guided by the following dos and don'ts in Malaysia: **Do's: (Do be polite, greet people and always be the first to offer shake hands when meeting a superior when the occasion allows it., Do remove shoes or slippers when entering houses, Do be patient when dealing with Malaysians, Do try to bargain when buying and pay and receive money with your right hand, Do check warranty and quality of electronics when buying , Do be in time, Malaysians value punctuality and Do be careful with personal items/security )** and **Don'ts:** Don't greet people "assalamualaikum" if you are not Muslim, Don't talk about politics or Religion, Don't point in your index finger, Don't start arguments or fight, Don't drink alcohol in Public Don't be involved in illegal drugs, foreigners are not immune to death penalty, Don't be too suave with Muslim Women, Don't shake hands or touch Muslim Women, Don't touch people's head **and** Don't go to red districts **Philippines was first from participating nations** to arrive in Langkawi Malaysia which Malaysia acknowledged. We wear in Khaki uniform to man the rail. PS 35 patrol vessel at the background with Lt Arabbi and Dr. Capt Joan Cornista. Also photo with the marines (Quartet Band), the other in his technical uniform is Lt Dr Aspiras, Dentist.





**4th<sup>rd</sup> Mass (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent)- PM-Joint LC 550 and PS 35 mass for safe arrival at Langkawi Island, Mark 1: 1-18 “John the Baptist Prepares the Lord’s Way”**

In the Gospel Message, Fr. Fernando said, we heard the voice of John in the wilderness calling us “*prepare the way of the Lord , make straight His paths*”. This simply means according to the chaplain – conversion or change of heart (mula sa matigas na puso, walang awa na puso, towards makatao, maawain, mapagmahal at makadiyos na puso). He also said that sometimes our life is like a desert: meaningless, lifeless, because of sin and pride, but we can make it a garden or bed of roses by listening to the voice of God in our hearts, by change of heart and attitude, by doing our duties and responsibilities as officers and men and women of PN, by observing discipline and respecting the culture of Malaysia. In this way our life becomes meaningful as ambassadors and representative of our country.



We were invited and toured at the **PS 35 patrol vessel by its CO CDR Paba**. We had brewed coffee. We also received each a Phil navy magic mug with me getting a bonus PN small plate that goes with the mug. Also appreciated the **King Neptune certificate by CDR Paba** being a Shellback and how we wish to also pass by the equator zero soon to be ta Shell-

back ! **Photo shows** us at the wardroom, me holding the Shellback certificate of CDR Paba, wishing to have similar certificate soon, my titanic pause at the PS35 light tower, our group photo holding our PN mugs (Its magic– with coffee, you will see the Navy building photo, but after you finished the coffee, the mug turned black) and the photo of newly caught fresh besugo by one of its crew. .

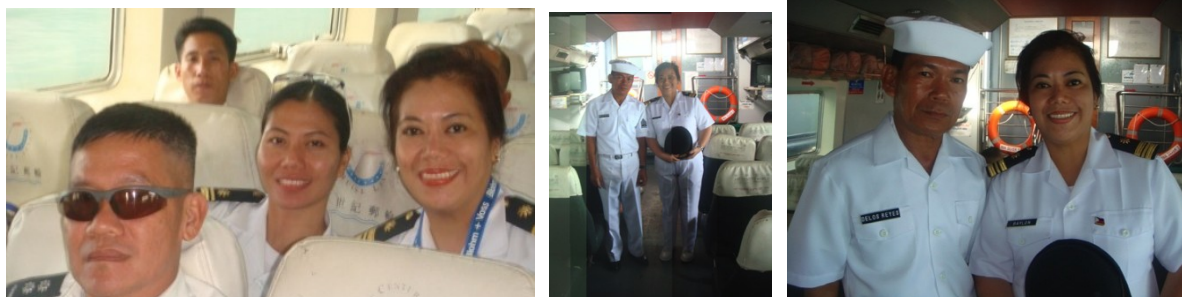


**11<sup>th</sup> Day - December 5, 2011 (Monday)**

We fixed all our uniforms for the week so we shall be ready for all the activities for LIMA 2011 glad to have Ms Navarro around who helped me fixed my uniforms., taught me proper way of ironing clothes and pinning the pins , saluting etc. Fixed all things and to do activities at LIMA based on programme of activities and tasks assigned by the Head of Mission for LIMA 2011 exhibit. Using Malaysian sim card, informed my love ones and close friends of my contact number in Malaysia .Got response from loved ones that they missed me , which I am sure as I also missed them.

## **12<sup>th</sup> Day Dec 6, 2011 (Tuesday -Opening Ceremonies at LIMA 2011)**

**NOTE:** For the December 6- 9, 2011– 4-day LIMA Exhibit 2011  
(30-page separate report has been prepared)



Aboard the Malaysian Ferry - Rev Fr LtCol Fernando with shades and Lt Navarro, the other is with PO3 De Los Reyes, Official PN photographer

### **Awana Porto Malai Langkawi**

Noted for its Mediterranean architecture and as a terminal for ocean going cruise ships, features a hotel, restaurants and shops lining the waterfront as well as a small marina. Several sailing and boating charters operating from the marina and sunset cruises around nearby islands were particularly observed.



### **Witnessed live action on Langkawi Island !**

Langkawi has an excellent reputation as a world-class venue for international sporting events and I am glad to be one of the thousands participants/spectators/observers who caught and experienced these pulsating events live!

**The Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA)** is held in Langkawi every two years. The main attraction of this event are the high tech military hardware and equipment on display. The exhibition is held in December and goes on for a week. Please see [www.limamaritime.com.my](http://www.limamaritime.com.my), [www.langkawiregatta.com](http://www.langkawiregatta.com) and [www.rmir.com](http://www.rmir.com) for details.

**The Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre (MIEC)** is a popular venue for international events It also one of the largest exhibitions and convention centres in Malaysia. It is strategically located in Padang Matsirat near the Langkawi International Airport At the Exhibit for Dec 6-9, 2011, LCDR Baylon was assigned as **team leader** for the group of 11. My group is composed of: **LtCol Fr Fernando, Capt Cornista, Ltjg Navarro, Lt Villamora, SN1 Ballenas, SN1 Perdon, PO3 Ramos, PO2 Delos Reyes, PO2 Millete, FN1 Yaob and PO3 Canite**. The other group is led by LCDR Estrella, PN,

**Photo below shows group photo with Capt Tejada (at the Center)** from left to right : Lt Villamora, Ensign, Reservist PO3 Canite, SN1 Perdon, **Capt Tejada**, me (LCDR Baylon), Capt Medical Doctor Cornista. Lt Navarro, LtCol Fr Melchor Fernando, Reservists PO3 Ramos and SN1 Ballenas (PN photographer Chief Julian De Los Reyes took the photo). **Other photos at the registration site**



**Photo sat the counter and Inside the standard room at Hotel Awana, Porto Mala**



The cheapest rate is RM 862/night during the LIMA 2011 exhibit (at low peak season, rate is RM 262only - lesson is to have your reservations before the scheduled LIMA 2011 to avail of the lowest rate)

### **13<sup>th</sup> Day - December 7, 2011 (Wednesday –LIMA Exhibit and Kuah Town)**

After the Exhibit, went to Kuah Town with my team and bought some duty free goods for pasalubongs

**At Wira Gaya Trading, Langkawi Kedah Malaysia, met the young Malaysian owner and Business Development Manager Loke Seng Chee ([wiragy@myjaring.net](mailto:wiragy@myjaring.net) or [wira-gaya@steamyx.com](mailto:wira-gaya@steamyx.com)) and also met Anne (+6-125940899 [koaysiewleng@gmail.com](mailto:koaysiewleng@gmail.com)). I saw many buying boxes of birds nest drinks which is a traditional ready to drink medicine good for the body. As one of the customers Anne said that its very good so I tired one box (60 RMN) with six bottles inside , It tastes good so shared the other five health medicinal drinks to LC 550 CO CDR Teodoro, Capt Torralba, CDR Cesista, PS 35 CO CDR Paba and Rev Fr Fernando. Since guaranteed good for the health, so instead of Chocolates or souvenir items, I bought 15 boxes for goodwill to people who made my trip to Malaysia possible.**

At Porto Malai, while waiting for our craft service, I bought bottled waters for my team which a new found friend businessman **SIDDIQ**, as shown on group photo . Aahe did not accept payment and had provided us chairs to rest. Likewise, when I inquired for a load to buy for my Malaysian sim card, and since he has no load for sell, he offered his mobile phone so I may call friends in Malaysia and even loved ones in the Philippines etc, unlimitedly for FREE. Hence, really appreciated his Christian acts, when we were tired, he offered seats, when we were thirsty, he gave us water and when needed to

communicate, he offered his phone. No wonder, he does good business in Malaysia, because he does also good charitable works even to strangers like us. A good business man in Malaysia, who was humble to share his humble beginnings from India who at a very young age came to Malaysia and learned to read and write on his own and now a successful well travelled businessman. This is not a surprise to me because SIDDIQ was good, kind and honest person. First and may be the last time to meet him, but I definitely recommend him to friends who would like to avail of his services in Malaysia be it in tours, travels, maritime and supplies. His company is MSN Marine Enterprises– (Ship Chandlers, Ship’s General Contractor, Marine Suppliers, Tours and Travels, Penang Malaysia). My good friend SIDDIQ may be contacted at his email address: [msnmarine@hotmail.com](mailto:msnmarine@hotmail.com) and his Malaysian mobile number +60124481390). Finally , our LC550 life raft; arrived as shown on photo with me in my orange life jacket. Brought the goods at LC 550 and back at Hotel Awana where we had an happy hour with the team . Shared the bills with the appetizer , courtesy of Rev Fr Lt Col Fernando) Group photo below saying Cheers!



With **Filipino Band** at Porto Malay–Hotel Awana Is. then as the group became bigger , we went inside the hotel bar to continue the bonding and fun .



**14<sup>th</sup> day -Dec 8, 2011 (Thursday)-LIMA exhibit and Int'l Maritime Cultural Night**



Inside the **ladies room** at the Awana Hotel, near the ballroom wherein the International Maritime Cultural presentation will be held, two lovely Malaysian journalist for LIMA 2011 asked ,if I am from the Philippines with unexpected question to wit: "**Is it true that Filipina Women are more beautiful than Malaysian women?**" I said not true as obviously, both of you are beautiful and we even look similar, we have similar eyes and similar complexion. Then took photos of the beautiful ladies with me who taught that I am beautiful (not handsome even in my navy uniform). Guess from the photo of three ladies, who is in her **20s, 30s and 40s**. After the Exhibit proceeded at Porto Malai Hotel Awana for the International Maritime Cultural Night.

**International Maritime Cultural Night. Dec 08. 2011** with Minister of Defense of Malaysia as Guest Of Honor -The Honourable Dato Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi who visited the Philippine booth and had smilingly ac-



knowledged me for having had photo with him and his prime minister at the LIMA Exhibit.



Left Photo (L-R): With EX-CO **CDR Cesista**, Head of Mission **Capt Torralba**, LCDR Angelica Baylon, LC550CO **CDR Teodoro** and PS35 CO **CDR Paba** at the Philippine booth of Filipino cuisine.

Photos include booths from Bangladesh, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Indonesia, India, Thailand, Australia and USA.



With Malaysia friends







With a lady Malaysian friend/the Malaysian Protocol Officers and the Master of Ceremonies who did an excellent job (also on photo Lt Landicho and Lt Ayad, both officers of LC 550)



We joined the LA dance with international delegates to the tune of the Malaysian dance song



Photos with INS Kora, Visakhapatnam, India Navy CDR Prashant D Shidyae, Commanding officer ([pdsidhaye@gmail.com](mailto:pdsidhaye@gmail.com) +919392652422)

**15<sup>th</sup> Day -Dec 9 (Friday) – Tours at Cable Car, Eagle Square and Exhibit)**



PN hired bus for the Phil contingent tour, Lt Aclan provided a briefing, the background shows the airport



## Toured at Langkawi Cable Car

Situated at the Oriental Village in Burau Bay, about 30 minutes away from Kuah town. We have enjoyed an exhilarating cable car ride (RMB 30) to the top of Gunung Mat Chincang. Also enjoyed the marvelous views of the Andaman Sea and the Langkawi Island group as well as the breathtaking sights such as overhanging cliff walls and isolated pinnacles. With a length of 919.5m, the Langkawi cable car has been recognized as the longest free span single rope cable car by the Malaysia Book of records. It has also one of the steepest gradients in the world, at 42 degree. At the middle and top stations, we further enjoyed the panoramic views thru the walking trails and viewing platforms available. Another impressive attraction here is the 125 m suspension bridge. A remarkable feat of Engineering, the curved bridge links the cable car station to the Mat Chincang mountain range. After the ride, we dropped by the oriental village to browse thru the assortment of souvenirs.



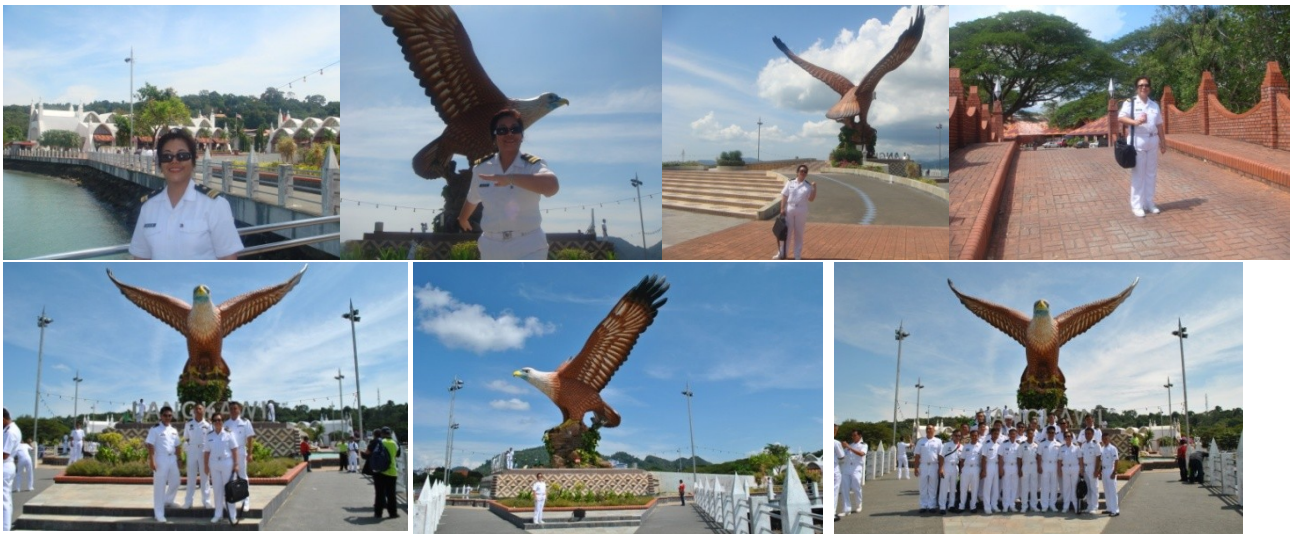
Photo shows group photo at the **Oriental village**, some solo pics, inside the moving cable car was the **US Commanding Officer**, one of LIMA 2011 delegates and our official Phil Navy Photographer. Other souvenir photos are shown below. We are still in our navy uniforms, even during tours as we were sent on official business and therefore must carry our PN uniforms with courtesy as Philippine representative in Malaysia.





**Eagle Square or Dataran Lang**

This is Langkawi’s most prominent landmark at the sea. Situated near the Kuah Jetty, the main attraction of the square is the **magnificent statue of the reddish brown eagle** majestically poised for flight. According to local folklore, Langkawi derived its name from Eagle or helang. In old Malay, kawi denotes reddish brown; hence, Langkawi means “*reddish brown eagle*”. The square is beautifully landscaped and features scenic ponds, bridges, covered terraces, restaurants, and barrel vaults made of bricks.



After the Eagle Square, others went to **Kuah Town** (located on the southeastern tip of Langkawi and is the island’s main town with Kuah Jetty being the take-off point to the neighboring islands. The name Kuah is a Malay word meaning gravy referring to an ancient folklore of two battling giants who overturned a gigantic pot of curry at the spot where the town now stands. It was once a rustic town with a few streets, but now Kuah is a thriving centre of hotels and shopping cum business complexes fortunately without the din of modern day cities. Kuah offers a wide variety of duty free goods such as tobacco, liquor, cosmetics and electrical items at highly attractive prices. Whereas I opted to join the LC 550 officers at **MIEC for the Exhibit**.

**Proceeded to LIMA 2011 Exhibit with Lt Aclan, Lt Palancia and Ens Peralta as shown on photos**



The exhibit was open to the public and had career orientation program for the youth. **Defense Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi** at a media appreciation luncheon at One Helang Hotel next to the Mahsuri International Convention Centre (MIEC) thanked the organizers of the show, **HW LIMA Sdn Bhd**, for having agreed to his idea that all proceeds from ticket sales from the 2-day public visit (December 9-10, 2011) at Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace 2011 Exhibition (LIMA 2011) will be donated to charity, which as of Dec 9, some 35,000 members of the public had turned up paying RM 10 per person.

He said that this was another record because two years ago, LIMA 2009 registered only 11,000 public visitors. Zahid also thanked the media for the excellent coverage of LIMA 2011 and attributed the good participation from trade and public visitors was due to the media's hard work. He also disclosed that he was once a journalist way back in 1973 with RTM. Thus, he knows how the media works and he offered the luncheon appreciation for all the media with raffle prizes (like: flying with Malaysia's aerobatics team Krisakti, Apple iPods, Samsung galaxy and other gifts)

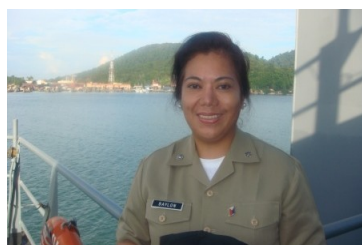


Photo with **Digi**, the Malaysian pilot known as Smokey # 4 of the Smokey Bandit (team of 5 acrobats), after his thrilling exhibition on air, which I was fortunate to experience as if I won the first prize raffle of flying with Malaysia's acrobatic team Smokey bandit. Below photos are taken prior to leaving MIEC for Kuah town and the aboard the Malaysian ferry at Porto Malai to ferry us to LC 550



**16<sup>th</sup> Day - Dec 10, 2011 (Saturday) – Departure from Langkawi (see porto Malai as background)**

First Muster at Langkawi Malaysia at 0800H and Departure from Langkawi at 0900H



It was also laundry day, to rest, to fix our things, the reports etc for our next activities at RMN, Lumut Perak Malaysia

### 17<sup>th</sup> Day Dec 11, 2011- Third Sunday of Advent- GAUDATE ( Joyful Sunday )

#### **Third Sunday of Advent – Gaudete (Joyful Sunday) John 1:6-8, 19-28 “John the Baptist Testimony”**

Rev Fr Mechor Fernando on photo, in his homily emphasized that this mass Celebration gives us an aura of joy and happiness as we are also happy to celebrate, the immaculate conception on this Sunday since during the feast day itself ( Dec 8), we were busy attending the LIMA exhibit 2011. We recall Mama Mary, that by virtue of her being the Mother of God, she was freed from the moment of her conception from stain of original sin that why she is blessed among women.

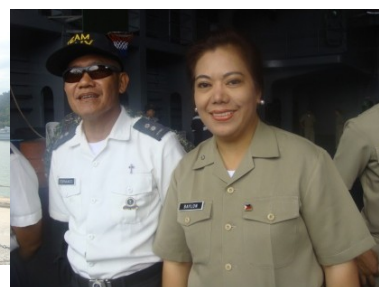


In one way or another, we have experienced being happy or joyful. He also cited so many reasons to personally rejoice: (1) Our being participant of the LIMA 2011, thanks to the PN under the administration of FOIC VAdm PAMA for supporting the Philippine Navy contingent. Aside from brochures, books, pamphlets, give aways/tokens, we rejoice not only in receiving the give aways (with **Ma'am Baylon having received the most**) but more so on the knowledge we could gain from these materials. (2) Others rejoice in meeting in new friends, with having **pictures with various dignitaries like Ma'am Baylon**, and not to forget the cultural presentation we had by 10 nationalities (Philippines, Bangladesh, Thailand, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, USA, Australia, Malaysia and Korea). Although there were language and cultural barriers, still the cultural show would be a good reason to be joyful especially that we had met new friends, tasted delicacies and shared beers, ginseng, rice wine and Tanduay. Truly we have felt, the spirit of sharing friendship because in unison we danced the LA walk in the tune of Malaysian song. (3) We also rejoiced with the beauty of nature. By riding the cable car, we saw the beauty of nature like the virgin forest of Malaysia and the vast blue ocean manifesting the beauty and wisdom of our Creator. (4) We rejoice during b-days, promotions, awarding, mission accomplishments (5) We rejoice with the prospect of new experience of Kuala Lumpur and Shellback ceremonies with Fr Fernando smilingly said **“Nakulitan si Lord sa panalangin ni Ma'am Baylon for the Shellback ceremonies na matuloy”** (Ma'am Baylon kept on praying to the Lord for the Shellback ceremonies to push through”)

The chaplain reiterated and emphasized that sometimes we equate feeling of happiness as the absence of trials and difficulties. When we have what we want, we are free to do what we want to do, one seems to be happy yet our faith, reminds us that we can still be happy even when we are suffering. We can be smiling even in trials and difficulties. Such is the message, Christ wants us to imbibed in ours – our positive attitude towards any difficulties in life just like Christ suffers for us. This message was reiterated during the mass at PS35 the next day- December 12, 2011.

### 18<sup>th</sup> day Dec 12, 2011 (Monday) Arrival at RMN port Lumut, Perak Malaysia and trip to Kuala Lumpur

Lumut is a town within the state of Perak. Within Lumut is the RMN's largest Naval Base and the home of the RMN's Fleet Command. Lumut is also a tourist destination wherein several resort can be found. Pangkor Island can be accessed via jetty at the Lumut Civilian Pier. Several small shops specialize in local delicacies and souvenir items. Photo shows me with PS 35 patrol vessel and RMN as background and with Fr Fernando asking on why I am still keen on photos when we had enough on board since day1.



Visited the **navy facilities at Lumut Naval Base at 0900H and again at 1400H.**

Liberty Commence at 1200H for Tour at Kuala Lumpur which is almost 350 km from Lumut (about 4 hours drive via van). First time to wear civilian attire in Malaysia. While inside the van, reported to the HOM that there are four separate personal invitations from new Malaysian friends (owners and/or connected with company/RMN at LIMA 2011 Exhibit in Langkawi) whose company /offices and residence are located in Lumut. However, the HOM regret that the schedule is already filled-up and cannot accept the invitation.

**Kuala Lumpur** is the capital of Malaysia while Putra Jaya is the seat of government. Kuala Lumpur means "*Muddy Confluence*". It was originally a mining town before the British made it the capital. Known as "*The City that Never Sleeps*", the city is known for its grand structures such as the KLCC, Menara Tower and the National Mosque.

### The Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur

At the height of 451.9m, the magnificent Petronas Twin Towers is a world renowned icon of modern Malaysia. It is the center piece of the Kuala Lumpur Convention Center, **Suria KLCC Shopping Mall**, star rated hotels, a mosque as well as immaculately landscaped KLCC park. Seems Christmas already in KL Malaysia as shown on photos , with 13 days more to go for December 25, 2011.



One mistake and unforgettable thing that I have done at KL was having bought **Durian**, that was already opened and placed on a Styrofoam to bring to my friends Lt Laja and Lt Pebbles who were left at LC 550. First time that I had tasted the fresh yellowish and juicy Malaysian Durian bought by Dr Karen Mosing as I had tasted durian flavored candies, ice creams or cakes. It was sweet and really taste good, hence I bought. However, inside the van, my seatmate an officer from PS35 commented that it smells Durian, so I put it inside my bag and covered the same with my Black Blazer. however the strong smell cant be hidden; hence, I put eucalyptus ointment on my forehead to cover the smell. My seatmate jokingly said that, now the smell turns into an old lady. Upon arrival at LC 550, Pebbles said that the said fruit would be smelly inside the room hence it was suggested to have it kept in freezer to be consumed the next day. When I went to the wardroom. I was happy to see my company headed by HOM eating late snacks. As they were with me (along with the durian fruit inside the van), it was but right that they enjoy the heavenly taste of Durian after having suffered from its strong smell that cant be explained. Their patience and coolness as a gentlemen and officer were put to test. Next time, will not do that again.

**19<sup>th</sup> Day -Dec 13, 2011 (Tour of Lumut etc at Perak Malaysia and Dinner hosted by PN at the Orient Star, Lumut for the RMN )**

In the morning after tour of the Royal Malaysian Navy facilities, was glad to receive a call from the RMN ENGR Ziggy Said, (LCDR Ret), the CEO /owner of D Aquarian Services whose company is located in Manjung Perak near Lumut with RMN as one of his clients. As shown on photos , we were toured at various resorts, the Jetty complex, Marina Cove, various gates of RMN, navy staff houses for officials and staff, his company and home where his Filipina nurse wife Angelita prepared snacks and some take home fruits including frozen fresh durian sealed in a tight container. Ziggy pointed and showed to us the Rahmat Museum, please see my concluding remarks about my envisioned future of LC550 which can also be transformed into a Rahmat Museum and be named as PN Museum



**Dec 13. 2011- Dinner hosted by the Philippine Navy for the Royal Malaysian Navy at the Orient Hotel, Lumut**

Inside the Hotel I noticed the photo of a **Durian Fruit** which was crossed (X), meaning that said fruit is not allowed inside the hotel. This reminded me again of what I had done to my superiors nose inside the van with the Durian (which I find the smell okay but may not be okay to them).





LCDR Baylon (5th from Left) with Capt Victor McIntosa (4th from left), the CO of Australian Navy. Also in the photo are (L-R): Lcdr Estrella, HOM Capt Torralba, Cdr Cesista, CO Cdr Teodoro and Lt Annonuevo.

**20<sup>th</sup> Day- Dec. 14, 2011- Pictorials at the deck helipad left Lumut, Perak**



**LCDR Baylon** with the Phil Marine Dual Band, In whites, seated at center is HOM **Capt Torralba** with the two King of Neptune of BRP550 Shellback former **CO Cdr Cesista** and PS35 CO **Cdr Paba**



**Another Success for the Head of Mission** (at center Capt Torralba) seated from left are the 5 ladies of the BRP 550 cheering for HOM: from left **Lt Pebbles Navarro, Lt Sandra Laja, Lt Maricell Arabbi, HOM Capt Toralba, Lcdr Baylon**( in khaki uniform), Lt Annonuevo and

*Observed at the bridge once again as we left Lumut (RMN port)*

**7<sup>th</sup> Mass (Dec 14- Wednesday)  
Luke 7:18b-23 "The Messengers From John The Baptist"**

**Fr Mechor Fernando** on photo says in his Homily: "Are you the one who is to Come, or should we look for another". The chaplain emphasized the reply of Jesus "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard; the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them". The chaplain reminded the participants to do act of kindness to our needy brothers .and sisters.



**Lay up the Bridge to observe** while the LC550 was passing the Singapore Strait.



*With the great CO **CDR Arnel Teodoro, PN** of LC 550 and with his efficient **Ex-O Lt Jacob, PN***



## **21<sup>st</sup> Day Dec 15, 2011 – SHELLBACK CEREMONIES**

As an introduction, the ceremony of **Crossing the Line** is an **initiation rite** in the Royal Navy, U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, and **other navies like Philippine Navy** that commemorates a sailor's **first crossing of the Equator**. Originally, the tradition was created as a test for seasoned sailors to ensure their new shipmates were capable of handling long rough times at sea. Sailors who have already crossed the Equator are nicknamed (**Trusty Shellbacks**, often referred to as **Sons of Neptune**); those who have not are nicknamed (**Slimy Pollywogs** as we were. Equator-crossing ceremonies, typically featuring King Neptune, are also sometimes carried out for passengers' entertainment on civilian ocean liners and cruise ships. They are also performed in the merchant navy and aboard sail training ships. The two-day event (evening and day) is a ritual in which previously indoctrinated crew members (Trusty Shellbacks) are organized into a "*Court of Neptune*" to indoctrinate the Slimy Polywogs into "*the mysteries of the Deep*". Physical hardship in keeping with the spirit of the initiation, are tolerated, and each Pollywog is expected to endure a standard initiation rite in order to become a Shellback! Depending on the Ocean or Fleet AOR, there can be variations in the rite.

We the Pollywogs of the Philippine Navy (NOBC trainees/shipriders/observers/organic navy and anyone else who had not crossed) had participated voluntarily, had ascended a ladder from the forecastle to the superstructure deck of the ship.



**I was third in line**, first was Head of Mission **CAPT Torralba** followed by **CDR Teodoro** while I was looking at the ladder when CO Cdr Teodoro was about to climb the ladder. Then, we crawled down a gauntlet of shellbacks on both sides of a long, heavy canvas runner, about 10–12 meters. The shellbacks had prepared 3-foot, or 1-meter, lengths of canvas/rubber firehose, which they swung hard at the posterior of each of us –the wogs.

We, the wogs then ascended a ladder to the boat deck to slide down a makeshift chute into the baptism of mess deck leavings in sea water in an inflated liferaft back on the superstructure deck. We, as wogs, then returned to the Forecastle, where we were hosed off by firehose and then allowed to simply drink the jungle wine then shout "*I am a Shellback*" and have photo with King Neptune and David Jones!

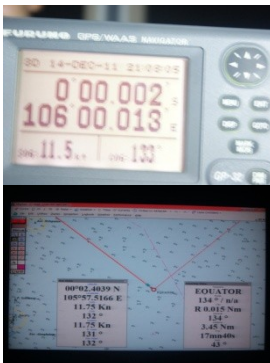
This is the text from a certificate issued on a United States Navy ship during the 1960s:

*"Know ye, that ..... on the ..... day of ..... , aboard ..... appeared at the equator at Latitude ..... ° , Longitude ..... ° entering into Our Royal Domain, and having been inspected and found worthy by My Royal Staff and was initiated into the Solemn Mysteries of the Ancient Order of the Deep. I command my subjects to Honor and Respect him as one of our Trusty Shellbacks. (Signed) Davey Jones — His Royal Scribe Neptunus Rex — Ruler of the Raging Main.*



Describing the Shellback ceremonies on **Dec. 15, 2011**, we had to be up at 4 am, dressed in our coverall (with our Team Navy shirts /shorts /leggings, within ). The Shellbacks on the other hand were dressed as pirates.

**Photo shows at the deck**, while waiting for the 0 Equator at GPS as the LC 550 crossed the Equator



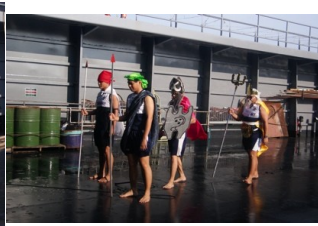
With **CO Cdr Teodoro (center)** at latitude 00.00.02. Finally, the zero equator was recorded as follows:  
**BRP Bacolod City (LC 550)**  
**Equator 2011**  
**15 (O509H) December 2011**  
**Latitude 000'00.000 N**  
**Longitude 105'59.8759 E**

When a ship crosses the zero equator, we the Philippine contingent on board LC 550 had a big festival called **Wog Day or Shellback Ceremonies** which we were fortunate to experience the fun!



With Head of Mission **CAPT Torralba** and **LC 550 CO CDR Teodoro**, we are first timers to undergo the Shellback ceremonies with **me as third on the line**, The senior officers who are already Shellbacks served as **King Neptunes** (**CDR Cesista** former CO of LC 550 and **CDR Paba** as CO of PS 35) and **LCDR Estrella** as **Davey Jones** as shown above in their costumes.

For newbies like me who hadn't crossed before, I am called a wog or poly wog. As poly wogs, we have to go through a **gauntlet of activities** to become Shellbacks. All of this includes parading before King Neptune, his crony Davey Jones and a bunch of other officers and chiefs dressed up and other characters. Hence, on Dec 15, 2011, a rare tradition in the Philippine Navy under the administration of FOIC Pama, with CDR Cesista as King of Neptune and LCDR Estrella as David Jones (both of them are already shellbacks), which very few from the Navy have ever experienced! The **long list of sins** committed by everyone on board LC 550 were read by the Mock Chaplain (**taking pictures was included in the list but hiding Durian inside the van was not included**) See below other photos of funny memories.



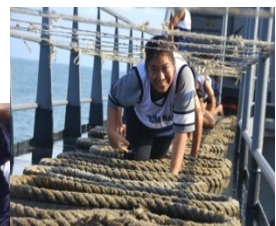
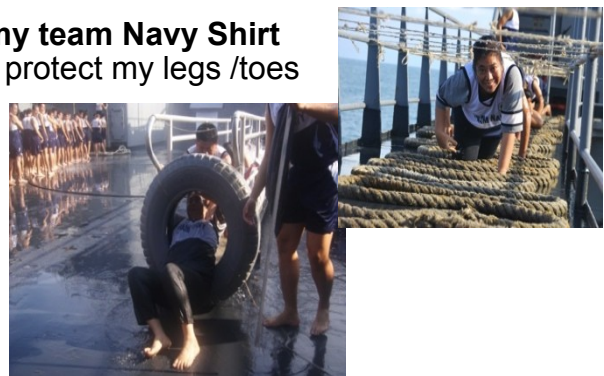
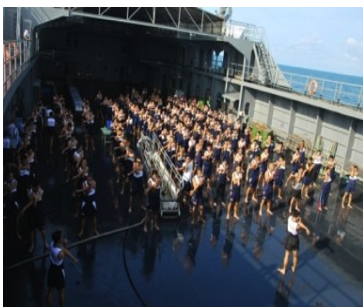
**Baptism on the line**, also called **equatorial baptism**, is an initiation ritual sometimes performed as a ship crosses the Equator, involving **water baptism** of passengers or crew

who have never crossed the Equator before. The ceremony is sometimes explained as being an initiation into the court of King Neptune, which we had experienced during the ceremo-



It was a long morning. We were all the way through and named Shellbacks by 1100H, but it felt so much longer than that. **Difficult but it was fun, which is what counts as shown on photos.**

**On photo is me in my team Navy Shirt with legging pants to protect my legs /toes from scratches from the uneven floorings as I crawled the obstacles and other various activities required by King Neptune.**



Before we went to the hangar bay/flight deck we had to entertain our Shellbacks. We sang over and over and over again as we had **strenuous exercises** and some danced steps and other **silly funny games, actions and all sort of funny things**. In the hangar bay we had to crawl while the shellbacks doused us with water. On the hangar bay we had to blow water out of the pad-eyes, an impossible feat, crawl through a mini obstacle courses and swam through a half pipe of water and the man over board markers and finally drank the jungle wine at the end of the line. "*Shellback*" is when we had enough of the obstacle course, made it through the half pipe and dived and drank the jungle wine. Then when King Neptune decided we'd done enough, he would named us Shellbacks.

**All these I undergone as shown on photos**, so it was really hard but fun as it was a camaraderie. "Neptune" was waiting for me at the end of the line to bestow me the title as a Shellback. So at the end - I finally shouted "**I am a Shellback**"! So glad that King Neptune was kind to me as **I had only one round of obstacle course**, made it through the half pipe and dived and **as photo shows** drank the jungle wine – one shot. Well, King Neptune should not be cruel to me because the **only sin** I may be guilty of having **committed** was **pausing for pictures** where the camera man took photos I thought that even if I be punished, I would not mind as photos provide proofs that I was with dignitaries, friends, at the exhibits and all places I have been even the restricted areas on the vessel with its officers and crews. Photos will make me remember friends and good memories . It also provide life and meaning to this report that it did happen and I was there with King Neptune!



**I am now a Shellback (2011) under the good administration of PN FOIC Alexander Pama!**

Soon to be awarded a Certificate signed by King Neptune (**see photo**) similar to ones received by VAdm Santos and CDR Paba and all other Shellbacks who served as King Neptune and had commanded a vessel so many times. **Photo from L-R:** Lcdr Estrella as Davey Jones, HOM Capt Torralba, Me – LCDR Baylon, CDR Cesista as King Neptune and L550 CO CDR Teodoro.



**22<sup>nd</sup> Day- Dec 16, 2011**

**The 8<sup>th</sup> Mass (First Simbang Gabi) John 5:33-36**

Rev. Fr. Melchor Fernando homily had traced the origins on why we celebrate Christmas on Dec 25 and he quoted Pope John Paul II who said during the Jubilee 2000 which marked the 2000 years that passed since the birth of Christ is "*Over and Above the importance of precise dating, is the event of the incarnation itself*" The son of God becoming one like us. He traced the history in Europe during the months Oct, Nov and Dec, are winter were nights are longer than days and darkness stays longer than lights. But on Dec. 25, days start to be longer than nights which we call winter solstice, which the pagan celebrate the feast of "SOL INVICTUS" (meaning pagans unconquered SUN). He said that when the gospel of Christ was preached to the nation many became Christians and the feast of SOL INVICTUS was not abolished but was given a new Christina meaning. That is, the appearance of Jesus Christ, the son of God, the true light, the true SUN. He said that we, being baptized Christian, are called to be a light. He noted Mathew 5:14 "You are the light of the world, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father". The chaplain challenged the Phil contingent to remove the darkness of selfishness, hatred, egoism, and put on a shining lamp of forgiveness, care, concern, charity and love in our hearts.

When the mass ended, **CDR Cesista** advised NOBC to report any health problems so as to remedy immediately before it get worsened. I for one, had muscle pain because of the Shellback ceremonies, but find it was a good exercise, as I was able to move all my body for the strenuous activities and there was no regret because “*I am a Shellback*” – a legitimate Navy staff since May 5, 2005.

**Continued the duty on board and prepared the report** with my body aching. Glad to have my lady roommate Lt Pebbles Navarro who was kind to massage me that somehow lighten the pain. Fr Fernando who also was suffering from arthritis also benefitted from the gifted Lt Navarro, with chocolates and prayers of course as goodwill.

### **23<sup>rd</sup> Day –Dec. 17, 2011 (Saturday)**

#### **The 9<sup>th</sup> Mass - Mathew 1: 1-17 “The Genealogy of Jesus” (or Family Tree)”**

The Chaplain emphasized the titles or identities of Jesus as Christ Messiah, the Anointed one, expected to restore the glory of King David, Son of David, Son of Abraham, member of the Chosen people, Seed of Abraham by whom all nations shall be blessed. Fr Fernando stressed that by virtue of our Baptism, we have been given the dignity of being God’s people, His chosen race, a holy people chosen as His own.

After mass, I **continued the usual duties on board and prepared the report**. With the above inspiring message of the chaplain that I am blessed with dignity as a child of God and a chosen one by virtue of Baptism and felt that I am fortunate to be chosen and blessed to join the Philippine contingent as many would want to , but only few can join.

### **24<sup>th</sup> Day -Dec 18.2011 ( 3rd Sunday)**

#### **10<sup>th</sup> Mass (3<sup>rd</sup> Simbang Gabi ) Luke 1:26-38 “Announcement of the Birth of Jesus”**

Rev. Fr. Fernando, in his homily, said that ANGEL Gabriel announced to Mary that she will bear a son “*Behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall name him Jesus*” Her Yes signifies her total trust to the Lord and the beginning of the realization of the mystery of incarnation, God becoming man like us. The chaplain emphasized the radical faith of Mary who is always humble, trusting, courageous, and abandon to the will of God. He challenged us to follow the example of Mary in our day to day living.

**I continued the duties on board and prepared the report** with the advise of the chaplain in mind and heart to follow the example of Mary in being humble, courageous, trustful to the will of God.

### **25<sup>th</sup> Day -Dec 19, 2011 The 11<sup>th</sup> Mass (4<sup>th</sup> Simbang Gabi )**

#### **Luke 1: 5-25 “Announcement of the Birth of John”**

The chaplain Fr Fernando emphasized the two couples prayed in the readings for divine providence. The first reading, Manoah and her barren wife in the town of Zorah, received a blessing from the Lord that her wife shall bear a child and he will be called Samson, the liberator of Israel from Palestine. On the other hand, In our gospel, Zachariah, the high priest and Elizabeth, her barren wife. Although they were old and her wife is barren, the angel Gabriel told him that her wife shall bear a son and he shall be named John which means God is gracious. Manoah and wife/Zachariah and wife both reacted to the message of the angel with feelings of fear and doubt but the angel assured them, fear not. In one way or the another, like Manoah and Zachariah, the chaplain said that we too feel fear and have doubts in our lives. At times, these fears paralyze us and hinder us to respond to God’s will. He cited 1 John 4: 18 “*There is no fear in love, perfect love drives out fear*”.

The chaplain challenged us to cast out our fears and give our total trust in the Divine Providence as we learn to love one another.. After the mass **I continued he usual duties on board and prepared the report**.

**26<sup>th</sup> Day- Dec 20, 2011 – Finalizing the Reports and Seagoing Logbook to be signed by CO Teodoro of LC 550**

Also noted the following **Shipboard Naval Terminology and Phraseology in Filipino** that were used by duty watches when announcing through PA system. The room assigned to me has a PA system, hence all the announcements even in the early morning were heard and memorized by me for the 26 days on board the LC 550. These are the DAILY ROUTINE announcements:

*“GISING GISING, HIGAAAN AY TIKLUPIN, TULUGAN AY AYUSIN. (Reveille, reveille, up all idlers, heave out and trice up all bunks), KALINISAN AY KAGANDAHAN, LAHAT NG BAGAY AY LINISAN MULA UNAHAN HANGGANG HULIHAN AY DAPAT LINISAN. (Sweepers, sweepers, man your brooms, make a clean sweep down for and aft), IHANDA ANG AGAHAN, TANGHALIAN, HAPUNAN. HAPAG KAINAN AY LINISAN. (Mess gear mess gear. Clean the mess deck for breakfast, lunch, supper), MAAGANG AGAHAN/ TANGHALIAN/HAPUNAN PARA SA HAHALILING TANOD. (Early mess for the incoming watches.), PAGSUBOK SA PAMUNGARAN – HUDYAT PANGKALAHATAN, HUDYAT PANG ALALAY AT HUDYAT PANG-KEMIKAL. (Testing the general alarm, collision and chemical alarm), PAGSUBOK TAPOS NA. (Testing completed), NAKAHANDA NA ANG AGAHAN, TANGHALIAN, HAPUNAN. (Breakfast, lunch, supper is served), LIGPITIN ANG HAPAG KAINAN. (Secure the mess line), HUMANDANG MAGPUGAY SA WATAWAT. (First call to colors), MAGPUGAY SA WATAWAT. LAHAT NG TAUHAN SALAPAG, MAGPUGAY SA WATAWAT. (Attention to colors, all hands on deck attention to color), MAGPATULOY 2X. (Carry on 2x), SIMULAN ANG MGA GAWAIN. (Turn to ship’s work), SANDALING PAMAMAHINGA, TINDAHAN BUKSAN NA. (Breaktime, ship’s store open), MAGPATULOY SA MGA GAWAIN. (Resume ship’s work), TUMIGIL SA MGA GAWAIN. (Knock off from all ship’s work), MGA SUSUNOD NA TANOD HUMANDANG HUMALILI. (All incoming watches, standby to relieve the watch), HALINHAN ANG MGA TANOD. (Relieve the watch), MAGBIGAY ULAT SA IKAWALO NG GABI, LAHAT NG KINAUKULAN MAGSAGAWA NG MASUSING PAGSISIYASAT AT LAGDAAN ANG ULAT SA PAMUNGARAN. (On deck, all eight o’clock reports, ORAS NG PAHINGALAY/PAGTULOG, MGA ILAWAN/ILAWA’Y LIGPITIN, KATAHIMIKAN PANAIGIN. (Taps, taps, lights out, all hands turn in to your bunks and maintain silent above the deck. The smoking lamp is out in all berthing/living spaces. Taps, Taps), LAHAT NG TAUHAN MAGTIPON SA PAMUNGARAN UPANG MAPAGALAMAN. (All hands assemble at the quarterdeck for muster, KALAS BUTO KALAS BUTO LAHAT NG TAUHAN MALIBAN SA PANGHATING GABING TANOD AT TANOD NA NAKATALAGA MAGTIPON SA DAUNGAN PARA SA KALAS BUTO. (Calisthenics 2X all hands except midnight and actual watch lay down the dock for morning calisthenics, ORAS NG PALAKASAN 2X LAHAT NG TAUHAN MALIBAN SA TANOD NA NAKATALAGA MAGTIPON SA DAUNGAN PARA SA KALIWANG/KANAN KALIPUNAN. ORAS NG PALAKASAN. (Athletics 2X for port/starboard section), LAHAT NG TAUHAN, MGA TAUHAN MAGTIPON SA HULIHAN NG MAPAG ALAMAN. (All hands assemble at the fantail for muster)”*

One thing that I observe which to me is **commendable** and must be applied in all vessels even in Commercial or our very own training Ship at MAAP – the TS KFO is the **observance of PRAYERS** in the 6:00 am morning prayers, the 3:00 pm Divine Mercy, the 6:00 pm Angelus and the 10:00 pm evening prayers (in Tagalog). Thanking, praising and imploring God’s help in everyday life on board.

Noted as well the various **functions of the people** who run the LC550 navy ship.

The **LC 550 CO CDR Teodoro** is the over-all responsible for the safety, well-being, and efficiency of his command. The 8 ship officers report to him daily namely: his **Ex-O Lt Jacob** for all matters pertaining to the ship as a whole; **Navigator Lt Pascual** for all matters pertaining to the safe navigation and piloting of the ship; **Operations Officer Lt Ayad** for combat and operational information; **Engineering Officer Lt Aclan** for the operation of the main propulsion and electrical plants; **Damage Control Officer Lt Laja** for the ship’s stability, watertight integrity and the control of damage; **1LT/Deck Officer Lt Landicho** for the maintenance of the ship’s hull and equipment associated with deck seamanship; **Gunnery Officer Lt Casamura** for the employment of the weapons system installed; **Mess Officer Ens Palancia** for the operation of the Wardroom and General Mess; and **Supply Officer Lt Arabbi** for procuring, controlling stowing and issuing of all supplies and materials.

The following have been observed from these officers at LC 550:

1. Observed that the **Executive/Personnel Officer (Lt Jacob)** functions as an aide or Executive, responsible to the Commanding Officer. He executed the orders of the Commanding Officer and coordinated and supervised the performance and administration of the command as a whole, including matters pertaining to morale, discipline, welfare, training, safety, rights and privileges of individuals within the command. All heads of department report to him for all matters pertaining to the internal administration of the ship. He also served as Navigator, Administrative Officer, Personnel Officer, Training Officer, Ship's Welfare Officer, Safety Officer and CMO Officer which from time to time he further delegated to other officers aboard ship to ensure effective and efficient disposition of tasks and responsibilities.
2. Observed that the **Operations Officer (Lt Aclan)** reports to the CO for the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of operational information and reports to the Executive Office for the administration of his department. He maintained the assigned electronics equipment, collected and transmitted by radio to proper authorities, requested for operational and logistics services required by the different departments in support of operations including but not limited to fuel, gasoline, store etc, replenishment afloat, and ship to shore passenger and cargo transportation. He obtained clearances and operating area assignment incidental to training, movement and operations of the ship; Prepared reports as required by operations plans, operations orders, and other directives. He also served as CIC Officer, Communications Officer, Electronics Officer, Intelligence Officer and Legal Officer.
3. Observed that the **Engineering Officer (Lt Aclan)** reports to the CO for the operational readiness and actual operation of the main propulsion and electrical machinery and reports to the Ex-O for the administration of his department. When the radar bogged down, he maintained the operation, care and maintenance of interior communication equipment in the ship and controlled and restored engineering and ship control casualties; maintained the master material history, engineering log and the engineer's bell book, and other operating and maintenance records. He maintained a current Ship's Maintenance Project for his department. He also served as Safety Officer and Special Service Officer.
4. Observed that the **Damage Control Officer (Lt Laja)** reports to the CO for the damage control organization and systems and reports to the Ex-O for the administration of her department. She coordinated and supervised the carrying out of prescribed checks and test of compartments and spaces for tightness. As there was fire fighting drill held at LC550 for the NOBC trainees, she supervised the fire fighting drills, acted as technical assistant to the Ex-O in carrying out the NBC defense procedures of the ship; training of ship's personnel in damage control including fire fighting, emergency repairs as when the radar had bogged down. **She assisted** the Engineering Officer perform such duties as the Engineering may direct. She also served as Repair Officer.
5. Observed that the **First Lieutenant/Deck Officer (Lt Landicho)** reports to the CO for employment and readiness of the ship's deck and seamanship equipment, operations and evolutions, and reports to the Ex-O for the administration of his department. He supervised the care and maintenance of ship's boats. Planned and executed deck seamanship evolutions and operations including anchoring, mooring, fueling, and replenishment at sea; the operation, care, and maintenance of the ground tackle, mooring lines, and related equipment. **Before entering port**, he insured that the ground tackle, and when appropriate, the mooring lines are ready for use. **When anchored**, he kept himself informed as to the condition of the ground tackle and promptly informed the Commanding Officer when any corrective action is necessary. He insured that the lines are properly tended to accommodate changes in weather, tides and currents whenever made fast to a dock. **As painting is on going inside the LC550**, he supervised, coordinated and directed the maintenance and painting of the ship, except for those areas specifically assigned to other departments; He supervised loading, unloading, and stowage of cargo; the operation, care, and maintenance of the ship's boats except boat machinery and of the life rafts and other life saving equipment.

**When we were on board the life raft**, he ensured that the required life jackets and other standard equipment necessary for the safety of the boats and personnel embarked are in place and in serviceable condition. He supervised the **disposal of** trash and garbage particularly when the Malaysia garbage boat was collecting the garbage. He also served as Cargo Officer, Ship's Key Custodian and Berthing Officer.

6. Observed that the **Gunnery Officer (Lt Casamura)** reports to the CO for employment and maintenance of the armament and ordinance equipment of the ship; and for the procurement, handling, stowage, and issuance of ammunitions etc as the need arises and reports to the Ex-O for the administration of his department. He maintained the assigned electronics equipment, the ship's armament and associated equipment as well as the physical security and integrity of magazines and ready service storage spaces. He conducted surveillance test and periodic inspections of ammunition etc in his department. He also served as the Recreation Officer and Special Service Officer.
7. Observed the **Mess Officer (Ens Palancia)** reports to the CO for the cleanliness of the galley and its personnel, food storage and preparation of food served in the Wardroom and General Mess and reports to the Ex-O for the administration of his department. He supervised the operation of the Wardroom, General Mess and the operation of the ship's store. He also served as Disbursing Ship's Store Officer.
8. Observed that the **Supply Officer (Lt Arabbi)** reports to the CO for the utilization of the ship's supplies and reports to the Ex-O for the administration of the Supply Department. He administered the ship's operating allotment to the end and ensure that all essential logistic requirements are met, coordinated the preparation and submission of departmental logistics requirements and supervised the operation and maintenance of store rooms. He also served as transportation officer.

**All these, I have observed as I had interviewed them and I was with them at the deck and the wardroom and heard them reporting to the CO and Ex-O regularly.**

### **27<sup>th</sup> Day -Dec 21, 2011 – Arrival in Sangley Cavite**

**Last Mass and souvenir photo with Rev Fr Melchor Fernando**, my new found spiritual adviser and closest friend on board the LC 550. As a souvenir, he gave me my requested holy water for my altar at home. After the mass, we had a simple arrival ceremony with the Fleet Commander **RAdm Alano as the GOH and speaker**. Even in *tikas pahinga*; however, I was under the heat of the sun and was told that once in the parade, one is not allowed to move so being at the front row, which can readily be seen by everyone particularly the superiors, I can't wipe the perspiration on my face etc and also felt my toes shaking even if I was slightly shaking my toes and hands at my back. I silently prayed to the Lord to provide me the strength not to bogged down and was comforting myself that I can withstand the heat and long ceremonies because "*I am a Shellback*". Though my spirit was willing and fighting so hard, my physical strength can't endure.



At first, I saw a very clear picture of the Head of Mission Capt Torralba in front presenting his successful mission report to all , with RADM Alano as GOH and Speaker seated along with other superiors, and that the same sight slowly transformed into a very bright sight, and suddenly felt that two of the SWAGS led by Lt Villamora already were beside me holding my arms as we leave the parade ground very slowly and brought me on board the shaded chair to rest. The steward brought me cold water. I remember having drunk 3 glasses of water, the best comforting drink I ever had. An ambulance also arrived, but of course, there is no need, as I felt already relieved from thirst, heat of the sun, and the hardening of my legs. That was also the time that I felt embarrassed .. Although an LCDR (initial rank awarded to me), it was my first time to experience standing under the heat with long ceremonies. I have no regrets as it was a memorable experience and enlightenment. Now I empathize with those PMMA, PMA and MAAP cadets who I witnessed had bogged down in their gala uniform during silent drills on several occasions especially in very long ceremonies. After I felt relieved, I joined them for some refreshments at the Executive lounge. I remember having said "*Permission to enter the wardroom Sir instead of Executive Lounge* "

Then we had boodle fight lunch with the team led by Head of Mission **Capt Torralba**. Then, joined Rev Fr Fernando at his office while waiting for the N3 Phil Navy service. Hence, I had the honor to visit his chaplains office in San Felipe and also had a tour of the vicinity where he plays tennis and conducts mass in Cavite. Met also his sacristan volunteers who missed him because of his long absence. He provided them some chocolate wafers and money to prepare for dinner that night. At 6 pm, the PN service arrived and we arrived in Manila at 8pm. At the Christmas party at LC 550 together with CDR Teodoro and his officers and staff in Sangley, Cavite, my kind spiritual adviser Fr Fernando texted whether I arrived in Manila safely. Having been with them for 26 days, will surely miss them especially Fr Teodoro.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS with Recommendations for LC 550**

In conclusion, this was a brief daily account of all the activities done daily from Nov 25 to December 22, 2011 which I shall be grateful as long as I live.

There were so many things to be thanked for. The experience provided for the first time to a civilian (reserve officer) aboard the Philippine Navy warship is worth documenting. It was a totally unique experience as if I had won a grand prize award- experience a unique 26 day voyage aboard a navy vessel.

Aside from the learning, knowledge and new skills gained, the spiritual retreat and reflections provided, the friends gained, getting to deal with various personalities, to be at the other parts of the world, to experience which even other Navy organic personnel have never experienced (Shellback ceremonies), the camaraderie with the senior, co-officer and staff on board, the protocol that must be observed as a military personnel, the various restricted rooms that I have been allowed to enter and took photos, the treatment accorded to me as an LCDR (PN reserved Officer), the privilege to ask questions and able to receive answers to all my questions and learned that there is so much things that I do not know but now I know because of the opportunity at LC550, the honor to experience being an LCDR on board the vessel and during the LIMA 2011 exhibit, the so many privileges provided to an officer and the so many good things as reflected on this report with documentary photo proofs.

Words are indeed not enough to express everything but this daily documentation shows the so many things to thank for. I thank God once again for making all this possible in

#### **Recommendations for LC 550 as she served as my home and school for 26 days**



The **RAHMAT MARITIME MUSEUM** in LUMUT ([www.warshiptour.com](http://www.warshiptour.com) with number +6056887707 or +6056887923). **Docked at the Marina Wing, Lumut**, the said museum is actually a **decommissioned warship**, the KD Rahmat, which had served for

several decades in the Royal Malaysian Navy since she was commissioned in 1971. Its service had been long and distinguished, being the first frigate designed to the requirement of the navy, and the first in the region to be fitted with a quadruple Sea Cat Surface to(Sam) launcher – a complex weapon system at the time. As a class-leading vessel among naval forces in South-east Asia, the ship's design emphasized high levels of automation and simplicity, reducing the need for a large crew. Build by Yarrow Shipbuilders in Glasgow, Scotland, the ship was initially called the KD Hang Jebat but after a run of unfortunate events in the 1970's, she was renamed KD **Rahmat**, which **means blessings** in Malay. Originally configured as an **antisubmarine warfare (ASW)** frigate, the ship was also used as the **navy's second training vessel**, having transformed into a training platform for commissioned officers and men after a routine fit in 2000. To enhance its role as a training vessel and to provide more accommodations space for trainees, its weapons and sonar systems were removed during the refit.



The frigate was decommissioned in 2004 and handed over to Penak government in 2008. The **93.8m long vessel** will strikes an imposing presence as a historical monument, with three of its decks open for guided tours which take up to 90 minutes to complete.

**Inside the museum**, there is a funnel like speaker which allows the bridge to communicate with other part of the ship and an intricate that controls behind the menacing 4.5" MKV Gun on board the main deck of the decommissioned KD Rahmat. One can see the view of the gun deck seen from the bridge at the Rahmat Maritime Museum in Lumut. The accommodations wherein bed stacked on top of each other showing the conditions where the crew slept in the crew berthing cabin. On the left are lockers where crew would keep their belongings.

Visitors can experience sleeping at the cabin overnight. On the main deck is a large 4.5 MK V anti-craft gun, which has a rate of fire of 24 rounds per minute and was used with remote power control during its heyday. The Helideck at night, tables and chairs are set up in a café like setting to provide light refreshments. For those prone to sea sickness, one can be rest assured that the ship is safe from rough seas as it is docked while those who are adventurous, one can stay overnight the refurbished quarters fitted with air-conditioning. **State Tourism Committee Chairman Datuk Hamidah Osman** said *"It gives visitors a glimpse into the lives of the sailors, how they lived and worked at sea, their hardships and the ship's history, thus provide them valuable insights."*

**Philippine Navy Logistic Support Vessel LC 550**, celebrated her debut - 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday, last **Dec 3, 2011** with best wishes that she will have many more trips to serve. This 18 year old Bacolod City LC-550 having served the Philippine Navy for so many good years as evidenced of the awards she has received, would someday gets old may be transformed to a PN Maritime Museum, similar with the Rahmat Maritime Museum by the Royal Malaysian Navy.

**My actual 26-day journey experiences with LC 550 was wonderful**. It provided me a glimpse of the actual lives at sea of the crews from top to bottom. Having watched movies such as the pirates of the Carribean, Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World, had stirred up my longing for adventure on the high seas. This longing was satisfied thru my actual steaming at LC 550. Before, I wondered what life as a sailor of the world's oceans is like, but now I know and had actually experienced them.

**Walking along its tight passage**, I felt claustrophobic and come to appreciate the sacrifices of the Philippine naval personnel, who have to live and work in such cramped environment round the clock in order to protect the waters. On the **2<sup>nd</sup> deck** are the crew's berthing cabin where two or three beds are stacked on top of each other to maximize space while storage lockers for the crew's belongings fill up the remaining space. Climbing up the steep and tight stairs and hatches and navigating the maze-like corridors is certainly a challenge but gave me a further glimpse into the living conditions of the naval forces. On the **3<sup>rd</sup> Deck**, I got to visit the crew's mess hall, officer's cabin's galley (kitchen), the gunnery, the refrigeration and freezer and on the **4<sup>th</sup> Deck**, got to visit the sick bay and the officers cabins. Compared to the Engine Room, the **Bridge** for me is still the most exciting part wherein the commanding view of the ship and the open seas are viewed and made **my dream of directing and steering the ship's course with photos had come true and made possible with the guidance and permission of LC 550 CO CDR Teodoro and EO Lt Jacob**. In the Philippine Navy, commanding a vessel, even if not a master mariner, is possible for those who are courageous with superb leadership and management skills coupled with trainings and steaming experiences.

It is envisioned that **LC 550 as a PN Logistic Support vessel** when it retired, may be docked at either Roxas blvd or in Cavite or in Bacolod City as a **PN Maritime Museum**. It would be open to the public for a fee (*which will also be used for operational and maintenance expenses*). It may also be refurbished as a 5-star Navy Hotel for functions or trainings/seminars or any gatherings that has a navy or maritime concept.