



# SINAG

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A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT ACTION FOR WOMEN NETWORK (DAWN)

January-March 2004

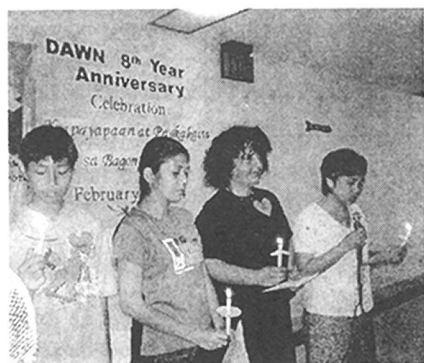
## Joyous and thankful for DAWN's 8th year

It was a solemn anniversary celebration for DAWN last February 7 when the staff, volunteers, guests, women and children members renewed ties and commitment as one family through a thanksgiving worship at the fifth floor lobby of the Don Santiago Building.

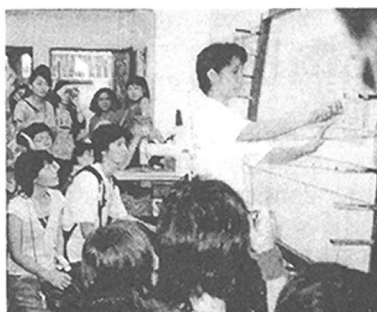
Sr. Adelina Terrado of the Daughters of Charity gave the inspirational message where she stressed the importance of moving on after the painful experience from working abroad. She particularly lauded the women members of DAWN who have managed to be strong after the Japan experience and are now trying to redirect their lives for themselves and their Japanese-Filipino children (JFC).

One of these women, Angelita Kawaguchi, expressed gratitude for the Lord's blessings in her prayer of commitment. She prayed for guidance and help that they may be able to fulfill their

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The prayers of commitment by the staff, members and volunteers.



## DAWN welcomes 2004 with Peace Boat

DAWN started the year 2004 in a festive mood as the staff, members and volunteers welcomed delegates from the Peace Boat 44<sup>th</sup> world cruise during their Manila visit last January 1 and 2.

The DAWN family was in full force to greet the delegates, who were mostly Japanese, upon their arrival at the port area last January 1 complete with streamers, dances and warm smiles. The solidarity night was a fitting way to end the day as Filipino music moved everyone to party and to savor the moment with newly-found friends.

The January 2 celebration proved to be even more exciting as more than a hundred delegates came to visit the DAWN office, DAWN Center and the Sikhay sewing and weaving projects before proceeding to the Senden Hall of



the Asian Social Institute (ASI) for a cultural exchange with the (To page 3)

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## EDITORIAL

# DAWN women as instruments of change

In 1975, the United Nations (UN) proclaimed March 8 of each year as International Women's Day when women around the world are recognized for their struggles and achievements. The UN also declared March as the International Women's Month "to awaken the consciousness of governments, leaders, and policymakers all over the world to pursue policies and programs that will help uplift women from their abject conditions."

This year's theme, "Working in Solidarity: Women, Human Rights, and Peace," recognizes the role of women as instruments of change given the new roles and tasks they assume in the family, society, nation, and the world where the values of equality, justice, peace, and solidarity should prevail. Women have likewise made great efforts to attain justice and equal opportunity for themselves and their children.

DAWN takes cognizance of these important roles of women.

With the feminization of migration, many women migrants are inevitably subjected to vulnerabilities like what our Filipino women entertainers in Japan go through. From pre-departure to reintegration, they bear the various forms of violations against their human rights.

These issues have been the main focus of DAWN's advocacy work. In raising awareness and in pushing for policy reforms and government action, DAWN sees it important to mold advocates from these women themselves who have gone through the Japan experience as former entertainers. They have the experiences to share and from which their fellow women can learn. They know the feelings — fears, worries, and apprehensions — of working as entertainers while being away from their families. They understand the difficult life upon their return. What these women returnees need is to be empowered with the knowledge, skills and attitude on human rights

and how to assert them, and on their possible contribution to protect the rights of other women.

These are the opportunities provided by DAWN to its own members. Although the purpose of these women is to seek DAWN's help in their legal concerns, usually for the paternal recognition and support of their Japanese-Filipino children (JFC), DAWN also provides them with other learning activities to help them redirect their lives and eventually become independent and self-sufficient.


In the first quarter of the year, DAWN has already conducted a number of workshops and team-building sessions for its women members.

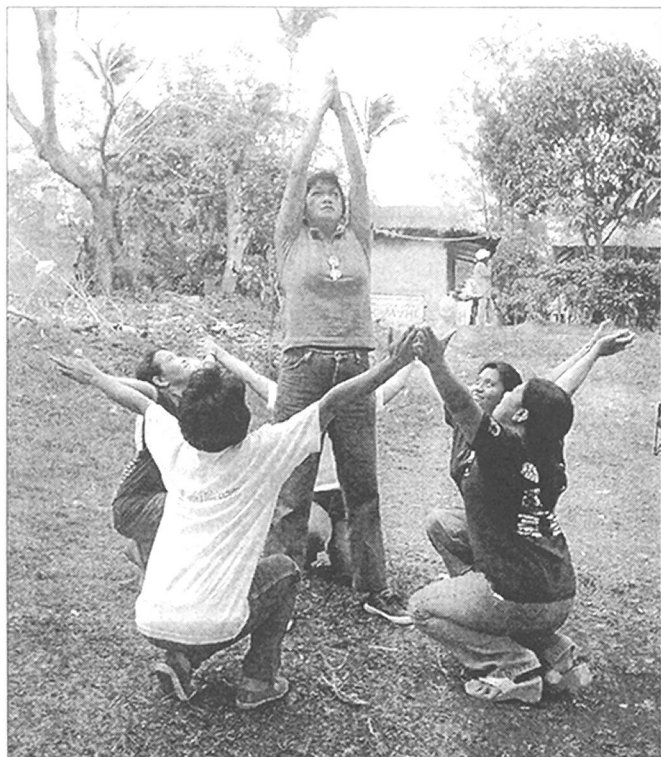
These activities helped the women to know and accept themselves, to move on from the painful past and to face their lives with renewed hope and optimism. Camaraderie is likewise developed among them, recognizing their similarities and differences as former entertainers and as mothers to their JFCs.

One major factor highlighted in these activities are the women's potentials as advocates of women migrants' rights. Their knowledge on human rights instruments, gender issues, migration realities and possible remedies, along with their communication skills and willingness to learn and be of help to their fellow women, were tapped and recognized in their group sharing and exercises.

Through a study tour in Japan, women members of Sikhay, DAWN's alternative livelihood program, were likewise exposed to the market and networks that continuously patronize their products and are given the opportunity to show off their new skills far different from their previous work as entertainers.

By making their voices heard and by taking collective action, the women members of DAWN assume an important and difficult role of bringing about a positive change in the migration phenomenon. And it doesn't have to be Women's Month or Women's Day before we recognize and appreciate such potentials of our women.

For us in DAWN, we celebrate our 8<sup>th</sup> year with pride for what our women members have become and can still possibly be in the coming years — more empowered, stronger, and more confident. 



DAWN women present a tableau of empowered women during one of their workshops.

# My first experience with Peace Boat

by Hiromi T. Ozawa, JFC

I'm very excited when Tita Mirriam told my mother about the Peace Boat visit because it's my first time to join them. We entertained them at the ASI Hall. We performed for them, we sang and danced together.

I met Ate Kei. She's so kind to me. We painted our names in Japanese. Ate Satomi taught me how to make origami, t-shirts, and birds.

And I met Kuya Yo. We played jumping rope outside and I heard them counting in Japanese. We ate lunch together and in the evening they invited us to have dinner with them at the Peace Boat.

When we were entering the boat one by one, the Japanese were clapping and cheering for us. And I saw Ate Kei again and I smiled at her. She accompanied me at the dining hall. We shared the



same table with Ate Miyuki and other JFC or Japanese-Filipino children. There were three Japanese at our table.

After eating dinner, they toured us inside the boat. All of us JFC were excited

while going to other rooms. They have souvenir shops, gym, bars, swimming pool, and basketball court. We sang for them again. And the cameras kept on flashing, taking pictures of us.

When we went out of the boat, because it was time to say goodbye to them, I saw the Japanese people waving goodbye and throwing ribbons of different colors. We caught it and I held it because they were holding the other end.



Hiromi (left) together with the other JFCs, sing for the delegates during their boat tour.

## DAWN WELCOMES from page 1

DAWN family.

The Japanese-Filipino children (JFC) gladly welcomed the delegates with their songs, "Welcome to the Family" and "Kumusta Ka! Ogenki desu-ka!"

Jannis Montañez, DAWN's Research and Advocacy Officer, also presented an overview of DAWN's programs and services before the video showing of "Dear Papa: Letters to Japan," "The

Correspondents" special feature on JFCs.

The delegates, staff, volunteers, and women and JFC members were later divided into groups. With the theme, "Peace and Development,"



DAWN members and Peace Boat delegates engage in group activities.



DAWN women's own rendition of "Babae Ka."

they came up with unique presentations through song, dance, art work, collage, and role playing which brought out not only their creativity but also the camaraderie

developed among the participants.

The women also presented excerpts from their musical play, "Iba't-Ibang Mukha ni Misty," and their own rendition of the song, "Babae Ka" while their children gracefully danced to the tune of "Flower Dance."

Peace Boat delegates also prepared some Japanese treats and games, much to the delight of the children who were in a playful mood and willingly tried hiragana  
(To page 4)



DAWN WELCOMES *from page 3*

*Children welcome the delegates with a song.*



*Women and children have a grand time with the delegates at ASI hall.*



*Children play and mingle with the other delegates inside the boat.*

warmly welcome the staff, volunteers, women and children with their friendly smiles and a hearty meal to share for dinner. They were toured inside the boat and were able to meet the other delegates.

The experience with Peace Boat was overwhelming that saying goodbye became an emotional moment for everyone, especially for the children who have easily developed a bond with some



*JFCs enjoy playing Japanese toys.*

of the delegates whom they fondly called their "ates" and "kuyas."

There were colorful ribbons thrown by the delegates on board while the women and children caught the other end of the ribbons, strongly holding on to them. As the boat was leaving, the ribbons slowly snapped off and the children began to shed tears while shouting meaningful goodbyes, waving and sadly watching the boat leaves.

*Children strongly hold on to the ends of the ribbons as Peace Boat leaves.*



### Lectures on board

From Manila, DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui joined Peace Boat's tour to Singapore from January 2-9. On board, Nuqui provided some lectures about the programs and services of DAWN. Sikhay products were also sold and patronized by the delegates



*DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui during one of her lectures on board.*

who were impressed by the skills and the products made by DAWN's women returnees from Japan. This and other projects of DAWN continuously generate support from Peace Boat as one of the organization's partners in protecting the rights of migrant women and their JFCs.

### Bidding goodbye

After the cultural exchange, DAWN family looked forward to the exciting boat tour to cap the whole day's activity. It was the delegates' turn to



*Mel Nuqui joins the other delegates on the way to Singapore.*

The whole DAWN family looks forward to another meaningful celebration with them in the coming years. 📷



## JOYOUS from page 1

duties and obligations as they face another year as DAWN members.

While on behalf of the children, Miyuki Shiga asked for empowerment and hope for the cause of her fellow JFCs.

"We hope and pray that the DAWN staff and volunteers will continue their support and their services and share their abilities to help the JFCs and the DAWN women," Shiga said.

The volunteers, represented by Soul Can Yildiz, also asked for the Lord's guidance as they continue supporting and fighting for the cause of the DAWN members. Yildiz likewise acknowledged in

the Lord's graces and blessings for the DAWN staff that they may be able to continue fulfilling their tasks of protecting the rights of women migrants and their children.

"Naniniwala po kami na kami ay iyong pinagbuklod upang maging instrumento sa gawaing ito." (We believe that you have put us together to become instruments in this endeavor.), Barcelona said in her prayer.

The morning ceremonies ended with the closing prayer and benediction by Sr. Terrado and everyone's touching rendition of the song, "Let There Be Peace on Earth."

### Afternoon celebration

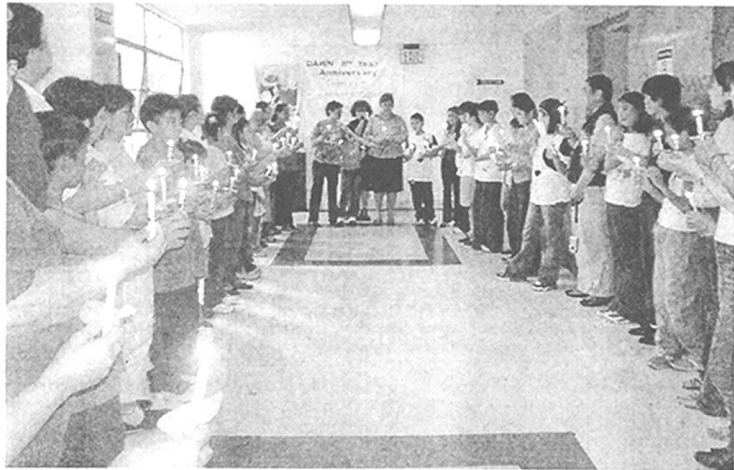
Camraderie and ties were strengthened through a simple program in the



Sr. Adelina Terrado inspires everyone with her anniversary message for the DAWN family.

women and children. There were raffle draws and parlor games that added more fun and excitement to the celebration.

Study tour participants also gamely joined the activities. The February tour is scheduled by DAWN-Japan in time for the DAWN anniversary so the participants can also take part in the celebration.



In a fellowship circle, singing "One Little Candle."

her prayer of commitment the learning experiences they had about the women and JFCs and about the capabilities that volunteers like her can contribute for their development.

Sikhay coordinator Mary Joy Barcelona, on the other hand, prayed for

afternoon. Apart from the traditional signing of the DAWN anniversary banner, everyone also enjoyed the presentations prepared by the



DAWN women gamely present a funny yet meaningful song number.



DAWN family's thanksgiving worship.

Natsumi Shiga led the fellowship circle in singing "One Little Candle" while another JFC, Tsuyoshi Imai, delivered the inspiring closing prayer.

"Lord, please enable us to use this new year of DAWN the wisest way we can for you and for your glory. And during the year, may we have... enough trials to keep us strong, enough sorrows to keep us human, enough hope to keep us happy... enough success to keep us eager... and enough determination to make each day better than the day before," the eleven-year-old JFC said in his prayer. 🙏

# Empowering workshops for DAWN women

by Jannis T. Montañez and Evangeline M. Macariola

Some got too emotional. Others were evidently optimistic. While there were a few who needed more encouragement. Though their reactions varied, the women members of DAWN managed to

value clarification and modification helped them to identify and appreciate the



*Women share their personal feelings and experiences during their workshops.*

draw strength from each other and emerged as better individuals during their series of workshops in the first quarter of the year.

Discovery and acceptance of one's self was the focus of the first three workshops conducted by Social Services Coordinator Mirriam Orig with the assistance of volunteer Soul Can Yildiz, to fifteen DAWN members.

Through sharing of personal experiences during their self-awareness workshop last January 24, the women were able to build / strengthen their confidence and trust to each other.

While the February 21 workshop on

*Expression of one's self and values through art work.*



*Women are trained to communicate and express themselves better in group presentations.*

most significant person in their lives who

Communication and its relevance to them as a group, on the other hand, was the focus of the workshop conducted last March 2.



*Women express their commitment to improve themselves.*

## Molding women as advocates

To prepare these women to greater responsibilities as advocates of women migrants' rights, March workshops centered on developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of DAWN women on migration issues and their important role in bringing about positive changes.

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# SIKHAY Study Tour

New learning experiences for DAWN women

by Mary Joy E. Barcelona



It was not the first time that I traveled to Japan as a DAWN member. As the coordinator of Sikhay, DAWN's alternative livelihood program, I have been to Japan for a number of times to promote and market our products during the Teatro Akebono musical tour.

But the last Japan visit I had was a different and challenging experience because two Sikhay members were with me and participated in the Sikhay study tour from March 26 to April 3.

The nine-day tour was a learning experience for me, and for Josephine Avelino, the pattern maker/cutter of our sewing project, and Imelda Balayo, member of our hand-weaving project.

We felt privileged to have met DAWN's different networks in  
*Visit at Sachiko Malta's shop where Sikhay products are also being sold.*



*Sikhay items like the one shown above are sold by networks like Hatsue Kanda from Sanjo, Niigata prefecture.*

together with DAWN's Executive Director Carmelita Nuqui and DAWN-Japan volunteers, Chiho Ogaya and Azusa Kawamura.

We attended meetings and fora and personally met with the networks who help us market and sell Sikhay products in Japan: the Children's

School and Studies coordinated by Yoriko Nakahira, Sachiko



*Meeting with Sachiko Malta, one of Sikhay-DAWN's networks in Niigata.*

five (5) cities and prefectures in Japan (Saitama, Niigata City, Tsubame Sanjo, Yokohama and Tokyo)



*Meeting with Jichiro in Tokyo.*

Malta's NGO College and Narunia, Hatsue Kanda's group, and Naomi Tsumura of Marjoram.

The product samples, suggestions and comments from our networks were valuable



*Sachiko-san (middle) shows the different threads used for her handwoven products while Yoriko Nakahira (left) looks on.*

insights we can apply to further improve the quality of our products and to come up with new items made of batik and hand-woven materials.

We also visited some fair trade shops and department stores where we also got ideas on the latest fashion trends in Japan which we can use in coming up with new

designs and styles. We also visited Ms. Sachiko who shared with us her techniques in hand-weaving.

The group was overwhelmed by the opportunity

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SIKHAY from page 7



From left: Azusa Kawamura, Josephine Avelino, Mary Joy Barcelona, Hatsue Kanda, Carmelita Nuqui, Imelda Balayo, and Chiho Ogaya in front of Kanda-san's shop.

to meet Yuko Sato of Niigata, Mr. Noboru Inokuchi and Ms. Setsuko Kubota of the Jichiro International Department, Mr. Shigeru Nakajima of JTUC-Rengo, Atty. Kenshi Nishida (DAWN's Advisory Council Member), Rep. Kazuo Inoue with representatives from the



Sikhay weaver Imelda Balayo shares with Marjoram members led by Naomi Tsumura (second from left), her personal experiences as a former entertainer and now as a member of DAWN's livelihood program.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Peace Boat's Shinsaku Nohira and Yoko Furuyama and of course the other DAWN-Japan volunteers who all have been supporting not only Sikhay but the other programs and activities of DAWN.

We had the chance to share with these networks our thoughts, feelings and experiences as former entertainers and now members of

Sikhay. Along with meeting with our networks, we also presented a thirteen-minute excerpt of our Teatro Akebono musical play "Iba't-Ibang Mukha Ni Misty" (The Different Faces of Misty). This allowed us to further advocate our concerns and issues as former entertainers as well as the plight of the Japanese-Filipino children. Our group also discussed the holistic

approach of DAWN in implementing its programs and services.

The tour was not just a learning experience for



Meeting with Yoriko Nakahira of the Association for Education and Protection of Asian Culture, one of Sikhay-DAWN's networks in Saitama.

all of us.

"Naibalik yong confidence and dignity na nawala sa 'kin pagkatapos ng walong beses kong pagpunta sa Japan bilang entertainer." (I was able to regain my confidence and dignity that I lost after working in Japan as an entertainer for eight times.), Balayo shared her feeling after joining the tour.

Avelino, on the other hand, expressed gladness for the opportunity to join the



Sayu-san (center), one of Sikhay networks, with the study tour group after the forum in Niigata.



Sikhay women present excerpts from their musical play, "Iba't-Ibang Mukha ni Misty," during a forum in Niigata.

tour which made her hard work and dedication as Sikhay member even more rewarding.

Indeed, the study tour allowed us women members of DAWN to show

how we have managed to stand up from our fall and are now taking pride of the decent job we have in Sikhay. And for this we are forever grateful to our DAWN family and to our networks and supporters who constantly help us redirect our lives despite the prevailing odds. 🍀

## SINAG

SINAG ("akebono" or "yoake" in Japanese) means dawn or daybreak. It is the quarterly publication of the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), a non-government, development organization devoted to issues concerning migrant women and their Japanese-Filipino children.

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# Seafarers cast votes as preparations for land-based absentee voters continue

by Jannis T. Montañez

(Reprinted with permission from the OFW Journalism Consortium)

The Philippines' first overseas absentee voting (OAV) exercise started last March 12 with the seafarers casting their votes for president, vice-president, senators and party-list representatives. Meanwhile, preparations are in stream for voting by land-based absentee voters.

As of March 26, some 88 Filipino seafarers had voted in various Philippine embassies and consulates around the world, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs. These posts include Bangkok, Brunei, Hongkong, Korea, Phnom Penh, Port Moresby, and Singapore in the Asia-Pacific region; Chicago and Spain in North America; Abu Dhabi, Amman, Beirut and Tripoli in the Middle East; and Athens, Berlin, and Hamburg in Europe.

Seafarers have until May 10, 2004 to cast their votes, while the 30-day period for land-based absentee voters will commence on April 11.

## 'Lahat ng puwedeng gawin, ginawana'

"*Lahat ng puwedeng gawin, ginawana na yata sa Overseas Absentee Voting* (Everything that could be done has been done for Overseas Absentee Voting)," said Catherine Maceda, Vice-Chair of the Department of Foreign Affairs-Overseas Absentee Voting (DFA-OAV) Secretariat, in the face of criticisms and complaints about the preparedness of the diplomatic posts to conduct the exercise.

Maceda's comment was part of her presentation on the government's preparations for the first-ever overseas absentee-voting exercise, at a forum on "Overseas Filipinos and the 2004 National Elections" organized by the OFW Journalism Consortium last March 19 at the Manila Pavilion Hotel.

To date, according to Maceda, all foreign posts have received the ballot boxes, ballots, election materials and paraphernalia from the Commission on Elections (Comelec). Requests for additional ballots have already been made by posts that reported deficiencies in the number of ballots delivered to them.

Maceda noted the creation of the Special Board of Election Inspectors (SBEIs), the Special Ballot Reception and Custody Group (SBRCG), and the Special Board of Canvassers in the foreign posts with a total of 2,730 members. These boards are deputized by the Comelec to secure the votes of Filipinos abroad.

A total of 468 DFA personnel deputized as COMELEC representatives trained by the Comelec and the DFA conducted echo seminars in 81 posts and 3 MECO offices in preparation for their major participation in the political exercise.

## 'Cheating is practically impossible'

"Cheating is practically impossible in absentee voting," Maceda assured migrants and advocates during the forum. Poll watchers and the media will be allowed during the actual counting of votes to further ensure transparency.

One group, however, expressed some dissatisfaction over the government's efforts to ensure the integrity of the overseas-voting exercise. In her presentation during the forum, Ellene Sana, officer-in-charge of the Center for Migrant Advocacy-Philippines, cited some loopholes in the conduct of the registration and the preparation for the actual voting, like the lack of preparedness of some embassies and consulates, the lack of information dissemination, the insufficient number of voting centers, budget constraints, and the delayed release of the list of candidates. The list of party-list organizations came out only on March 12, the day the seafarers began going to the polls.

Sana described the OAV law as "flawed", but felt nonetheless that it signified the political empowerment of overseas Filipinos, and ought to be regarded as a breakthrough in NGO advocacy.

In response, Maceda said that although the foreign posts may have committed mistakes in implementing the OAV, these have been corrected.

"When we expect too much during the initial days of implementation, I think that's being impractical," she remarked in response to criticisms and complaints raised by some sectors.

Reacting to an incident in the


Philippine Embassy in Korea when two visiting legislators from the House of Representatives encountered some awkwardness, due to attempts by the embassy officials to adhere to a non-partisan policy, Maceda said this only shows how DFA officials and personnel are aware of the provisions of the law.

## Not clueless but 'masinop'

"While a congressman may not necessarily run for a position being elected under the OAV act, we should all remember that they are part of political parties. And while they may not be running for a national position, they may be promoting the candidacy of a person running for a national position. That's not being clueless at all (on the part of the posts). That is, in fact, being *masinop* (prudent)," Maceda explained.

As reported on the DFA website, venues approved by their host governments for use as field and satellite voting precincts are being prepared in accordance with Comelec-prescribed guidelines. Polling precincts within the posts' premises and other designated areas approved by Comelec have already been established.

Following DFA Secretary Delia Domingo Albert's visit to Vietnam during the first week of March, the Vietnamese government granted the use of a government guest house in Ho Chi Minh City as venue for the conduct of OAV. The DFA Secretary herself inspected the facility during her brief stay in the city.

Secretary Albert has reminded the officials and personnel at the posts "to ensure the integrity and credibility of the voting process" and that the electoral bodies must "observe attention to details, diligence and transparency in the exercise of their functions." 

*The OFW Journalism Consortium is a non-profit media-civil society coalition that writes and distributes newsfeatures and in-depth reports on Philippine migration issues.*

## Newsbriefs

### DAWN joins the National Migrants' Sunday celebration

DAWN staff, members and volunteers joined fellow advocates and migrant groups in celebrating the 18<sup>th</sup> National Migrants' Sunday last February 29 at the Quirino Grandstand in Luneta.

With the theme, "*Handog ng Plipino sa Mundo*," the event was graced by His Excellency Gaudencio Rosales, Archbishop of Manila, who was also the main celebrant of the Eucharist. His Excellency Bishop Ramon C. Arguelles, Chairman of the CBCP-Episcopal Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI), Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and other clergy and religious representatives from various Catholic communities were also there to celebrate with around 5,000 representatives from different parish communities and organizations.

Charles Alberto Ibay, a gifted and world-renowned Filipino artist,

came to share his musical talent to the participants. Despite his blindness, Ibay was not discouraged to pursue his inclination to music and singing.


His two-hour performance left a positive impression to the participants including Rosalie Akase, one of DAWN's women members who attended the event.

"*Nakakabilib yong galing nya. Kahit bulag sya, di yon naging hadlang para sa pagkanta nya*". (His talent was so impressive. His blindness was not a hindrance to his singing.), she remarked.

The National Migrants' Sunday, the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent,



DAWN members along with fellow advocates join the program at the Quirino Grandstand.

is celebrated all over the Philippines. This year's Manila event was jointly organized by the CBCP-ECMI and the John Paul II International Center for Family and Communication Foundation, Inc. 


## PMRW brings the OWWA Omnibus Policies issue to court

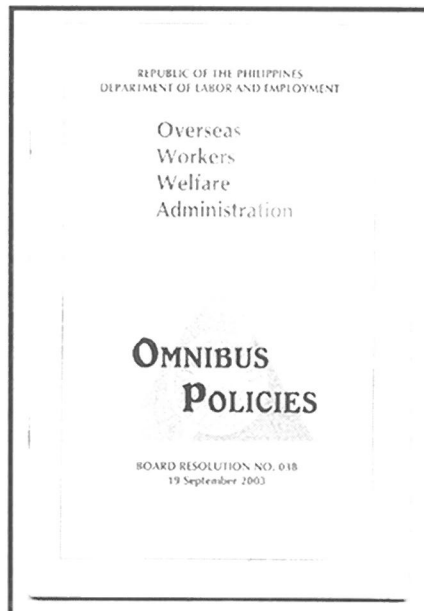
The Philippine Migrants' Rights Watch (PMRW) together with two migrant returnees as complainants, filed a case before the Pasay Regional Trial Court last February 18, 2004 in relation to the controversial Omnibus Policies of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA).

Seen by civil society groups as detrimental to the interests of the migrant workers, the Omnibus Policies has been the

subject of complaints and criticisms from various migrant NGOs, church-based groups and migrant advocates, and Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) organizations.

After a series of advocacy

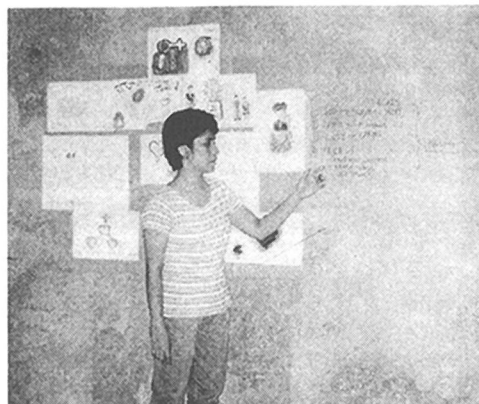
efforts through public forum, press conference, on-line campaign, lobby work in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and meetings and dialogues with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and OWWA, the issue was finally brought to court. It particularly asks the court to stop: a) the implementation of the questionable provisions of the OWWA Omnibus Policies, and b) the mandatory collection of the US\$25 or its equivalent from the OFWs as contributions to the OWWA fund and to collect the amount instead from the employers of the OFWs as provided by law. The first hearing was set last February 26. 





## EMPOWERING from page 6

DAWN's Research and Advocacy Officer Jannis Montañez, Education and Training Officer Evangeline Macariola and Social Worker Marilyn Bo conducted the workshops coinciding with the celebration of



Imelda Balayo presents the different art works made by the DAWN women in the value clarification and modification exercise.

Women's Month and the International Women's Day (March 8).



DAWN's Education and Training Officer Evangeline Macariola discusses with the group the value of braving the odds as women advocates.



Rose Verano shares her analysis of the poster on human rights as DAWN's Research and Advocacy Officer Jannis Montañez listens.

The women were notably creative in coming up with representations of themselves in the self-disclosure exercise last March 13. They were also open in sharing personal details about themselves in the group. They identified their similarities in terms of experiences, feelings, sentiments and their present situation which serve as major factors in helping each other to move on and to work effectively as a group of women in DAWN and as advocates.

Last March 20, another workshop was conducted, this time at the Picnic Grove in Tagaytay City. Participated in by 11

DAWN women, the activity helped them identify and understand the different migration issues confronting women while also tapping their sensibilities in analyzing advocacy materials.

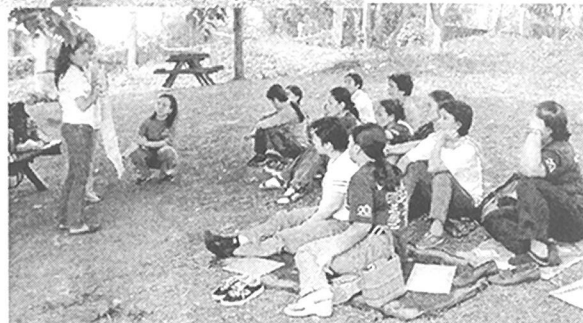
The women's level of willingness and interest on migration issues vis-à-vis DAWN's advocacy work were also gauged through their open discussion with the DAWN staff. Their hindering and facilitating factors as potential advocates were likewise identified during the workshop.

The first of a three-session leadership training was also held last March 27 attended by six DAWN women. The training

(To page 12)



The women develop trust and camaraderie with their fellow DAWN members during workshop exercises like this.



Jannis discusses DAWN's advocacy work and the important role of women in protecting the rights of migrants and their families.

## SUBSCRIPTION

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**EMPOWERING** *from page 11*

explored the important leadership behaviors and gave the women a greater sense of power through the use of appropriate language in assuming responsibility for their own feelings, ideas, and beliefs. They were likewise taught about the interrelationship of language and self-awareness through the exercises.

Through the six-Saturday workshop, DAWN women were able to discover and reveal more about themselves including their potentials as advocates. In the coming months, they are expected to more confidently share their thoughts, feelings and views to the public so that other women may learn and benefit from their fruitful experiences. Making themselves recognized not simply as former entertainers but more importantly, as empowered women returnees with a better perspective in life.



*DAWN members as empowered, stronger, and more confident women of our time.* 

## Study tour group visits DAWN, gov't and private agencies

Four days seemed a short time but the participants still had an enriching study tour last February 7-11. Thanks to the organizations and offices who took time to accommodate their visit.

### Bonding with DAWN members

A few hours after their arrival in Manila, the participants came to DAWN and joined the organization's eighth anniversary celebration with the staff, members and volunteers last February 7.

DAWN-Japan coordinator Chiho Ogaya, volunteers Azusa Kawamura, Yukiko Mimori, and Soul Can Yildiz and guests Risa Nishiguchi and Seiji Takeuchi joined the whole day celebration beginning with the thanksgiving worship in the morning. The afternoon program was enlivened by their participation in the games and presentations prepared by the staff and members.

After an orientation and video showing about DAWN's programs and services, the participants then left with their respective host families for the home stay. Selected mothers and Japanese-Filipino children accommodated these participants and had a chance to know each one better during their stay.

### Orientation and interviews


In line with the objective of understanding the realities confronting Filipino women, particularly, the entertainers in Japan and those married to Japanese nationals, the participants had orientations and interviews with the Empire Artist Promotions Agency, and with government offices such as the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and the Embassy of Japan.

### Filipino women share their experiences

Discussions with two groups of Filipino women were made enriching by their openness to answer the questions from the participants. DAWN women, Imelda Balayo, Rose Verano and Adelia Miranda comprised the first group. They were asked about their feelings and experiences as former entertainers.

The discussion with the second group composed of three Filipino women, all married to Japanese nationals, focused on the problems they face concerning their foreign spouses. The participants were surprised to hear stories of discrimination experienced by the women and their children in a Makati-based Japanese school. The participants noted the sad fact that these women and children have to endure such treatment right in their own home country.

### Another enriching tour

Just like the past study tours, this year's participants acknowledged the activity as a good learning experience especially for those who had come to the Philippines for the first time. Though there were unexpected criticisms hurled against DAWN in the private agency they visited, the other offices were lauded by the participants for the healthy discussions they engaged in and the warmth of the people during their visit. The participants likewise recognized the importance of having the DAWN staff during the discussions because she can contribute insights and ask questions on certain issues for a more in-depth discussion. DAWN looks forward to another fruitful study tour in coordination with DAWN-Japan. 

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