

# “DR. REX VICTOR O. CRUZ, NAST ACADEMICIAN”

(By : EFREN CHAVEZ)

For the past four decades, Dr. Rex Victor O. Cruz, former UPLB chancellor, has exemplified leadership not only in university administration, but also in scientific inquiry.

His vast knowledge and experience in watershed management and climate change studies have made him a sought-after expert in these fields.

As Professor 12, Dr. Cruz is an esteemed mentor at the College of Forestry and Natural Resources, where he also served as dean (2008-2011).

As UP Scientist III, he is a frequently cited journal author whose research and development works have influenced the policies and practice of watershed management in the country.

His works and publications have helped in the application of watershed approach in the integrated management of forest, land, soil, water, lowland, and coastal resources.

His book “Guidelines for watershed management in the Philippines” is a popular reference among practitioners.

He pioneered the applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in land use planning and watershed management in the Philippines, starting with his dissertation at the University of Arizona.

Dr. Cruz has collaborated with experts from various disciplines in pursuing seminal climate change studies, particularly on the effects of climate change on forestry, water, soil, biodiversity, and communities.

On top of producing and strengthening knowledge in the field of forestry and natural resources, he remains committed in extending science and technical assistance to LGUs and local communities. He is actively assisting national government agencies and local government units in

developing watershed management plans and other natural resources management plans.

He is one of the prime movers of the National Conservation Farming Village (CFV) Program. This science-based upland development strategy promotes the sustainability and resiliency of upland ecosystems and communities.

He also led the establishment of the first network of learning watersheds in the Philippines in 2012 and the network of ecosystem monitoring systems with support from the Department of Science and Technology. His ultimate aspiration is to facilitate the establishment of the Philippine Ecosystem and Watershed Observation Network (PEWON).

PEWON is envisioned to develop a long-term empirical database on changes in soil, water, biodiversity, and other key attributes of ecosystems and watersheds amid

climate change, land use change, and other natural and anthropogenic stressors.

Dr. Cruz is one of the first, if not the first Filipino member author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). He was the principal lead author, lead author and coordinating lead author of the second, third, and fourth IPCC assessment reports, respectively, from 1992 to 2007.

The IPCC was jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2007 with former US Vice President Al Gore for its work in building up, disseminating knowledge about man-made climate change, and on the need to counteract such change.

His leadership in academe, in science, and in public service earned for Dr. Cruz a privileged spot in the roster of Academicians at the National Academy of Science and Technology of the Philippines. **(KE Araguas with information from CFNR)**

# SUSPECT FOR THE KILLING OF GRADE 7 STUDENT, NABBED IN CALAMBA CITY

A Security Guard suspect for the killing of a minor student inside the school classroom in Calamba City recently was arrested by the elements of Calamba City Police Station (CPS) according to Police Major Jojo Ibardal- oza Sabeniano, Chief, Public Information Office (PIO) in Camp Paciano Rizal, Barangay Bagumbayan, Santa Cruz, Laguna.

Laguna Police Provincial Director Police Col. Eleazar Pepito Mat- ta reported to CALA- BARZON Regional Di- rector Police BGen. Ed- ward Esperat Carranza, the arrest of Reynaldo

Estrope Valderama at Calamba City, Laguna.

Police Colonel Mat- ta identified the suspect as Reynaldo Estrope Valderama, 35 years old, single, Security Guard native of Del- galiedo, Camarines Sur and presently re- siding at Brgy Masili, Calamba City, Laguna.

Police report said, that on Tuesday (July 9, 2019), at about 04:00 o'clock in the morning in Barangay Bucal, Calamba City, suspect in the killing of a minor student identified as Mark Anthony Miranda was placed under arrest. A local resident ap- proached Calamba CPS Mobile Crew stationed

Barangay Bucal particu- larly at the railroad (riles) track of PNR about the possible presence of the suspect.

Consequently, re- sponding PNP person- nel of Calamba CPS saw the suspect walk- ing along the train tracks hence his arrest. Recovered inside his backpack is the one (1) unit of cal 38 revolver Shooter Protector owned by the security agency with four (4) rounds of ammunition.

In the investigation revealed that for the last five days, suspect stayed in the hilly por- tion of Brgy. Masili and go to the lakeside of

Laguna de Bay just to drink water. His hunger prints him to go down to look for food.

Laguna Governor Ramil, Hernandez be- stow PHP 100,000.00 one hundred thousand pesos of reward to the local residents pinpoint the location and gener- ate aid to the arrest of the suspect.

The Calamba City Police Station is prepar- ing a case for illegal possession of firearms against the suspect and will strengthen the murder charge against him in relation to the killing of Mark Anthony Miranda. **(EFREN CHAVEZ)**

# DR. RICO C. ANCOG, 2019 OUT- STANDING YOUNG SCIENTIST



Dr. Rico C. Ancog has exceeded expectations for his age. At 27, he already completed his doctorate in Environmental Science. At 31, he was leading research projects. At 34, he clinched the coveted UP Scientist III title, the highest there is in the UP Scientific Productivity System.

Now at 35, Dr. Ancog adds another milestone to his young and fruitful career, this time as the Outstanding Young Scientist of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST).

His home unit, the School of Environmental Science and Management (SESAM) where he is an assistant professor, believes that his works in environmental economics, particularly in providing answers to the all-important question of how to balance development and natural resources/envi- ronmental systems, are worthy of the NAST distinction.

His 12 research

projects and 21 scientific publications, and these figures are sure to increase soon, have uncovered valuable points on evaluating the impacts of development programs and projects to socio- ecological systems. His works have also assessed management strategies contributing to environmental policy and governance.

He may have accomplished much for his age, but Dr. Ancog testifies that there were no short-cuts to all these things. It took hard work and institutional support for his achievements to unfold.

“Ako ang nagbubukas ng pinto dito (sa SESAM) para magsulat. Minsan in- aabot ako ng alas 8 nang gabi. Ako din ang huling umaalis para magsara, pero excited akong bumalik agad kinabukasan para magsulat,” he said.

“I’m grateful because I couldn’t have done it all by myself. I’m blessed that I’m in a very good organization, which trusted my talent and

provided me the opportunity,” Dr. Ancog added.

Describing his journey to the award as a humbling experience, Dr. Ancog emphasized the importance of SESAM to the process.

“UPLB, particularly SESAM, is a perfect place for me to grow as a professional and as a practitioner of environmental science because it champions multi- and interdisciplinary perspectives,” he said.

“We’re already at the stage of so-called post-normal science, such as participatory and community-based researches. We’ve reached that point already,” he added, in appreciation to the current academic landscape at the university.

On July 11, Dr. Ancog will officially receive his OYS award, putting him on the roster of past OYS from UPLB, many of whom are now pillars of science and technology in the country. **(LY- SETTE NADINE B. SIGUA & EFREN B. CHAVEZ)**

# Duterte may fire 50 to 70 in Customs over corruption

**MANILA** -- Not just four, but around 50 to 70 officials and employees of the Bureau of Customs (BOC) may face dismissal over corruption allegations, Malacañang said on Thursday.

Presidential Spokesperson Salvador Panelo bared this after President Rodrigo Duterte on Wednesday night ordered the “freezing” of Customs officials and employees but did not disclose their names.

Panelo explained that placing the personnel in “freezer” meant that they will be placed on “floating” status pending administrative and criminal charges.

Clarifying what the President meant by “dark times ahead” in a recent speech, Panelo said aside from terrorism and illegal drugs, the chief executive was also referring to widespread corruption particularly in the BOC.

“Talaga namang maraming (There really are) dark times ahead, nandiyan yung terorismo, nandiyan yung war on drugs, nandiyan yung corruption -- kita mo yung sa Customs o biglang ubod ng dami (there’s terrorism, there’s the war on drugs, there’s corruption -- you see in Customs there’s suddenly so many),” Panelo said in a Palace briefing.

“From what I gather, mga 72 yata tatanggalin niya (around 72 could be facing dismissal) or are facing administrative charges. Ganun karami either 72 or 62, di ko na malaman exact number (That’s how big, either 72 or 62 I don’t know the exact number). Mahigit (over) 50. Less than 100. Ganun karami ang involved sa corruption (That’s how many are involved in corruption),” he added.