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AND GO FORWARD

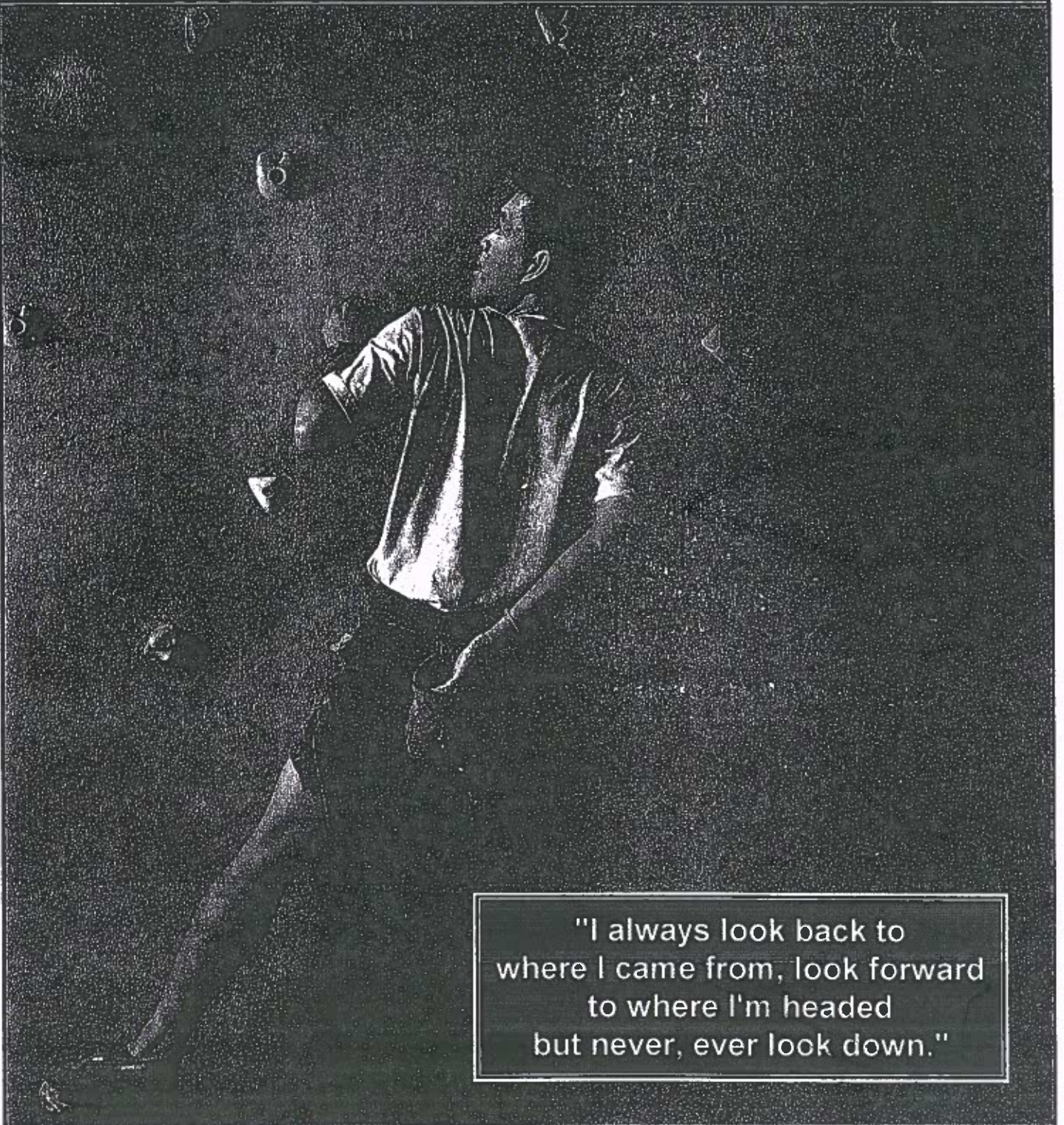
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The Migrants' Newspaper

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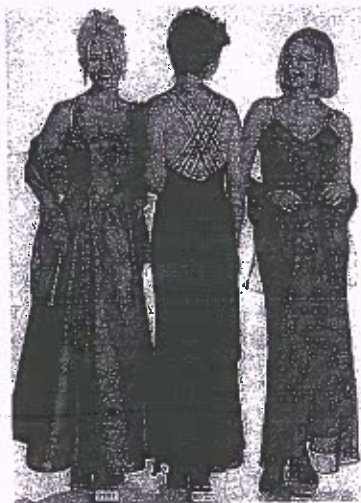


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to where I'm headed
but never, ever look down."

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Business Address: Valdemarsgade 69
DK 1665 Copenhagen V, Denmark

Phone: +45 33 21 99 26
Fax: +45 33 25 86 26
Giro 1-659-9476
e-mail: bayanihan@get2net.dk

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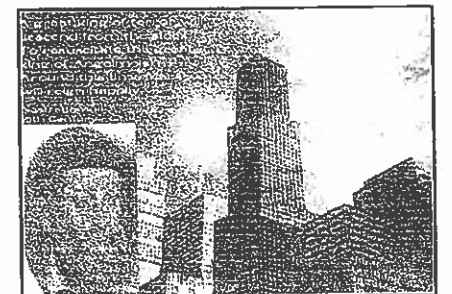
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From the Editor

Rocks in Life!



Deng A. Valera-Larsen

Let me tell you a story of a teacher who gave his students an interesting exercise on time management.

A philosophy professor stood before his class and had some items in front of him. When class began, wordlessly he picked up a large empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks about 2" in diameter. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open areas between the rocks. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. The students laughed but they agreed that it was.

The professor picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else.

"Now," said the professor, "I want you to recognize that this is your life. The rocks are the important things - your family, your children, your health, your faith - anything that is so important to you that if it were lost, you would be nearly destroyed. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car. The sand is everything else. The small stuff."

"If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all

your energy and time on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are really important to you."

"Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical check-ups. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal."

"Take care of the rocks first - the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

Paradoxically, even as modern technology continuously churns out discoveries that are supposed to make our lives simpler and easier, life itself gets more and more complicated, with our job dominating our waking time and defining the roles and relationship we enter into. We become enslaved by our work, so much so that there is no more time and energy left to experience other roles and relationships that enrich our lives and make living truly joyful.

To live joyfully is to have a balanced life. And to have a balanced life is to perform our various roles reasonably well. But how can we find enough time and energy to do our various roles in order to live a balanced life? Or in order to succeed in life?

The answer is simple: By setting our priorities. By and large, we Filipinos espouse the

following hierarchy of values: God, family, health, work and friends. We should know what are most important to us and we should make sure that they come first in our lives. We do not have to choose between family and friends, between home and career, between personal goals and community involvement. All we have to do is to identify the rocks in our lives and place them at the center of our existence.

And when we do, we'll discover to our pleasant surprise that we can do so much more, and that all the other things, the pebbles and the sand, will fall neatly into place complementing one another so that the end result is greater.

Let us remember a line from Winston Churchill, one of the greatest statesmen of all time: *We make a living by what we get; but we make a life by what we give.* ❀

THE WHY OF THE COVER



"I always look back to where I came from, look forward to where I'm headed, but never, ever look down."

Life can be aptly described in terms of unique rockcases God gives each person to climb. Some may be steeper than most; others may be more winding or may have more turns in their paths; while some may be longer or shorter than expected.

We are lone travelers on our individual rockcases, experiencing joys and sorrows all our own.

At times, the journey may seem too long and tiring, or we may stumble and wound ourselves on a random step. But almost always, we pick ourselves up and continue the trek upward even as we doubt, for in our hearts we know that with each resolute step, the door to our happiness at the end of our rockcases inches nearer and nearer.

The power to soar - to reach the top - is on our hands. But let us remember that just like rock climbing, life doesn't end when we reach the top. We have to go on... and live life to its fullest.



Marc R. Dicap

From the President's Desk

OFWs with Money Claims

How to go about it

You are an OFW. You feel aggrieved because all or some of the term conditions of your contract were not followed by your foreign employer, resulting in unpaid money dues. You are now in the Philippines. They say you can still make claims. Where do you file your money claims? How do you go about it? Up to when can you file your money claims?

This simplified guide aims to remove OFW anxieties due to lack of knowledge for the resolution of their money claims. It can also guide agencies, who are wrongly accused, and whose officers have also professed similar anxiety for lack of knowledge of

National Relations Commission (NLRC) procedures. It must be stressed however that this guide does not detail the entire NLRC Rules of Procedure which must be referred to when having an actual case, and that these procedures are bound by the due process requirements of law.

An OFW (a person who is to be engaged, is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a state of which he/she is not a legal resident) shall file his money claim or complaint with a Regional Arbitration Branch (RAB) of NLRC. At the option of the OFW, his/her money claims can be filed with the RAB where he/she resides or where the prin-

cipal office of the respondent/ employer is situated.

For the implementation of the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipino Act of 1995, NLRC created a Migrant Workers Desk. NLRC also designated a Migrant Workers Desk in every RAB all over the country.

The OFWs can file their claims with the NLRC NCR North at PPSTA Building, Banawe St., Quezon City; or with NLRC NCR South at Bookman Building, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

FILING PROCEDURE

1. An OFW goes to complaint section for OFWs to fill up a complaint form. For accurate information, OFWs are advised to secure details about their agencies and contracts from POEA. The completed complaint has to be subscribed and sworn to by the complainant before an administering officer.

2. Complainants can have their complaint notarized free of charge before the authorized Administrative Officer.

3. The complaint is docketed, that is, listed, numbered and raffled to the Labor Arbiter who will hear and decide the case.

4. The OFW then proceeds to the office of the Labor Arbiter and learns from the staff the date of the initial mandatory conciliation conference(s). Thereafter, the complainant can leave to return on the scheduled meeting.

The staff of the Labor Arbiters takes charge of sending sum-

mons (notice of the complaints with the dates of the hearings) to the respondent.

In the mandatory conciliation conferences before the Labor Arbiter, issues are simplified and parties are encouraged to settle their case amicably. Should the effort fails, parties are directed to submit pleadings. Hearings are conducted only if necessary.

The decision of the Labor Arbiter when not appealed becomes final and executory. If appealed, the appeal is filed with the same NLRC Branch/Labor Arbiter that decided the case but addressed to the Commission with payment of proper appeal fees. The entire records of the case is forwarded to the Division of the Commission having jurisdiction over the RAB.

As a rule, the resolution of the Commission becomes final and executory after ten calendar days from receipt of the parties.

Any of the parties, however, can file a Motion for Reconsideration (MR) on the decision of the Commission but only on palpable or clear errors. A party can ask the Court of Appeals (then, and after the Supreme Court) to review the case by way of *Certiorari*.

Thereafter, the decision is recorded in the Book of Entry of Judgments and the entire records of the case is sent back to the Labor Arbiter of origin for execution.

Under the NLRC New Rules of Procedure, the parties to a case can, at any stage of the proceeding, amicably settle their case. ❀

ERRATA

We would like to apologize to our columnist Dr. Arlene Torres D'Mello for the typographical errors committed in her column *From Down Under*.

In her article entitled "When to Act Filipino and When to Act Australian" that appeared in the June issue of the Filipino Mirror, the introductory sentence should have been "If migrant parents have difficulties bringing up their children..." instead of "If my grandparents have difficulties bringing up their children..."

We would also like to extend our apologies to Ms. Rosemarie Magno, Proprietress of Rostan's, for the incorrect telephone number printed in her advertisement at the inside cover of the newsletter.

The correct telephone number of Rostan's is 32 59 68 00.

Our sincere apologies. Editorial Board

Sa paglalahad na ito ay matutunghayan ninyo ang mahahalagang "amendments" na ipinaglalaman ng mga grupo ng migranteng manggagawa na maipaloob sa R.A. 8042. Bagaman ang R.A. 8042 ay nalikha bilang proteksyon ng mga "Overseas Filipino Workers" (OFW), hindi nito ganap na napapangalagaan ang mga karapatan ng ating mga migranteng manggagawa.



Samu't Sari ni Diko

PAT D. VALENZUELA

AMEND R. A. 8042 Upholds Migrant Rights and Interests

The Alliance of Migrant Workers and Advocates to Amend RA 8042 (AMEND) expenses deep concern over the continuing abuse and exploitation of overseas Filipino workers, and calls on the incoming members of the legislature in particular and the Arroyo administration to prioritize the proposed amendments to the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995 in the list of urgent legislative measures in the 12th Congress.

RA No. 8042 serves as a concrete gain for overseas Filipinos, whose sacrifices and hardships in foreign lands have been lauded by successive administrations. Yet many of its provisions disregard major issues which affect OFWs, and deny government responsibility over the protection of migrant rights. Hence, the difficulty with which OFWs and their families still clamor for justice, almost six years after enactment. Worse, its objective towards eventual deregulation, in the face of widespread violation of labor standards, violation against women in overseas employment, and hostile acts of racism, discriminatory and xenophobia suffered by migrant workers in general, envisions a purely pro-recruiter, market-driven labor export industry.

We are increasingly troubled that Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's thrust for increased employment is silent on much needed protection for the human

rights of Filipino workers especially those abroad. Overseas Filipinos have yet to realize their right to vote. Legal remedies for illegal recruitment, blacklisting, age cut-off and illegal termination of OFWs are lacking and the little that we have are not enforced. Social security, as well as economically and socially productive reintegration programs, is a distant reality for returning OFWs. The most at risk sectors in international labor migration - women and children, continue to be trafficked, prostituted, and suffer virtual enslavement in many countries which generally do not have bilateral agreements with the Philippines, and have not ratified the 1990 UN Convention on the protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

Regular consultation - dialogues mechanisms between OFW returnees, advocates and government agencies; effective monitoring and assistance to OFWs in 3-D jobs (dirty, dangerous and demeaning); comprehensive aid to distressed OFWs and their families; reorientation of the *country team approach* in various Philippine embassies and consulates; and finally a gender, ethnicity-sensitive bureaucracy, are some of the measures needed to address, at least in part, the immediate problems faced by the OFWs.

AMEND submits that the

proposed amendments are crucial to the transformation of RA 8042 into a truly PRO-OFW LAW. In working for the passage of amendments as proposed by various migrant workers organizations and advocates, candidates vying for the seats in the House of Representatives and the Senate can demonstrate their commitment to improve the lives of more than 7 million OFWs, and their families.

10 POINT PRO-OFW ELECTORAL AGENDA

1. Stop the deregulation of the overseas labor industry and reassert government's primary role in the protection and promotion of OFW's rights and welfare.
2. Work for the generation of local employment, as well as economically and socially productive reintegration programs for returning and retiring overseas Filipino workers.
3. Amend RA 8042 to incorporate important protection, specifically for seafarers and women migrant workers.
4. Immediately address the problem of trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation, bonded labor and slavery-like conditions.
5. Implement a comprehensive socio-economic program and other safety nets for women survivors of violence abroad, and families of migrant workers, including women abandoned by their

spouses working abroad.

6. Certify as urgent the bill on Absentee Voting for overseas Filipinos, and the Anti-Trafficking in Women and Minors Act.

7. Create Bilateral Labor Agreements with receiving countries, mechanisms to monitor their implementation and regional forum or any venue where it can discuss and resolve issues concerning labor migration, especially respect and protection of the human rights of migrants workers.

8. Negotiate for the repeal of racist, xenophobic and discriminatory policies and laws in receiving countries such as the two-week rule for foreign domestic workers in Hong Kong, the mandatory HIV-AIDS testing in several countries, the mandatory pregnancy test in Singapore and immediate deportation for positive cases.

9. Implement social security, health and housing coverage for OFCWs.

10. Institute gender sensitivity training among key officials and front-line personnel of government agencies in charge for labor migration - the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), and the Dept. of Foreign Affairs (DFA), and enforce gender sensitive mechanism, programs, and approaches to deal with many issues and concerns of migrant workers. ❀

Noon at Ngayon ni Nene RAMON F. MAGSAYSAY Jdolo ng Masa



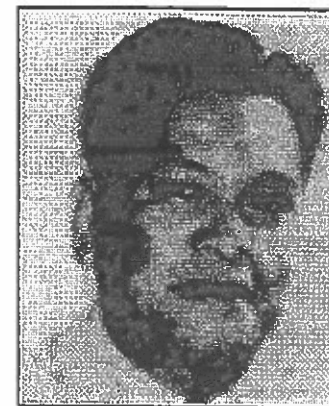
Naniniwala ako na ang taong kapos sa buhay ay dapat mapunan sa batas (I believe that he who has less in life should have more in law)...

Ito ay isa sa panuntunan ni Ramon F. Magsaysay, hinangaang pangulo ng ating bayan.

Sa kauna-unahang pagkakataon, ang palasyo ng *Malacañan* ay nabuksan sa mga karaniwang mamamayan o sa masa. Ito ay naganap nang manungkulan si Ramon F. Magsaysay bilang pangatlong pangulo ng Ikatlong Republika ng Pilipinas.

Si Ramon F. Magsaysay ay isinilang sa Iba, Zambales noong 31 Agosto 1907. Ang kanyang mga magulang ay sina Exequiel Magsaysay at Perfekta del Fierro.

Ang ama ay isang guro sa Iba sa mga nagnanais na maging aluwage. Nangangasiwa rin siya ng isang talyer sa pagpapanday sa Castillejos at gumagawa siya ng *carretas* at kariton na hinihila ng



Ramon Magsaysay
1953 - 1957

kalabaw. Dito ay tumutulong si Ramon at ito marahil ang dahilan kung bakit siya ay nagtataglay ng matipunong pangangatawan.

Nag-aral si Ramon sa mababang paaralan ng Castillejos, Zambales. May natatagong talino, ang dapat na apat na taong pag-aaral sa Zambales Academy sa San Narciso, isa ring bayan sa Zambales, ay tinapos lamang niya nang tatlong taon.

Noong taong 1927, si Ramon ay lumuwas ng Maynila at nagpatala sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas upang mag-aral ng pagkalinhiyero. Habang nag-aaral, si Ramon ay namasukan ng iba't ibang gawain upang hindi siya gaanong umasa sa magulang.

Subalit si Ramon ay nagkasakit. Pinagpayuhan siya ng manggagamot na magpahinga muna, sapagka't ang kanyang mga baga ay humihina. Umuwi si Ramon sa kanyang bayan at di nagtagal ay muling nagbalik ang kanyang kalusugan.

Nang magbalik si Ramon sa UP ay hindi na siya tinanggap at napag-alaman niyang siya ay itinalang "bagsak" sa paaralan. Hindi niya nasabihan ang paman-tasan na siya ay itigil muna dahil sa kanyang karamdaman.

Ipinasya ni Ramon na huwag nang ipagpatuloy ang dating pinag-aaralan. Sa halip ay nag-aral siya ng komersiyo sa Jose Rizal College. Dito ay nagtapos siya noong 1930. Habang nag-aaral, si Ramon ay namasukan bilang tsuper ng may-ari ng bahay

na kanyang tinutuluyan.

Si Ramon ay isa ring mahusay na mekaniko. Naging tagapangasiwa siya sa isang talyer ng Try-Tran Company, isang kompanya ng mga sasakyan noong araw. Ang kanyang buwanang sahod ay 80 piso.

Noong ikalawang digmaan, si Ramon ay may ranggong kapitan sa Hukbong Sandatahan. Sumanib din siya sa mga gerilya. Dahil sa katapatan sa tungkulin, ang kanyang mga tauhan ay nananatili ring tapat sa kanya.

Noong Pebrero 1946, si Magsaysay ay tumiwalag sa hukbo. Noon ding taong iyon ay nahalal siyang kinatawan ng Zambales. Muli siyang nahalal noong 1949.

Dahil sa kakayahang ipinamalas ni Magsaysay bilang lider ng hukbo, hinirang siya noong 1 Setyembre 1950 ng Pangulong Elpidio Quirino bilang Kalihim ng Tanggulang Pambansa. Bilang Kalihim ay naibalik niya ang pagtitiwala ng mga tao sa mga sundalo.

Sa pampanguluhang halalang ginanap noong 10 Nobyembre 1953, nagwagi si Magsaysay laban kay Pangulong Quirino. Sa buong panahon ng kanyang panunungkulan ay hindi nagbago ang kanyang pagmamalasakit sa karaniwang tao o masa.

Kung lalagumin ang kanyang sinabi ay ganire: "Nauunawaan ko ang mga taong ito, sapagka't noong araw ay isa rin ako sa kanila. Dahil sa aking katungkulan ngayon ay sisikapin ko ang lahat

upang mabawasan ang kanilang paghihirap."

Si Ramon Magsaysay ay kasal kay Luz Banzon ng Bataan. Tatlo ang kanilang anak: sina Teresita, Milagros at Ramon, Jr. na isa ring pulitiko.

Noong 17 Marso 1957, siya ay nasawi, kasama ng iba pang pinuno, nang bumagsak ang eroplanong kinalulunanan nila sa Bundok Manunggal, Cebu. Siya ay 49 na taong gulang nang mangyari ang sakuna.

MGA NAGANAP NOONG PANAHON NI MAGSAYSAY

1. Si Ramon Magsaysay ay minahal at idolo ng masa. Naibalik niya ang pagtitiwala ng mga mamamayan sa pamahalaang demokratiko.

2. Sa administrasyon niya, nasupil ang rebeldeng Kilusan ng Huk na pinamumunuan ni Luis Taruc.

3. Ang Barong Tagalog na dating kasuutan ng mahihirap ay iniangat niya bilang pangunahing kasuutan ng mga Pilipino. Siya ang kauna-unahang pangulo na nagsuot ng Barong Tagalog sa Pasinaya sa Pangulo noong 30 Disyembre 1953.

4. Nabigyang-pansin ang mga malalayong nayon na dati-rati ay hindi nararating ng ibang pangulo.

5. Panahon niya nang nabuo ang Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) noong 8 Setyembre 1954.

6. Pinagtibay ang Batas Laurel-Langley upang ipagpatuloy ang pakikipagkalakalan ng Pilipinas sa Estados Unidos mula 15 Disyembre 1954 hanggang 3 Hulyo 1974.

7. Pinagtibay ang kasunduang Bayad-Pinsala ng Hapon at Pilipinas noong 9 Mayo 1956, na nagtatadhana ng pagbabayad ng Hapon sa Pilipinas ng halagang \$800 milyon sa loob ng 25 taon. Ito ay para sa mga pinsalang idinulot ng mga Hapones noong panahon ng digmaan. ❀