

OUR MODERN-DAY HEROES

by:

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The Philippines not only observes the holiday season, but also The Month of Overseas Filipinos, which recognizes the nation's contemporary heroes, every December.

By Proclamation No. 276, signed by late President Corazon C. Aquino in 1987, December is designated as The Month of Overseas Filipinos (OFs) to recognize and commemorate OFs, who are spread over the globe as immigrants, laborers, students, and professionals. OFs who "struggled against the preceding regime and campaigned for the restoration of Philippine democracy" were also honored in the declaration. As stated in the proclamation, OFs have since contributed to the Philippine economy through taxes and remittances.

The Official Website of DepED Division of Bataan

Considering the recent international health epidemic caused by the COVID-19, OFs continue to play a crucial role in helping the country's economy recover after more than a year of stringent lockdowns that pushed the economy to its lowest point. In honor of Overseas Filipinos Month, here are some facts about OFs and their status in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Teodoro Locsin Jr. described the COVID-19-related repatriation of Filipinos from other countries as the largest in Philippine history. "This is the largest repatriation in our history, possibly the largest repatriation of any country anywhere in the world," Locsin added. "The rest of the world is astounded by the scope and success of our repatriation; it's never been done before," he concluded.

Higher dangers and burden. Notwithstanding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, one of the monsters preying on OFWs since then, unlawful recruiting, thrives in the Philippines. Instances of illegal, unethical, and unfair recruitment practices have surged this year, according to data from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA).

Indeed, we may say that OFs are considered modern heroes because of their strength to continue working abroad despite of all the health challenges that may sacrifice their valuable time with their families in the Philippines. All for the sake of their families especially the children who are their treasures just to finish their education and someday will also be successful in their chosen careers and may be called as heroes in their generation.

References:

<https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1988/06/21/proclamation-no-276-s-1988/>

<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1530042/ofws-ph-heroes-even-in-time-of-covid-pandemic>