

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

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I would like to congratulate and offer my appreciations to Grandmaster Meliton C. Geronimo and Master Jaime C. Geronimo for getting Sikaran to where it is now. Sikaran was formerly an unknown art to the outside world. Although according to history the art had existed even before the Spanish colonization of the Philippines, but for so many years only a handful of Sikaran practitioners in Baras, Rizal knew about it. On March 14, 1964, however, when Meliton C. Geronimo joined the First Asian Karate Championship in Tokyo, Japan, he introduced Sikaran to the Asian sports arena. He was able to convince and amaze other Grandmasters of the different martial arts with the unique and distinct fighting style of Sikaran, especially its signature kick "Biakid." Henceforth, Sikaran "awoke from its golden slumber."

The untiring efforts of Meliton paid off when on November 6, 1966, the Asian Karate Association recognized Sikaran as a Philippine fighting art of distinct origin, and conferred him the 10th Degree Red Belt as the Grandmaster of Sikaran.

Eventually, Sikaran gained acceptance in the Martial Arts world. A significant number of Karate Clubs inside and outside the Philippines embraced its concepts and affiliated with Geronimo's Kapatirang Sikaran ng Pilipinas, which later became Pandaigdigang Kapatirang Sikaran ng Pilipinas or World Sikaran Brotherhood of the Philippines. To broaden the spectrum of Sikaran, Meliton incorporated Arnis, the Filipino art of stick fighting, into the Sikaran curricula, that draws more enthusiasm from most Sikaranistas.

Among the significant achievements of Meliton's Sikaran group, aside from winning international recognition, was their selection to train the members of the Presidential Security Command/RPS Ang Pangulo 777 of President Ferdinand E. Marcos in the early '70s. Meliton and the Sikaran Senior Instructors headed by his brother, Jaime, efficiently trained the elite military security men in defensive tactics with Sikaran as the base art. Their proficiency in self-defense, imbued with professionalism and hard works, earned the appreciation and recognition from the President himself.

Meliton retired from the military with flying colors for his dedicated service. He eventually became the Mayor of Baras, Rizal, where he earned the moniker of "Mayor Latigo" due to his expertise in the use of, and habit of carrying, a whip (Latigo). Because of his colorful career as a soldier, as a civil servant and as a Grandmaster in Sikaran, Octo Arts Productions produced a movie, "Mayor Latigo," based on his real-life story, with veteran actor Eddie Garcia portraying the role of Meliton. The movie became a blockbuster.

As Mayor of Baras, Meliton's first official edict was to acknowledge Baras as the birthplace of Sikaran, contained in an Executive Order which was unanimously approved by the Baras Municipal Council and concurred in by the Rizal Provincial Board. As part of such Executive Order, the seal of the World Sikaran

Brotherhood and the phrase “Baras, Home of Sikaran” was adopted as an official part of the Municipal Letterhead. Extensive researches revealed that Baras is the only government unit around the world that honors the birthplace of a martial art and publicly displays it on its official letterhead. Likewise, the Baras Municipal Council designated the last Sunday of March of each year as Sikaran Festival Day, with covered logistical appropriation.

Nowadays, anyone visiting Baras would always be attracted by the eye-catching boundary marker bearing the phrase “Welcome to Baras, Home of Sikaran.” In front of the Municipal Hall, a monument of two Sikaranistas exchanging “Biakid” proudly stands. When you look to the right, the Baras Gymnasium will greet you, displaying a mural with the word “Sikaran” and underneath are two Sikaranistas also exchanging “Biakid.” A few hundred meters away, in the public market area lies the gym headquarters of the World Sikaran Brotherhood of the Philippines where Jaime and some Sikaran senior black belts practice and hold seminars.

Meliton and Jaime vigorously pursued the recognition of Sikaran by the Philippine government, either locally or nationally. Their efforts and persistence brought about another historic milestone. In 2010, the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Rizal enacted Ordinance No. 002, entitled “AN ORDINANCE DECLARING SIKARAN AS THE PROVINCIAL SPORT, PROVIDING MECHANISM AND PROGRAMS FOR ITS PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION, APPROPRIATING THE NECESSARY FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,” otherwise known as “SIKARAN Ordinance of 2010.”

Section 2 of such ordinance specifically states the reason for its enactment, and officially recognized Grandmaster Meliton C. Geronimo as the man behind the teaching and propagation of Sikaran, thus:

“Section 2. RATIONALE. This Ordinance seeks to declare SIKARAN as the Provincial Sport of the Province of Rizal;

SIKARAN, is the ancient art of Filipino foot-fighting that originated in the Municipality of Baras, Province of Rizal. It is distinct from other forms of martial arts as Taekwondo and Karate by incorporating Arnis in the predominantly foot-fighting technique which has been taught and has been propagated locally and internationally for the past forty-four years through the tutelage of Former Baras Mayor, Meliton Geronimo, 10th Degree Red Belt Grandmaster of Sikaran...”

Other significant provisions of the Ordinance are:

“Section 3. INTEGRATION IN THE SANGGUNIANG KABATAAN SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM;

In order to mainstream, promote and popularize SIKARAN as a Martial Art in the Province of Rizal, all Sangguniang Kabataan in the Provincial, City/Municipal Federation, as well as in the Barangay Level, are mandated to include SIKARAN in its regular sports development program;”

“Section 4. MAINSTREAMING SIKARAN IN THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND IN VARIOUS SPORTS EVENTS IN THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL;

All primary, secondary and tertiary public and private educational institutions are hereby encouraged to include SIKARAN as a required subject in the Physical Education (P.E.) Curriculum;

The Sangguniang Kabataan Provincial Federation and the Rizal Youth and Sports Development Office shall coordinate with the Schools Division Superintendent, Department of Education Rizal, in the conduct of various activities to mainstream and promote SIKARAN as the Provincial Sport;

In order to mainstream SIKARAN as a Provincial Sport, it shall be included as one of the sporting events in the Palarong Panlalawigan, Palarong Panlungsod/Pambayan and Palarong Pambarangay, respectively, as provided for under RA 7160, otherwise known as the 1991 Local Government Code;”

“Section 5. CREATION OF THE RIZAL SIKARAN TRAINING CENTER; SUPERVISION OF THE RIZAL SIKARAN TRAINING CENTER (RSTC);

The RSTC as herein established shall be under the direct control and supervision of the Office of the Governor with the Center Director as head/chief of office, who shall be appointed by the Governor for a fixed term of three (3) years unless sooner removed for just cause;”

“Section 6. RIZAL SIKARAN TRAINING BOARD;”

“...The RSTC Board shall likewise be responsible for the accreditation, training and certification of SIKARAN trainers, instructors, coaches and referees in accordance with the guidelines it shall hereinafter formulate and shall perform such other functions as may be provided for by law or ordinance;”

“Section 7. ANNUAL SIKARAN ROADSHOW;

There shall be an annual SIKARAN Road Show in the form of Provincial, City/Municipal and Barangay Tournaments, Exhibits and Forum and such other similar necessary activities that will promote the advocacy of SIKARAN as well as to identify potential talents to be recruited as trainers of the centers;”

“Section 8. SIKARAN DEVELOPMENT FUND;

There is hereby established a SIKARAN Provincial Development Fund chargeable against any unappropriated sum from the Provincial Treasury. Thereafter, such amount needed to implement this Ordinance shall be included in the annual appropriation of the province;”

The SIKARAN of Grandmaster Meliton Geronimo is the only duly accredited SIKARAN organization mentioned in this Ordinance. Under the authority of Meliton, Jaime is relentlessly pushing for the full implementation of Sikaran Ordinance of 2010, in coordination with the concerned Rizal government instrumentality, such as Rizal Youth and Sports Development Office, Sangguniang Kabataan Provincial Federation, Department of Education Rizal and the Office of the Governor.

Sikaran Master Jaime C. Geronimo, along with some SIKARAN instructors, had started conducting series of SIKARAN seminars, teach-ins and demonstrations to Dep-Ed Rizal, certifying some teachers as

trainers, coaches, referees and tournament judges. Likewise, regular Sikaran tournaments are held in various parts of the province, aside from the observance of Sikaran Festival every last Sunday of March each year in Baras, Rizal.

In line with Meliton's continued effort to propagate Sikaran all over the world, he authorized Emmanuel "Emmy" Querubin to write the book "SIKARAN, The Fighting Art of the Filipino Farmer" that relates the complete history, origin and foundation of the techniques of Sikaran, with "blow-by-blow" accounts how it was transformed by Meliton from a modest art of Filipino farmers into an internationally recognized Filipino Martial Art of distinct origin. This book is the first and only authoritative writings about Sikaran. Emmy is a Sikaran 9th Degree Black Belt. He was active in Sikaran in the '60s and '70s as Meliton's official historian, writer, researcher, and Director for Research and Standards. He was highly instrumental in helping Meliton in the formulation and coinage of Sikaran commands and terminologies (e.g. Salag-Ba or Salag Pababa; Sipa-Lid or Sipang Patagilid, etc.), where Meliton earned recognition and award from the Philippine Institute of National Language, and are now being used as the official Sikaran medium of instructions. Emmy, now a retired member of the Oakland (California) Police Department, migrated to the United States in the mid 70's. He is now actively supporting Meliton in the propagation of Sikaran through his writings. He is currently preparing for the release of his second book about Sikaran.

As part of Meliton's Sikaran Standardization intended to establish a uniform Program of Instructions, he initially presented the Sikaran Instructional Video Volume 1 (Basic Sikaran) to be followed by Volume 2 (Advanced Sikaran) produced by the Seletaria Sikaran-Arnis, as official reference materials in the series of seminars attended by the instructors of the World Sikaran Brotherhood of the Philippines.

Likewise, under Meliton's authority, Jaime is relentlessly lobbying for the inclusion of Sikaran into the curriculum of the Department of Education, not only in the Province of Rizal but nationwide, as part of the educational system's Physical Education, through the Office of Senator Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos, Jr. Moreover, Jaime is currently pushing for the participation of Sikaran in the Philippine Olympic Committee.

To Meliton C. Geronimo and Jaime C. Geronimo for their priceless and immeasurable dedication in the propagation of Sikaran, and to Emmanuel DES Querubin for his invaluable contributions to Sikaran through his writings, cheers and kudos for their OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT!!! - esj01/10/2012