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**ASec. Bernardo Rafaelito
R. Alejandro IV**
*Officer-in-Charge,
Office of Civil Defense*

Rene "Butch" S. Meily
*President, Philippine Disaster
Resilience Foundation*

PRISONS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND THE PATH TO PROGRESS:

BuCor's 50-Year
Problem, a 5-Year
Solution

A PILLAR OF PURPOSE:

The Life, Work, and
Rotary Journey of
Architect Philip
Hung Recto

**RC Manila Leads
Ocular Inspection**
for Intended Rotary
Club Projects at
MMMHS

**Signing of Sisterhood
Agreement**
with Rotary Club
of Jinju Jeil
(RI District 3590)

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PROGRAM

5th Weekly Membership Meeting

Rotary Year 2025-2026

Thursday, August 14, 2025, 12:30 PM

Manila Polo Club

Moderator: PAT JOSHUA RUEBEN "Josh" G. ARAGON

PART I

12:00 NN Registration

12:30 PM Call to Order | **PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA**

Invocation | **RTN. MIGUEL "Mico" MENDOZA**

Philippine National Anthem | **AVP**

Rotary Club of Manila Hymn | **RCM WF Music Chorale**

The Four (4) Way Test | **RTN. JOAQUIN PABLO "Jop" A. ESQUIVAS**

Acknowledgement of Guests | **PAT JOSHUA RUEBEN "Josh" G. ARAGON**

Birthday Celebrants

Aug 09 Rtn. Romy Nones Aug 12 PDSAA Ike Stranathan
Rtn. John Simon Rtn. Mathias Hallerback

Aug 10 PD Nagi Zeitouni Aug 13 Rtn. Mike Guarin
Rtn. L.A. Sevilla

Maligayang Bati/Happy Birthday Song | **RCM WF Chorale**

PETA Animal Welfare Project | **PDG ALEXANDER "Alex" C. CUREG**

Signing of Agreement with:

PDRF, Rotaract Club of Manila, Philippine Red Cross, JCI Manila, Business Network, Inc., and AIESEC Phils.

PART II

12:50 PM President's Time | **PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA**

12:55 PM Introduction of the Guest of Honor and Speakers

BLA CARLOS "Caloy" G. SERAPIO

PVP REGINALD "Reggie" T. YU

Guest of Honor and Speakers

ASEC. BERNARDO RAFAELITO "Raffy" R. ALEJANDRO IV

Officer-in-Charge, Office of Civil Defense

MR. RENE "Butch" S. MEILY

President, Philippine Disaster Resilience
Foundation (PDRF)

1:30 PM Open Forum/Q&A

1:50 PM Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation

PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA

2:00 PM Adjournment | **PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA**

EDITORIAL

Reginald T. Yu
Editor-in-Chief



DISASTERS are the great equalizers. They do not discriminate between rich and poor, city or countryside, public or private sector. In an instant, they can strip away decades of progress, testing the limits of our preparedness, our unity, and our humanity.

Yet within every calamity lies a question: How ready are we, not only to survive, but to recover, rebuild, and rise stronger?

This week, the Rotary Club of Manila is honored to hear from two individuals whose lives and careers have been spent answering that question in the harshest of conditions.

Rene "Butch" S. Meily, President of the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF), has redefined how the private sector engages in

disaster management. The PDRF is not a reactive organization waiting for a crisis to hit — it is an engine of preparedness, mobilizing resources, technology, and networks long before the first warning signal is raised. From leading relief efforts during Super Typhoon Haiyan to creating platforms like IdeaSpace and QBO Innovation Hub that incubate solutions to real-world challenges, Butch has shown that resilience is not only about relief — it is about readiness and innovation. Under his leadership, PDRF received global recognition, including the 2016 Prince of Wales Business in Community International Disaster Relief Prize, proving that the private sector can be as vital to saving lives as any government agency.

Assistant Secretary **Bernardo Rafaelito R. Alejandro IV**, Officer-in-Charge of the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), has been in the trenches of nearly every major disaster the Philippines has faced in the past two decades — from Typhoon Ondoy in 2009 to Typhoon Yolanda in 2013, and more recently, Typhoons Odette and Agaton, not to mention the unprecedented challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. A seasoned crisis manager and a naval reservist, he has commanded national

incident responses, overseen disaster logistics at the highest level, and coordinated life-saving operations in both urban and remote settings. His career is a testament to what it means to dedicate one's life to the safety and resilience of a nation.

Between them, Butch and Asec. Bernie represent the two essential pillars of disaster resiliency: strategic collaboration and operational execution. One mobilizes the power of the private sector, the other commands the readiness and response of government. Together, they illustrate a hard truth — resilience is not built in the chaos of the storm, but in the calm before it.

It begins with foresight: identifying risks, strengthening infrastructure, preparing communities, and securing supply chains. It thrives on partnership: government agencies, businesses, non-profits, and civic organizations like Rotary pooling their resources, skills, and influence to form a united front. And it endures through commitment: sustaining recovery efforts long after the cameras have turned away and the headlines have moved on.

For Rotarians, the concept of “Service Above Self” aligns perfectly



Every school we help reinforce, every livelihood we help restore, every community we help empower is a bulwark against the next calamity.

with the ethos of disaster resiliency. Our initiatives in the Seven Areas of Focus — from providing clean water and sanitation to supporting the environment — are not just service projects; they are acts of prevention, mitigation, and capacity building. Every school we help reinforce, every livelihood we help restore, every community we help empower is a bulwark against the next calamity.

But we must also acknowledge that the work is never done. The Philippines remains one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, sitting squarely on the typhoon belt and the Pacific Ring of Fire. Climate change is intensifying storms, altering weather patterns, and magnifying the risks our communities face. In such a reality, complacency is our greatest enemy.

Our task is clear: to embed preparedness into our culture, to mainstream risk reduction into every sector, and to ensure that no Filipino is left without the tools and knowledge to survive and recover. This is not simply about building back better; it is about building forward — stronger, smarter, and more united.

As we welcome today's speakers, let us remember that disaster resiliency is not a concept for policymakers and responders alone. It is a collective duty. It belongs to all of us — every citizen, every leader, every Rotarian. And when we accept that responsibility together, we can create a nation that can withstand not only the storms that rage outside, but also the doubts and fears that threaten us from within.

Let us choose to be that nation.
Let us choose to be prepared.
Let us choose resilience — for ourselves, for our communities, and for generations yet to come.



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JOAQUIN ANTONIO S. DILLERA
Associate

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

IT is with much excitement that I look forward to our **August 14 Weekly Membership Meeting**. We will have two guest speakers (one from the **Office of Civil Defense**, and another from the **Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, Inc.**) who will discuss disaster preparedness and resilience. There is no doubt that the massive rains and heavy floods brought by typhoons last month have again reminded us of a truth and reality that can no longer be ignored – that we live in an era where the frequency and intensity of natural disasters are increasing.

With this reality enveloping us, disaster resilience has thus become a central pillar of sustainable development. Resilience, in this context, refers to the capacity of individuals, communities, and institutions to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from adverse events while minimizing damage to lives, livelihoods, and resources. While resilience can be nurtured at the personal and community level,



Raoul C. Creencia
President

achieving it at a meaningful scale often requires a collaborative approach—one where governments, private entities, civil society, and academic institutions work together in organized partnerships.

With this in mind, our August 14 WMM will not just be an avenue for discussion, but a call to action. And heeding this clarion call are seven organizations – RC Manila, Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, Inc., AISSEC Philippines, BNI Philippines, Philippine Red Cross, JCI Manila, and Rotaract Club of Manila – who will enter into a partnership to pursue a joint project that targets disaster resilience. On this day, these seven

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

organizations will join forces and organize a Disaster Resilience EXPO that is scheduled to be held sometime in October 2025.

This partnership agreement is a step towards the right direction as no single organization, however capable, can address the multifaceted demands of disaster preparedness and recovery.

Partnerships leverage the strengths of diverse actors, creating a synergy that results in more effective outcomes. Indeed, organized partnerships can facilitate the pooling of resources, lending each other's strengths, sharing of critical information, and harmonization of disaster management strategies. Moreover, partnerships encourage efficiency by preventing the duplication of efforts and ensuring that interventions are complementary rather than competitive. Partnerships create a sense of shared ownership over resilience goals. When multiple organizations work toward a common mission, accountability and motivation increase, and the benefits of resilience are distributed more equitably.

It bears stressing that disaster



This partnership agreement is a step towards the right direction as no single organization, however capable, can address the multifaceted demands of disaster preparedness and recovery.

resilience is not a destination but a continuous process of preparation, adaptation, and improvement. Given the complexity and scale of modern disasters, organizational partnerships are not merely desirable—they are indispensable. By uniting the complementary capacities of these seven organizations, such partnership can weave a stronger, more resilient social fabric. In doing so, they do their share in at least ensuring that when disasters strike, communities can withstand the blow, recover swiftly, and emerge stronger than before.

I thus welcome the partnership agreement signing on August 14, for it expands the reach and multiplies the hands and hearts of the gentlemen comprising Asia's First Rotary Club.

GUEST OF HONOR & SPEAKER



**ASEC. BERNARDO
RAFAELITO R.
ALEJANDRO IV,
CESO IV, MNSA**

**Civil Defense Deputy
Administrator for Administration
and Education**



Career Background

- Civil Defense Deputy Administrator for Administration (CDDA-A) and presently the Officer-in-Charge of the Office of Civil Defense
- Career Executive Service Officer (CESO) with a Rank of CESO IV
- Has been with OCD for more than 25 years
- Naval Reservist with a Rank of COMMANDER (equivalent to LTC in the Army)

Previous Positions Held

- Civil Defense Deputy Administrator for Administration and Education in the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), Department of National Defense (DND) (March 2024 - December 2024)
- Civil Defense Deputy Administrator for Operations in the Office of Civil Defense (OCD), Department of National Defense (DND) (March 2022 - July 2023)
- NDRRMC Spokesperson (Concurrent Capacity, September 2022 - September 2023)
- Director, Operations Service (September 2020 to March 2022)
- Concurrent Director, Rehabilitation and Recovery Management Service (November 2020 to October 2021)

ASEC. BERNARDO RAFAELITO R. ALEJANDRO IV

*Officer-in-Charge,
Office of Civil Defense*

- Director, Administrative and Financial Management Service, Office of Civil
- Defense (OCD) (July 2019 to August 2020)
- Director, Policy Development and Planning Service, OCD (March 2017-June 2019)
- Regional Director, OCD Region V (January 2007 to March 2017)
- Held various staff positions in OCD (2000 - 2006)
- Legislative Staff Officer in the Philippine Senate (1995-1998)

Disasters/Events Managed

- Panunumpa 2022, Served as the National Incident Commander of the Joint Task Group Emergency Preparedness and Response (JTG EPR)
- COVID-19 Pandemic Response Operations (2020 to 2023), Managed Task Group of Resource Management and Logistics (TG RML) - Support to the National Task Force against COVID-19

- Typhoons Agaton (2022), Odette (2021), Quinta, Rolly, and Ulysses (2020), Ompong (2018), Nina (2016), Amang (2015), Glenda (2014), Yolanda (2013), Pablo (2012), Juaning (2011), Ondoy (2009), Reming (2007)
- Mayon Volcano (2016, 2013, 2009) & Bulusan Volcano Eruptions (2011)
- Bohol (2013) and Guihulngan Earthquakes (2012)
- 50th ASEAN Summit & Related Meetings (2017)
- PAPAL Visit (2015)
- 2015 APEC Summit and Related Meetings (2015)
- UN World Tourism Organization & ASEAN Conference on Tourism and Climate Change (2014)

Educational Background

- Master in National Security Administration, National Defense College of the Philippines, 2021
- Master in Peace and Security Studies, Bicol University, 2010
- Public Administration, UP Diliman, 1995
- Has various trainings in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (including Incident Command System (ICS) Trainings, Crisis Management and Civil-Military Coordination Course)

GUEST OF HONOR & SPEAKER



RENE "BUTCH" S. MEILY
*President, Philippine Disaster
Resilience Foundation*



Butch Meily is President of Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation, a private sector disaster management organization that includes major business groups. Philippine Long

Distance Telephone, his parent company, received the 2016 Prince of Wales Business in Community UPS International Disaster Relief Prize for work mobilizing PDRF during Super Typhoon Haiyan.

Butch also heads IdeaSpace, a technology accelerator for early-stage startups, and QBO Innovation Hub, a public private partnership with DOST and DTI to mentor startups. Previously, he served as Vice President, Communications for TLC Beatrice International, a food company in New York and Paris.

Butch was First Vice President and Special Assistant to PLDT's chairman and president of PLDT Smart Foundation. Prior to PLDT, he worked for several New York public relations firms and a financial startup in New York.

Butch has an M.A. from University of Florida, receiving its Most Distinguished Alumnus award in 2000 and becoming Freedom Forum Distinguished Visiting Professor in 2003 and a member of its Hall of Fame. Butch is a graduate of Ateneo De Manila University. His book, "From Manila to Wall Street," became an Amazon kindle business bestseller when it debuted in May 2025.

PRISONS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND THE PATH TO PROGRESS

BuCor's 50-Year Problem, a 5-Year Solution

by PVP Reginald T. Yu



IN the quiet elegance of the Manila Polo Club, where the air seems to carry the scent of tradition and the weight of history, the Rotary Club of Manila gathered once more for its 4th Weekly Membership Meeting of the Rotary Year. It was Thursday, August 7, 2025 — another date in the long and distinguished calendar of the club, yet one that would unfold with a sense of urgency and vision not easily forgotten.



Beyond the club's trademark fellowship and ceremonial dignity, the meeting would carry the pulse of something deeper — a reaffirmation of the very essence of leadership in Rotary and in the nation it serves. Here, among men and women who have each carved their own mark in public life, business, and service, the conversation would stretch far beyond the four walls of the Polo Club and into the future of the country.

The Call to Order: A Familiar Ritual, a Living Tradition

At precisely 12:30 PM, the gavel fell in the hands of **President Raoul C. Creencia**, its crisp sound cutting through the hum of conversations. The Call to Order is a moment steeped in

ritual for the Rotary Club of Manila, yet it is never mechanical. It signals not just the start of a meeting, but the renewal of a covenant — to uphold Rotary's values and translate them into action.



President Raoul C. Creencia called the meeting to order.

The meeting opened with an invocation led by **Treasurer Paul Joseph “PJ” M. Garcia**, whose words offered gratitude for blessings received and sought guidance for the tasks ahead. It was a quiet prayer, yet the weight it carried was unmistakable: a reminder that service without humility loses its soul.



Treasurer Paul Joseph “PJ” M. Garcia led the invocation.

The **Philippine National Anthem** followed, its melody swelling through the hall, evoking pride and a sense of shared destiny. Then, the familiar chords of the **Rotary Club of Manila Hymn**, sung with practiced grace by the **RCM World Famous Music Chorale**, washed over the room, uniting the assembly in song.

STAR Rotarian Stefan Yordanov stood to lead the Four-Way Test, the moral compass of Rotary. Spoken in unison by the members, it transformed into more than a recitation; it became an affirmation that truth, fairness, goodwill, and mutual benefit must guide

every decision — whether in the boardroom, in government, or in the heart’s quiet deliberations.



STAR Rotarian Stefan Yordanov led the recitation of The Four-Way Test.

The day’s moderator, **Vice-President Ricardo “Ricky” S.B. Guevara**, then acknowledged the guests, his warm tone pulling them seamlessly into the fold of the club’s fellowship.



Vice-President Ricardo “Ricky” S.B. Guevara moderated the meeting.

This acknowledgment was followed by a lighter moment — the celebration of birthdays. Rotarians **Philip Recto** and **Ray Davis**, whose birthdays fell on July

24, and **Director Edwin Hernandez**, whose birthday coincided with the day's meeting, received greetings and applause as the Chorale delivered a spirited **Maligayang Bati**. In Rotary, such gestures are more than custom; they are the fabric of camaraderie that binds service and friendship together.



The RCM World Famous Music Chorale delivered a spirited Maligayang Bati.

Shaping the Future: Nominations for the Board of Directors

With the warm fellowship setting the tone, the meeting moved to the serious work of shaping the club's leadership for the coming years. **Past President Arsenio "Archit" M. Bartolome III**, Election Committee Chairman, presided over the nominations for the Board of Directors for Rotary Year 2026–2027.

One by one, the names of 21 Rotarians were put forward — each nomination representing a story of service,

leadership, and commitment to the club's ideals. This process, conducted with both dignity and transparency, underscored a truth that Rotarians know well: leadership succession is not a matter of mere formalities. It is the lifeblood of an institution that must remain vibrant and relevant in a changing world.



Past President Arsenio "Archit" M. Bartolome III, Election Committee Chairman, presided over the nominations for the Board of Directors for Rotary Year 2026–2027.

The act of nominating leaders is, in essence, an act of trust. It is the club saying, "We believe you can carry the standard forward." In that moment, the past, present, and future of the Rotary Club of Manila intersected in a silent handshake between generations.

Inspiring the Next Generation: The Paing Hechanova Youth Leadership Awards

From the leadership of today, the

meeting turned its gaze to the leaders of tomorrow. **Club President Melchor “Chock” Encabo**, Charter President of Rotary Metro Escolta, took the floor to introduce the **Paing Hechanova Youth Leadership Awards (PHYLA)** — a flagship initiative of the Rotary Club of Makati that has quickly grown into a national movement.

Launched during Rotary Year 2023–2024, PHYLA honors the memory of the late Past Rotary International Director Rafael “Paing” Hechanova, a man whose contributions to both Rotary and Philippine sports left a legacy of excellence. His name still stirs respect among Rotarians, not only for his achievements but for the generosity of spirit with which he served.

PHYLA seeks out exceptional young leaders across the Philippines — men and women whose vision, integrity, and commitment to service set them apart. In its inaugural year, it drew over 50 nominations from across the archipelago, supported by all 10 Rotary districts. The award is not simply a recognition; it is an investment in the belief that the values of Rotary can take root early, shaping lives that will, in turn, shape communities.

As President Encabo spoke, it was hard not to imagine a future PHYLA awardee standing decades from now at a Rotary

lectern, recalling the recognition that first affirmed their potential. In honoring youth leadership, Rotary is not merely applauding promise — it is planting seeds.

A Month of Leadership in Action

President Creencia then shifted the meeting into what he calls **President’s Time**, presenting a five-minute audio-visual report on his first month in office.



President Raoul Creencia delivered his message during the President’s Time.

The presentation was more than a list of accomplishments; it was a statement of momentum. Images and numbers painted a picture of a club that had hit the ground running — projects initiated, partnerships strengthened, and plans already taking shape for the months ahead.

In leadership, the first month often sets the tone for the entire term. By

presenting his report so early, President Creencia signaled his commitment to accountability and transparency — values that resonate deeply in Rotary and beyond.

The Guest of Honor: A Commander's Vision for Reform

When **Secretary Antonilo “Anton” D.C. Mauricio** rose to introduce the day’s Guest of Honor and Speaker, there was already a hum of anticipation in the room. His words painted a portrait of a man whose career has been defined not by easy appointments but by daunting challenges — challenges that demand both intellect and steel.



Secretary Antonilo “Anton” D.C. Mauricio introduced the Guest of Honor and Speaker.

And then, in his measured, deliberate pace, **General Gregorio Pio P. Catapang Jr., AFP (Ret.)** — the Director General of the Bureau of Corrections — stepped forward. His presence was

quietly commanding, the kind of bearing forged in the military but tempered by years of navigating complex realities.

He began not with data, but with memory. He recalled his last time speaking before the Rotary Club of Manila — back when he was Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and the West Philippine Sea dominated the national conversation. That talk, he noted, was about defending the country’s territorial sovereignty. Today’s subject was no less a matter of national security, but of a different kind: the future of the Bureau of Corrections, and by extension, the future of justice and rehabilitation in the Philippines.



General Gregorio Pio P. Catapang Jr., AFP (Ret.), the Guest of Honor and Speaker

Then, with the candor of a soldier accustomed to speaking truth without varnish, he brought the room into the stark reality of BuCor’s condition.

A Century of Neglect

BuCor's history, he explained, is deeply interwoven with the country's colonial past. The first prison and penal farm was established in the early 1900s — not to detain criminals in the modern sense, but to incarcerate Filipinos resisting Spanish rule. Another facility rose in Palawan in 1905, this time to hold those who opposed American occupation. In 1935, as the Commonwealth was born, the New Bilibid Prison was built, and yet again its early purpose was to confine those who stood against the government of the day.

But the detail that stunned the room was this: the last significant prison construction in BuCor happened more than fifty years ago, during the time of the current President's father. Half a century without expansion, in a country whose population had more than doubled, had produced what Gen. Catapang called "the biggest mega prison in the entire world."

"Talagang nagsisiksikan kami," he admitted bluntly — we are truly overcrowded. And this was no mere inconvenience. Overcrowding magnifies every other problem: disease, violence, corruption, and the sheer inability to provide rehabilitation that could give inmates a chance at reintegration into society.



"You give me a job that's difficult, and I will solve it," he declared — not as a boast, but as a statement of operating principle.

An Inherited Crisis

"I inherited a rotten organization," he said, the words heavy with both frustration and resolve. There was no attempt to soften the reality. For decades, BuCor had been not just neglected but left to fester. Layers of systemic dysfunction had hardened over time, making reform not only urgent but deeply complex.

For a lesser man, such a task would seem an assignment to avoid. But Gen. Catapang made it clear: he has never been one for deputy roles, never content to stand in someone else's shadow. From the time he was a young platoon leader, through the ranks as company commander, battalion commander, brigade commander, division commander, area commander, and eventually Chief of Staff, he has always been at the point of command.

The Strategic Imperative

The centerpiece of his vision is as pragmatic as it is bold: relocate BuCor's main facility from Muntinlupa to a safer, more secure location, funded through the strategic development of the current site.

He described the property's unique position — bordered by Ayala Alabang, Porto Pino, and Villar City — prime real estate with a market value of P250,000 to P500,000 per square meter. In military terms, he said, BuCor's current position is “unattainable” — untenable and too close to densely populated, high-value neighborhoods. Any escape from the prison would immediately threaten surrounding communities.



The logic is clear: move the prison, monetize the land through public-private partnership, and use the proceeds to build modern, humane, and well-secured correctional facilities elsewhere. In doing so, the reform would not only address security and overcrowding but also unlock economic value that could ripple into broader development.

Public-Private Partnerships: The Nation's Future

Here, Gen. Catapang's tone shifted from tactical to visionary. The problem of BuCor, he argued, cannot be solved in isolation from the larger economic and governance challenges of the Philippines. Public-private partnerships, in his view, are the key to breaking cycles of neglect and underfunding.

“The future of this country belongs to PPPs,” he said with conviction. It was a statement that resonated with the Rotarians in the room — many of whom understand the power of partnership in turning ambitious plans into reality.

His vision extended far beyond prison walls. He spoke of harnessing land and resources to generate wealth, which in turn could fuel the modernization of the Armed Forces. In a world where the Philippines sits at the crossroads of superpower rivalries, the goal is to transform the country into at least a “middle power” — strong enough to

protect its interests and contribute meaningfully to regional peace and stability.

An Invitation to Engage

Throughout his address, Gen. Catapang returned to a recurring refrain: “Give me your land, and I’ll make wealth out of it.” It was not merely a quip; it was a challenge to rethink how national assets are used, to move beyond bureaucratic inertia, and to seize opportunities for nation-building.

He underscored that BuCor, if reimagined and restructured, could be more than a custodial institution. It could be an engine for regional economic development, a model of reform that demonstrates how entrenched problems can be unraveled with the right mix of vision, discipline, and resourcefulness.

Courage Under Scrutiny

The open forum that followed was testament to the Rotary Club of



*“Give me your land,
and I’ll make wealth
out of it.”*

Manila’s role as both sounding board and crucible for big ideas. Questions probed the specifics of relocation, the mechanics of PPP arrangements, and the safeguards against misuse of funds.

Gen. Catapang responded with the same blend of candor and command that marked his speech. He did not shy away from the difficulties — political, logistical, or financial — but he returned always to the necessity of action. Delay, he implied, is itself a decision, and one the country can no longer afford.

By the time he concluded, it was clear that the room had not simply heard a talk about prison reform. They had been invited into a broader conversation about how leadership must confront legacies of neglect, and how vision — when matched with the will to act — can turn even the most entrenched problems into opportunities for progress.

An Exchange of Ideas

The open forum that followed was lively and engaged. Rotarians pressed for details, offered perspectives, and explored the implications of the Director General’s proposals. The discussion was marked by a mutual recognition: Rotary’s network of leaders and BuCor’s urgent need for reform could intersect in ways that serve the public good.



BuCor's Dir. Gen. Catapang Jr. engaged in an interactive conversation with PD Abe Pascual, PDG Vince Carlos, PP Chito Zaldarriaga, PDG Rudy Bediones, Rtn. Romy Nones, and PP Boy Guevara.



Such exchanges are a hallmark of RCM's meetings — where the guest speaker's message does not end with applause, but is tested, expanded, and sometimes even reshaped through dialogue.

A Gesture of Appreciation

As the program drew toward its conclusion, President Creencia presented Gen. Catapang with a Certificate of Appreciation. In Rotary, such presentations are more than ceremonial; they are symbolic acknowledgments that the club's platform has been used to inspire thought, challenge assumptions, and stir the will to act.



The applause that followed was warm, but it also carried an undercurrent of respect for the task ahead. Reforming BuCor is no small undertaking. It will require the same discipline, vision, and resolve that Gen. Catapang has carried through a career of command.

Beyond the Meeting: The Work Ahead

When the meeting adjourned, the formalities ended but the conversations did not. In smaller groups, Rotarians lingered — some discussing the nominations, others reflecting on PHYLA's potential, and many parsing the implications of BuCor's proposed transformation.

In these exchanges lies the quiet power of Rotary. The meeting is the catalyst, but the ripples extend far beyond. In the days and weeks to come, the ideas shared that Thursday could find themselves translated into projects, partnerships, and initiatives that touch lives in ways the meeting's agenda could not fully capture.

The 4th Weekly Membership Meeting of August 7, 2025, will be remembered not just for its well-orchestrated program, but for its convergence of themes: the continuity of leadership, the nurturing of youth, the transparency of progress, and the courage to confront a national challenge with both realism and vision.



The 4th Weekly Membership Meeting will be remembered... for its convergence of themes: the continuity of leadership, the nurturing of youth, the transparency of progress, and the courage to confront a national challenge with both realism and vision.

For the Rotary Club of Manila, it was another affirmation of what it has always been — a gathering place for leaders who believe that service is not merely an act, but a way of life. And for those who were present, it was a reminder that leadership, whether in a civic club or in the corridors of government, demands not only the will to serve, but the resolve to see things through.



President Raoul Creencia adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Fellowship



Nomination for the Board of Directors for Rotary Year 2026-2027

The nomination for the Board of Directors for Rotary Year 2026-2027 was held last Thursday, August 7, 2025, during the Weekly Membership Meeting held at the Turf Room, Manila Polo Club.

	NOMINATOR		NOMINEE
1	Pres Raoul Creencia	1	VP Ricky Guevara
		2	Dir. Edwin Hernandez
		3	Dir. Rami Chahwan
		4	Dir. Jason Bogovich
		5	Dir Mike Albaña
		6	Dir. Hans Palacios
		7	Dir. Warren So
		8	Sec. Anton Mauricio
2	PDG Vince Carlos	9	BLA Caloy Serapio
3	PDG Alex Cureg	10	AIA Mike Roxas
4	PP Boy Guevara	11	Rtn Del Lorenzana
5	Dir Rami Chahwan	12	PT Lito Sibayan
		13	PVP Reggie Yu
		14	Rtn Nico Valencia
		15	DSAA John Cutter
		16	Asst. Sec. Paco Magsaysay
6	PD Ner Lonzaga	17	Rtn Bernd Schneider
7	IA Nick Locsin	18	Asst. Treas. Karlo Castro
8	PP Hermie Esguerra	19	PD Teddy Kalaw
		20	PD Amading Valdez
9	Dir Warren So	21	Rtn Gani Macatoman

There being no further comments to the motion of PP Domingo S. Guevara, the nomination for the Board of Directors for Rotary Year 2026-2027 was closed.

Archit

PP ARCHIT BARTOLOME

Chairman, Committee on Election

Attested by:

Anton

ANTON MAURICIO

Club Secretary

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

RCM Members' Attendance Report
RY 2025-2026



ATTENDANCE REPORT

August 2025

AUGUST 2025	August 07, 2025 BUCOR DIR.GEN. GREGORIO CATAPANG JR.
MEMBERS PRESENT	45
MEMBERS PRESENT %	21%
MAKE UP ATTENDEES	7
EXEMPTED	6
ON LEAVE	0
Total Active Members	46
Total # of Members	215
TOTAL %:	21%
ROTARACTORS	14
MEDIA	0
EMBASSIES / DIPLOMATIC CORPS	0
DG, DGE, DGN, PDG	0
GOHS / GS	5
VISITING ROTARIAN	5
Guests of RCM MEMBERS	8
TOTAL ATTENDEES	77



LIST OF ATTENDEES

August 7, 2025

1	Agnes, Jerry A.	23	Mueller, Klaus
2	Balanay, Aries B.	24	Nomura, Kazuhiro
3	Bautista, John Jr. I.	25	Pañares, Ben Thomas P.
4	Benedicto III, Bernardo T.	26	Patterson, Collin David
5	Canon, Raul Jr. E.	27	Peliño, Wilfredo M.
6	Cenica, John T.	28	Quisumbing, Ramon De Jesus DP
7	Co, Ferdinand C.	29	Rast, Tobias
8	Coyuto, Jr., Robert G.	30	Reyes, Crispine P.
9	Creencia, Rasul C.	31	Robertz, Constantine Franz Josef
10	David, Virgilio	32	Rodríguez Sr., Joaquin C.
11	Dy, Manuel C.	33	Roño, Marlon R.
12	Enriquez III, Eduardo Y.	34	Schmitz, Stefan
13	Garcia, Herbert Joey	35	Schneider, Bernd
14	Guarin, Michael Arcatamy H.	36	Shimoda, Shigeru
15	Guevara, Jr., Domingo S.	37	Sicat, Michael Allan E.
16	Harle, Wolfgang Kurt	38	Simen, Juanito A.
17	Jucaban, Jeric J.	39	Syjuco, Jr., Jose A.
18	Lim, Richard	40	Valdes, Joel C.
19	Locsin, Arsenio Z.	41	Valdez, Jason Rolando N.
20	Lopez, Arthur M.	42	Valencia, Rodolfo G.
21	Macapagal, Michael T	43	Yasushi, Iwata
22	Matschuck, Guenter Gerhard G.	44	Yu, Geoffrey C.
		45	Yujuco, Brendon M.V.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2025-2026

As of August 12, 2025

1	ABRIAM, ARIEL
2	ACOSTA, CRISPINIANO G.
3	AGNES, JERRY A
4	BAGATSING, VALENTINO
5	BARTOLOME, ARSENIO III M.
6	BEDIONES, RODOLFO P.
7	BELLA, GERONIMO JR. D
8	BENEDICTO, SIXTO T
9	BLANCO, MANUEL M.
10	BRANELEC, JACQUES
11	BUENDIA, CARLOS
12	CANON, RAUL JR C.
13	CAMPOS, JOSELITO JR. D.
14	CARLOS, VICENTE J.
15	CARRANCEJA, ARVIN ARIK B.
16	CASTRO, KARLO EUGENE JOSEF M
17	CHAN, ROBERT JR.
18	CREENCIA, RAOUL C.
19	CUREG, ALEXANDER P.
20	CUTTER, JOHN MICHAEL
21	DAVIS, RAYMOND N.
22	ELDEBS, ISSAM
23	ESGUERRA, HERMINIO S.
24	EUGENIO, JOHN EMYL G
25	FERNANDEZ, ANTONIO JAIME JOSE V.
26	GARCIA, VICTOR III G.
27	GUEVARA, DOMINGO JR.
28	GUEVARA, RICARDO S.B.
29	HALLARE, DELFIN JR.
30	HALLARE, NICOLAO
31	HERNANDEZ, EDWIN H.
32	IBUYAN, BENEDICT JULIUS F.
33	KALAW, TEODORO ALEJANDRO IV Y.
34	KATIGBAK J ALFONSO L
35	KLEBS, DAVID

36	LAUREL, RICARDO P.
37	LAZARO, JUAN MIGUEL
38	LEE, RICHARD L
39	LIM, DAVID EDUARDO T.
40	LONZAGA, REINERIO C.
41	LOPEZ, ANTONIO
42	LOPEZ, ARTHUR M.
43	LORENZANA, DELFIN
44	MATSCHUCK, GUENTER GERHARD G.
45	MAURICIO, ANTONILO DC
46	MAURICIO, FRANCISCO C.
47	NOLIDO, RAMON ALBERTO B.
48	NOMURA, KAZUHIRO
49	NONES, ROMEO C.
50	NUÑEZ, JOSE A.
51	PALLASIGUE, JOHN BRIAN C.
52	PAYUMO, FELICITO C.
53	PINEDA, PATRICIO JR. F.
54	PIZARRAS, JORDAN M.
55	PREYSLER, FAUSTO JR. D.R.
56	RANKL, PETER
57	RECTO, PHILIP H.
58	SCHNEIDER, BERND
59	SHIMODA, SHIGERU
60	SIBAYAN, JOSELITO H.
61	STRANATHAN, IKE EDWARD
62	SYJUCO, JOSE, JR. A.
63	TAGAYSAY, HECTOR O.
64	VALDEZ, AMADO
65	VALENCIA, JOHN NICO P.
66	YORDANOV, STEFAN
67	YU, REGINALD T.
68	ZALDARRIAGA, FELIX FRANCISCO S.
69	ZIALCITA, XAVIER Y.
70	ZIMMER, CHRISTOPHER

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

RCM Secretariat Holds Monthly 'CorSec' Meeting with Secretary Anton Mauricio



The RCM staff's monthly 'CorSec' meeting with Secretary Anton Mauricio was held on August 11, 2025, at the RCM Secretariat office.

ROTARY'S AREAS OF FOCUS



PEACEBUILDING AND
CONFLICT PREVENTION



DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



WATER, SANITATION,
AND HYGIENE



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION
AND LITERACY



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



ENVIRONMENT

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

Membership Committee Meeting



The Membership Committee met on Thursday, August 7, 2025, at the Sports Café of the Manila Polo Club to meet and get to know the proposed new member, Mr. Hiroyasu Kanda.

Present during the meeting were Membership Committee Chair and Director in Charge of Membership Concerns, Vice President Ricky Guevara; Committee Members Past Director Teddy Kalaw, Past District Governor Vince Carlos, Past Treasurer Lito Sibayan, and Secretary Anton Mauricio.



PEOPLE

A PILLAR OF PURPOSE

The Life, Work, and Rotary Journey of Architect Philip Hung Recto

by PVP Reginald T. Yu

IN the quiet hour before dawn — when the cities still sleep beneath a blanket of indigo, and the skyline dreams not in light, but in possibility — there exists a man whose life's work cannot be found in headlines or hashtags, but in the enduring lines of structures that cradle the lives of millions. He is not a politician shaping policy. He is not a tycoon commanding markets. He is neither boastful nor brash. And yet, in every corner of Metro Manila, and in corners even more unassuming —



Pasig, Antipolo, Ortigas, Bonifacio Global City — his presence rises, silent and sure, through glass and steel, columns and cantilevers, quietly defining the landscapes we move through, study within, worship inside, and lead from.

His name may not always ring out in the crowded chorus of self-promotion and spectacle, but his work speaks in timelessness — in the grace of a façade that doesn't age with time, in the symmetry of a space that breathes with clarity, in the strength of a structure that upholds more than weight — it upholds purpose.



Rtn. Arch. Philip Recto is included in the Hall of Fame at the headquarters of the United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) in 2019.

That man is Architect **Philip Hung Recto** — visionary designer, nation-builder, cultural custodian, and quiet humanitarian.

For over five decades, he has drawn not just buildings, but bridges — between past and future, tradition and innovation, intellect and integrity. His signature is not a flamboyant stamp etched in stone but a gentleness that lingers in the light that floods a hallway, in the way a space makes you feel seen, or in the silence of a sanctuary that invites stillness amid the noise of modern life.

But to reduce Arch. Philip to a master of blueprints and beams would be to misunderstand the very foundation of his life's work. Behind the accolades — the Likha Gold Medal, the Outstanding Architect of the Year, the UPAA Distinguished Alumni Award — lies a structure built not of concrete or curtain walls, but of conviction, compassion, and an unshakable moral compass.

He has never chased recognition. He has never craved titles. Instead, he has followed a subtler but surer blueprint: a life shaped by principle. A vocation governed by discipline. A service animated by humility. And a character molded, perhaps most powerfully, by his deep and enduring commitment to Rotary values — fellowship, integrity, truth, and service above self.



Presenting a project in the Bay Area to Pasay City Mayor Jovito Claudio

In every project, he asked more than what would look good. He asked what would do good. In every Rotary initiative he supported, he gave not only resources, but reverence. For Arch. Philip, greatness has never been measured in the height of buildings, nor in the breadth of awards. It has always been measured in the depth of one's character and the quiet weight of one's influence — the kind that cannot be counted, only felt.

He is a man who has never needed to raise his voice to be heard. His works speak volumes. His service resounds in lives uplifted. His presence, like his designs, endures long after he has left the room.

And so, we begin this portrait not with a list of accomplishments, but with an invitation to see what he has always seen: that the most beautiful structures are not

always the ones that tower above us, but the ones that lift us — within.

This is the story of Philip Hung Recto. Architect of spaces. Builder of lives. Designer of a legacy grounded in truth, and elevated by grace.

Foundations in Faith and Family

Born on July 24, 1947, in post-war Manila, a city still mending its ruins, Philip Hung Recto entered a world suspended between history and rebuilding. He was the son of David Recto and Luisa Angtaiyong (née Co Aguia) — parents who lived with quiet dignity, instilling in their son a deep respect for education, resilience, and civic duty.

From an early age, Philip showed a fascination with lines and forms. He would draw houses for his neighbors, sketch



Rtn. Arch. Philip Recto with wife, Ester, at the Niagara Falls in Canada.

churches in his schoolbooks, build miniature cities with matchboxes and paper. But his inclinations were never just artistic — they were moral. He believed in the potential of space to influence the soul. That belief would define his life.

In 1965, he entered the prestigious University of the Philippines Diliman to study architecture. There, amid the red-brick walkways and post-colonial classrooms of the College of Architecture, his ideas took shape. It wasn't just buildings he was learning to design — it was futures. He would graduate in 1970, among the top of his class, and immediately begin what would become one of the most influential architectural careers of his generation.

Yet even then, as a young man in his twenties, there was something in Arch. Philip's bearing that suggested a deeper calling — something that would soon find voice not in a drafting room, but in the fellowship halls of Rotary Club of Manila.



At a Rotary meeting with former House Speaker, Cong. Manny Villar



Rtn. Arch. Philip Recto giving his Classification Talk at an RCM meeting

Drawing Blueprints with Brotherhood: The Rotary Years Begin

The Rotary wheel first found its way into Philip Recto's life in 1983, when he became a Paul Harris Fellow — an early recognition of his quiet contributions to society. But for Recto, Rotary was never just about awards. It was about alignment. The Four-Way Test — Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned? — echoed the values his parents had taught him as a child. These questions were the very same questions he asked himself as an architect.

And so began a lifelong journey with the Rotary Club of Manila, the first and oldest Rotary club in Asia. Among peers who were luminaries in business, law, and public service, Arch. Philip stood out not

for bluster or bravado, but for depth. He listened. He asked thoughtful questions. He contributed generously, often anonymously, believing that the truest acts of service are those that leave no signature.

In a world that often prized visibility, Recto remained rooted in Rotary's most sacred principle — Service Above Self.

Over the decades, he would take part in countless projects: education programs for out-of-school youth, community development in underserved barangays, and architectural support for Rotary's own legacy structures. His involvement wasn't flashy. He didn't chase titles. And yet his presence was constant, dependable, and unshakably sincere.

In meetings, he rarely dominated the floor. But when he did speak, it was with the clarity of a man who knew how to turn silence into substance.



At RCM meeting with Supreme Court Justice Andres Narvasa

Designing Cities, Serving Causes: The Merging of Vocation and Advocacy

There is an old saying among architects: “We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us.” For Philip Hung Recto, this was never just a poetic turn of phrase — it was a moral truth. In every wall he raised and every public space he conceived, he asked not merely how it would look, but how it would live. Who would walk these halls? Whose dreams would echo through these classrooms? What kind of citizen would this space help form?

It was this human-centered design philosophy that made his buildings breathe with soul.

Long before terms like green architecture or social design became industry



At the wake of Lenny Panganiban in Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park

buzzwords, Arch. Philip had been quietly practicing a kind of ethical architecture — one that considered not only form and function, but impact. Whether it was a university building meant to inspire young minds or a corporate tower designed to harmonize with the skyline, each project bore the hallmarks of thoughtful restraint and civic responsibility.

His most iconic projects — Corporate Finance Plaza (61 stories), One Corporate Centre (54 stories), De La Salle University-Br. Andrew Gonzalez Hall, St. Paul College Pasig, and One San Miguel Avenue — are not just feats of engineering and aesthetics; they are case studies in how architecture can serve community, culture, and continuity.

And within these steel-and-stone achievements, Arch. Philip found a unique platform to blend Rotary ideals with professional ethos.

For instance, during the conceptualization of the First Pacific Leadership Academy (formerly the Manuel M. Lopez Development Center) in Antipolo, he deliberately wove in elements of openness and community. The structure was not only designed to be a training ground for future leaders — it was meant to evoke humility, dialogue, and learning. These were not just design intentions — they were Rotarian values rendered in glass, concrete, and air.

In every architectural undertaking, his compass remained steady: Will this structure uplift human dignity? Will it honor truth? Will it enable service? His blueprints were often blueprints of hope.

It was this seamless merging of vocation and advocacy that made him such a compelling figure in Rotary — he did not compartmentalize service and profession. To him, they were one and the same.



The 61-story Corporate Finance Plaza in Ortigas Center

The Quiet Power of the Rotary Table

Rotary, for many, is about causes. For Philip Recto, it was always about connections.

The Rotary Club of Manila, with its storied legacy dating back to 1919, was not simply a club — it was an intellectual salon, a council of civic minds, a fellowship of leaders bound not by ego but by shared purpose. And within this circle, Arch. Philip emerged as both a listener and a quiet architect of influence.

He was a constant figure at weekly meetings, his presence reassuring, his words measured. In an age when conversations too often raced ahead of reflection, Recto became the quiet counterbalance — a man who spoke only when it mattered, and when he did, his words carried the weight of thought and care.

He never lobbied for prominence, yet his name carried gravity. Past Presidents and Governors often consulted him — not because he demanded attention, but because he radiated trust. His judgment, like his architecture, was never flashy — but always foundational.

He understood that the real power of Rotary did not lie in speeches or accolades, but in the silent work of service — in the books delivered to a rural school, in the relief goods packed during a typhoon, in

the scholarship quietly paid for without fanfare. These, to him, were the invisible bricks that built a better world.

Many remember seeing him arrive early, taking his seat at the long Rotary table, calmly flipping through the program, engaging in quiet conversation, sometimes with a fellow Rotarian, other times with a guest whom others had missed. He was the man who made you feel heard. He asked after your projects, your family, your struggles — not to be polite, but because he genuinely cared.



At a Rotary meeting with the late National Security Adviser Roilo Golez

It is this kind of quiet leadership — steady, compassionate, unflinching — that became his signature within Rotary.

Paul Harris and the Spirit of Humility

When Arch. Philip was named a Paul Harris Fellow in 1983, it was not simply an

honor — it was a confirmation. Named after Rotary's founder, the recognition celebrates those who embody Rotary's highest ideals of fellowship and service.

For Recto, this was less a medal and more a mirror. It reflected who he had always been: a professional who never separated technical excellence from moral clarity, a man whose leadership style was less about commanding and more about cultivating.



He wore the Paul Harris pin not with pride, but with responsibility. To him, it was a reminder: to design not just buildings, but bridges; to draft not just plans, but pathways for others to grow; and to lead not just with skill, but with soul.

Rotary events became more than social gatherings. They were strategic points of intersection — where mentorship

happened over dinner, where collaboration was seeded through conversation, where small talk turned into long-term change.

His approach to Rotary work was architectural in its own way — disciplined, layered, lasting. He believed in sustainable service: projects that outlived their initiators, ideas that educated, efforts that empowered.

And just as his firm never stamped its name across the skyline in bold letters, so too did he resist personal spotlight in Rotary. He knew that legacies are not made louder by recognition — they are made deeper by resonance.

Building Lives, One Scholar at a Time

For many, architecture ends when the building is done — the last pane of glass set, the final inspection cleared, the ceremonial ribbon cut. But for Philip Hung Recto, the true measure of a structure's worth came not from its façade, but from what it nurtured long after the blueprints had faded. A building could inspire. A corridor could spark curiosity. A staircase could lead to a dream. To him, architecture was never static — it was a living ecosystem for human potential.

This belief was most powerfully manifested not in steel towers or academic halls, but in a simple act of faith: the creation of the

Philip H. Recto Design Excellence Award in the year 2000 at the University of the Philippines College of Architecture.

It began as a modest scholarship prize — to recognize the top undergraduate thesis submitted by a graduating student. But like all things Recto, it was never just about the accolade. It was about affirmation. It was about whispering to a young, uncertain graduate: “You are seen. You are worthy. And we will open doors for you.”

Over the next two decades, that whisper would become a chorus of opportunity.

To date, 176 students have received the award — each one a testament to Arch. Philip’s enduring commitment to cultivating the next generation of designers, thinkers, and nation-builders. More than a third of them — 33, to be exact — were given life-changing opportunities to undertake post-baccalaureate training in leading architectural firms across Singapore, Hong Kong, and Shenzhen, China. These were not just internships; they were launchpads. They gave Filipino students exposure to global standards, cross-cultural work ethics, and international mentorship that would forever expand their vision.

For Arch. Philip, this initiative was deeply personal. He had once stood at that same threshold — freshly graduated, full of hope, unsure of the world. He knew how

vital that first affirmation could be. And so, he offered it, again and again, not with the thunder of self-congratulation, but with the quiet constancy of someone who remembered where he came from.



Rtn. Arch. Philip Recto receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award from the UP Alumni Association in 2024.

In this way, his scholarship program became an extension of his Rotarian soul. Rotary, after all, is about empowering others — not with charity, but with dignity. The Design Excellence Award embodied the very principle of “Service Above Self.” It wasn’t just a prize. It was a lifeline.

More than once, past awardees have returned to UP not only as practitioners



Presenting a plan to Mayor Lito Atienza on the improvement of the Rotary Circle in Remedios, Malate

but as teachers. Some have become mentors in their own right, echoing the generosity they once received. In the ripple effect of these lives, one sees the essence of Rotary distilled: that the truest service is not what you do, but what you start.

The Architect as Storyteller

To understand Philip Recto, one must first let go of the idea of the architect as merely a technician of lines and measurements. He was never that. He was, at his core, a storyteller — and his medium was space.

Each of his projects told a story: of a community's aspirations, of a university's evolution, of a corporate vision looking skyward. He approached his craft as a novelist might — plotting beginnings, transitions, and climaxes in square meters and verticality. A well-placed atrium could dramatize arrival. A quiet alcove could whisper refuge. An open plaza could become a gathering of shared hopes.

What made Arch. Philip's work enduring was his refusal to be seduced by trends. While others chased flamboyant forms and

glossy facades, he remained rooted in purpose, proportion, and the Filipino experience. His buildings did not shout — they spoke. Softly, surely, and with depth.

And so, when asked what his greatest work is, he does not answer with a building. He speaks of people — students he mentored, clients who became collaborators, Rotary fellows who became lifelong friends. “The structure,” he once said, “is never the point. The soul it shelters — that’s the real design.”

In Rotary, a Fellowship of Purpose

In Rotary, he found the perfect home for that soul. The organization’s mission to serve, to empower, to uplift resonated not just with his values, but with the very architecture of his life. And though he never sought elected office within the Rotary hierarchy, his influence was unmistakable — quietly present in every youth development initiative, every civic partnership, every art and architecture-related fellowship that required both discernment and design.

He was often called upon for matters that required delicacy — drafting plans for heritage sites, advising on Rotary-supported community buildings, or helping assess the viability of a scholarship-linked construction. And he did so without drawing attention to himself. No plaques. No speeches. Just the satisfaction of a project done right.

Within the Rotary Club of Manila, he was that rare bridge — connecting the pragmatic with the poetic, the engineer with the artist, the Rotarian with the citizen. He reminded his fellow members that infrastructure is not just about roads or buildings, but about relationships — with history, with place, and with people.

Younger Rotarians often gravitated to him, not because he dazzled them, but because he believed in them. He treated even the greenest members as peers, listening to their ideas with the same attention he gave to seasoned professionals. In doing so, he became not just a mentor, but a model.

In a world starved of genuine role models, Arch. Philip stood as a living architecture of character — rooted, enduring, and built to uplift.



*With Philip Recto Awardees
in Singapore*

Legacy in Stone and Silence

Legacy, as often defined by monuments or titles, was never a pursuit for Philip Hung Recto. And yet, through the quiet grace of his work and the stillness of his presence, a legacy has unfolded — layer by layer, project by project, life by life — etched not in the grand proclamations of power, but in the subtler language of service, excellence, and integrity.

One needs only to walk the lobbies he designed, ascend the towers he envisioned, or step into the lecture halls and corporate centers he shaped to

The landmark 54-story One Corporate Centre at the corner of Julia Vargas Avenue and Meralco Avenue, Ortigas Center



understand the scale of that legacy. The Corporate Finance Plaza, rising 61 stories into the Ortigas sky, is not simply a corporate building — it is a metaphor for aspiration, for dreams that climb high yet remain anchored in discipline and grace. The One Corporate Centre, standing tall at 54 stories, bears his distinctive design vocabulary: intelligent structure, restrained elegance, and intuitive function.

At De La Salle University, the Br. Andrew Gonzalez Hall stands not just as a feat of vertical education space, but as a structure that breathes dignity into the pursuit of learning. There is an academic rhythm to its layout, an invitation to gather, reflect, and grow. In Antipolo, the First Pacific Leadership Academy, formerly known as the Manuel M. Lopez Development Center, stands not only as a training facility but as a spiritual center for modern leadership — where walls do not separate, but connect.

And yet, beyond the buildings, beyond the firms and the urban landscapes, it is in Rotary's invisible architecture that his legacy becomes most profound.

Here was a man who did not aspire to dominate the floor in meetings but whose ideas quietly transformed the room. He rarely made grand speeches, but when he did speak, his words had the impact of foundations — firm, sound, deeply considered. He didn't build Rotary with

bricks, but with bonds. He laid down no concrete in his service projects, yet he built enduring pathways for others to follow.

Among those who served beside him in Rotary recall him not only for his expertise, but for his demeanor — a rare balance of gentleness and strength. “Philip had a presence that never sought the spotlight,” one longtime fellow Rotarian reflects. “But when he entered a room, something shifted. There was calm. There was clarity. You knew you were in the company of a man who had nothing to prove, and everything to give.”

The Rotary of Mentorship and Memory

There is a quiet revolution that Arch. Philip helped usher into Rotary. It wasn’t radical or headline-grabbing — it didn’t seek to break molds or rewrite constitutions. Rather, it returned to the basics: the mentorship of young minds, the quiet building of trust, the preservation of values in a changing world.

In an era where so much of leadership is conflated with visibility, he reminded everyone that greatness can reside in silence. That service can happen not with fanfare, but with fidelity — to people, to principle, to purpose.

In the later years of his Rotary involvement, Recto became a lodestar for

younger Rotarians — an elder not in age alone, but in wisdom. He rarely imposed himself on emerging leaders. Instead, he listened. He asked questions. And when advice was sought, he offered it with surgical precision — never more than what was needed, never less than what was right.

He was also a guardian of Rotary’s intellectual and cultural memory. While



Rtn. Arch. Philip Recto receiving the "Araw ng Maynila Patnubay Award" from Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza, Jr., 1999

others moved fast with trends and technological buzzwords, he would often bring the conversation back to ethics, to impact, to meaning. He believed in the future, yes — but not at the expense of the foundational values that had shaped Rotary since 1919 in the Philippines.

Through his firm and his club, he facilitated the restoration of Rotary heritage spaces, advised on the integration

A PILLAR OF PURPOSE: The Life, Work, and Rotary Journey of Architect Philip Hung Recto



Visit to a project site in Bacolod, with the view of The Ruins in the background.

of art in community centers, and quietly funded educational materials for youth development initiatives. Each gesture, though rarely publicized, became a small pillar holding up the great edifice of service.

As Rotary evolved with time — adopting digital platforms, expanding its reach, building new partnerships — Arch. Philip stood as a bridge between eras. He understood tradition not as constraint, but as compass.

A Life Rooted in Grace

There are men who build cities. And there

are men who build lives. In the rarest of cases, there are those who do both — quietly, humbly, and without expectation of applause.

Architect Philip Recto is one such man.

Now well into his later years, he remains active, his eyes still keen, his posture still composed. At his desk, drawings may have given way to letters of thanks, citations of honor, photographs from past ceremonies and conferences. But the spark remains — the architect's eye, the Rotarian's heart, the gentleman's grace.

A PILLAR OF PURPOSE: The Life, Work, and Rotary Journey of Architect Philip Hung Recto



Rtn. Arch. Philip Recto receiving the "Architect of the Year" award from President Fidel Ramos, 1998

To those who know him, he is not only a master of the built environment but a custodian of something even more vital: character. His life is proof that dignity need not be loud, that service can be elegant, and that a well-lived life leaves behind no ruins — only roads for others to walk on.

There is no doubt that many years from now, when names fade and accolades gather dust, the name Philip H. Recto will still be spoken — not in shouted tributes, but in the reverent tone reserved for men who lived truthfully.

He will be remembered not only for the buildings he created, but for the lives he lifted, the ethics he championed, and the quiet force of a soul fully aligned with purpose.

The Blueprint of a Life Well-Lived

Every architect works with space and time.

They draw in dimensions, measure in seconds, think in permanence. But few master that alchemy between form and meaning — between what is built and what is bequeathed. Fewer still learn to design not just cities, but lives — not just monuments, but memories.

Philip Recto has done both.

His name may be carved beneath the steel bones of buildings, but the truest structures he leaves behind are the unseen ones: the scholarship awarded in quietude, the young architect emboldened by his belief, the Rotarian guided by his clarity, the friend uplifted by his presence. His greatness lies not in the height of what he has constructed, but in the depth of how he has lived.

In his architecture, we see precision. In his service, we see soul.

He has designed towers, yes — but he has also drafted dreams. He has built offices, yes — but also trust. He has raised campuses and corporate headquarters — but also standards, ideals, and the bar of what it means to be a Filipino professional with conscience.

And within Rotary, he has served not just as a club member, but as a custodian of civility, a silent architect of goodwill, a mentor without title, and a friend without condition.

Some might look at the long résumé of honors — the Likha Gold Medal, the Outstanding Architect of the Year, the UPAA Distinguished Alumni Award, the Paul Harris Fellow citation, the PFPA Professional Excellence Award, the dozens of buildings and decades of service — and call it a legacy of accomplishments.

But those who know him well know better.

His legacy is not in what he has accumulated, but in what he has given.

It is in the silence between his words when he chooses to listen.

It is in the steadiness of his posture when faced with disagreement.

It is in the warmth of his handshake, the thoughtfulness of his advice, the way he elevates the room without ever stepping on a pedestal.

It is in his refusal to speak ill of others, his consistent moral compass, and his belief that buildings, like people, should be honest.

In a world that often measures worth in square footage and social media, he has reminded us — by the example of his life — that real worth lies in integrity. In service. In craftsmanship and character.

And when, years from now, someone walks into the lobby of a building he designed, or flips through the thesis of a student he once supported, or sits at a Rotary meeting



Rtn. Arch. Philip Recto as the 14th Likha Gold Medal Awardee of the United Architects of the Philippines (UAP), 2019

where his name is quietly remembered — they will feel it.

Not just the structure. Not just the scholarship. Not just the silence.

They will feel the presence of a man who shaped the world with gentleness.

A man who drew not only buildings, but bridges.

Who built not only upward, but inward.

Who lived not only with purpose — but with grace.

And that — more than any monument, more than any medal — is the true architecture of a life well-lived.

DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT

Rotary District 3810 Mobilizes for Typhoon Crising Relief



IN the quiet hours of the morning on July 22 and 23, 2025, the Multinational Club House in Parañaque City transformed into a bustling hub of compassion and resolve. Rotary International District 3810, answering the urgent call for aid, gathered its leaders, members, and volunteers for the repacking of relief goods bound for the victims of Typhoon Crising.

Tables stretched across the hall, laden with rice, canned goods, noodles, bottled water, and other essentials. Gloved hands moved in rhythm—scooping, sealing, stacking—each motion carrying not just supplies, but a silent message of hope to families who had lost so much. The air was filled with the quiet hum of determination, punctuated by warm exchanges and words of encouragement among Rotarians united by purpose.



District

Governor Mary Mei Rodrigo's presence inspired the volunteers, reminding all that service above self is not just a Rotary motto but a way of life. The operation was a collaborative effort, a testament to what can be achieved when clubs unite for good, transcending boundaries to meet urgent humanitarian needs.

By the end of two days, the neatly packed relief goods stood as tangible proof of Rotary's promise to be there when it matters most. Soon, these parcels would make their way to evacuation centers, bringing not only sustenance but the assurance that no one stands alone in times of disaster.

In Parañaque City, amidst the echoes of shared labor, the spirit of Rotary shone—steady, unyielding, and deeply human.



DISTRICT EVENT

RID 3810 Holds First District Monthly Meeting



DSG Hermie Esguerra, Special Assistant to the District Governor-Manila SDG Albert S. Alday, and President Raoul Creencia attended the First District Monthly Meeting of Rotary District 3810 for RY 2025-2026 last August 6, 2025 at the Gloria Maris Restaurant, Mall of Asia, Pasay City.



President Raoul Creencia performed together with fellow United Chosen Presidents as part of the UCP Concert Band during the District Monthly Meeting.

DSG Hermie Esguerra and President Raoul Creencia were given awards as early birds at the District Monthly Meeting.





PDG Vince Carlos, PDG Rudy Bediones and DSG Hermie Esguerra attended the Handover and Induction Ceremonies of the Past Presidents Council of Rotary District 3810 last August 11, 2025 at the Century Seafood Restaurant in Manila.



RECOGNITION CORNER

Special Award of Recognition Presented to Rotarian Lance Tan at Rotary District 3810 Monthly Meeting



DSG Hermie Esguerra, Special Assistant to the District Governor-Manila, and President Raoul C. Creencia witnessed the bestowing of the Special Award of Recognition to Rtn. Lance Tan by District Governor Mary Mei Rodrigo in the presence of District Executive Secretary Eric Candidato for graciously lending his Lakbay Museo complete with catering for the purpose of shooting the Rotary District 3810 National Anthem last June 28, 2025 during the First District Monthly Meeting of Rotary District 3810 for RY 2025-2026 last August 6, 2025 at the Gloria Maris Restaurant, Mall of Asia, Pasay City.

Rotarian Lance Tan Launches MindSpark Science Discovery, the Philippines' Largest Interactive Science Museum



ROTARIAN Lance Tan, President and CEO of the Philippine Amusement and Entertainment Corporation (PAEC Global), launched his newest venture, MindSpark Science Discovery, the biggest interactive science museum in the Philippines, sitting on a 9,000 square meter facility at Ayala Malls Manila Bay in Parañaque City, with more than 100 interactive exhibits and 30 themed rooms designed to spark interest and foster a deeper understanding of STEM. No less than Department of Education Secretary Juan Edgardo “Sonny” Angara was on hand to cut the ceremonial ribbon on this milestone event last August 12, 2025.



INTERCLUB EVENT

30th Charter Anniversary and 31st Induction Ceremonies of the Rotary Club of Manila Bay



DISTRICT Secretary General Hermie Esguerra and President Raoul Creencia attended the 30th Charter Anniversary and 31st Induction Ceremonies of the Rotary Club of Manila Bay last August 7, 2025 at the Chardonnay by Astoria, Pasig City.



President Raoul
Creencia with RC
Manila Bay
President Lani
Sison

INTERCLUB ACTIVITY

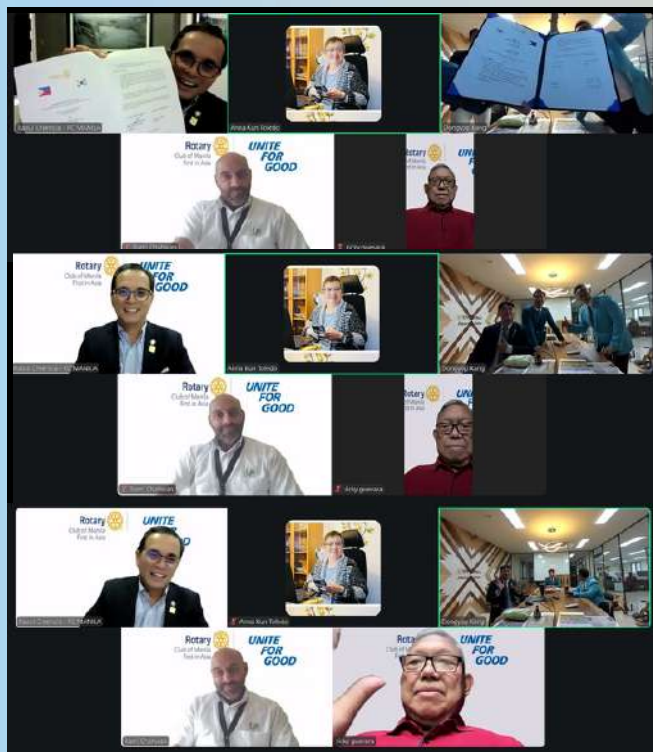
President Raoul Creencia Leads Ocular Inspection for Intended Rotary Club Projects at MMMHS



PRESIDENT Raoul Creencia conducted an ocular inspection at Mariano Marcos Memorial High School (MMMHS) in Sta. Ana, Manila, for intended projects in collaboration with other Manila-based Rotary Clubs. Joining him were (from left) RC Binondo Prime President Joy Francisco, MMMHS representative Ms. Delmalyn Balatay, and RC Intramuros President Dennis Bendo.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Signing of Sisterhood Agreement with Rotary Club of Jinju Jeil (RI District 3590)



PRESIDENT Raoul Creencia, together with Vice President Ricky Guevara and Director Rami Chahwan (Director for International Service), at the signing of sisterhood agreement with the Rotary Club of Jinju Jeil (RI District 3590). The event also marked discussions on a proposed Global Grant partnership, paving the way for deeper collaboration and strengthened ties between the two clubs.



The sisterhood agreement with the Rotary Club of Jinju Jeil

FELLOWSHIP

Aleco Breakfast Fellowship



ALECO Breakfast Fellowship held on August 11, 2025.

Present were (from left) PD Jun Hallare, PD Beda Fajardo, former member Mr. Jorge Salazar, PP Jackie Rodriguez, former member Francis Juico, former member Eric Severino, Rtn. Cris Acosta, Sec Anton Mauricio, PP Ebot Tan, PD Ner Lonzaga, PT Chito Tagaysay, PP Archit Bartolome, and Rtn. Willie Peliño.

COGS IN THE WHEEL

By Dir. Jason Bogovich



I attended today's meeting of the Rotary Club of Kent, Ohio. As someone who grew up in Kent, it was inspiring to see a fellow centennial club in a city of 35,000 sustain 100+ members and still draw ~50 people on a weekday. Not bad for a small city!!



The interesting thing is that their meetings are hybrid, and according to their President, in-person attendance is not impacted.



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