

ABOUT PING LACSON

Ang tama, ipaglaban. Ang mali, labanan. (What is right must be kept right. What is wrong must be set right.)

These words have served as the constant guide of PANFILO “PING” MORENA LACSON, who has been circumspect in matters of public interest and committed against various forms of corruption in his 50 years of public service in the fields of law enforcement, lawmaking, and humanitarian work.

Lacson first earned a tough, no-nonsense reputation while serving in the Philippine Constabulary and Philippine National Police: solving high-profile crimes including kidnap-for-ransom cases in the 1980s and 1990s; and reviving the PNP’s glory days as Chief, PNP from 1999 to 2001.

In the Senate, Lacson is an untiring, tenacious watchdog of the national budget, making sure dubious congressional insertions (a.k.a. pork barrel) and useless appropriations are checked and deleted during plenary debates.

His continuous fight against corruption, including pork barrel in all its iterations, earned him the degree of Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa, from the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in March 2019.

Humble Beginnings

Lacson was born on June 1, 1948 into a family of humble beginnings in Imus, Cavite, the fourth of eight children. His father Buenaventura worked as a jeepney driver, and his mother Maxima as a market vendor. Ping got his basic education from the Bayang Luma Elementary School and the Imus Institute. In 1996, he earned his postgraduate degree at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, a Master’s in Government Management.

He dreamed of becoming a lawyer and an agent of the National Bureau of Investigation. But as fate would have it, a friend invited him as his companion in applying at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). Ping passed the entrance exam while his friend did not.

Ping graduated from the PMA as part of the Matatag Class of 1971, having learned the virtues of courage, integrity and loyalty, and ultimately becoming a first-class leader of men.

He joined the Philippine Constabulary (PC) as a young, idealistic rookie. He joined the Philippine National Police after the PC was decommissioned in 1991.

Law Enforcement Career

After graduating from the PMA, Lt. Lacson was assigned to the Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group from 1971 to 1986, and the PC-INP Anti-Carnapping Task Force from 1986 to 1988.

Lacson gained approval for his firm adherence to what is right. He was also responsible for the successful resolution of several kidnap-for-ransom cases, including that of Robina Gokongwei in 1981. He led the team that rescued Robina, and declined her offer of a reward.

He was then assigned as Provincial Commander of Isabela from 1988 to 1989, where he became highly detested by logging “magnates.”

From 1989 to 1992, he served as Metropolitan District Command (Metrodiscom) commander of Cebu City, and became an adopted son of the city due to his work. City officials even initially objected to his transfer and sought to retain him.

From February to July 1992, Lacson headed the police in Laguna, and earned a reputation for his uncompromising stand against illegal gambling.

In late 1992, then Vice President Estrada entrusted him with the sensitive job of heading the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission’s Task Force Habagat until 1995. From 1996 to 1997, Lacson served as Project Officer of Special Project Alpha.

When Estrada became President in 1998, Lacson served as chief of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, which brought down a high number of kidnap-for-ransom cases to zero in less than a year, while fighting drug trafficking, smuggling activities, carnapping, illegal possession of firearms and other nefarious activities.

PNP Chief (1999-2001)

During his term as PNP Chief, Lacson led by example as he instituted a no-take policy and a fitness program, while cleansing the police force of “scalawags in uniform” (a.k.a. kotong cops) – initiatives that earned the PNP the highest public approval ratings in its history.

When he formally took the reins of the PNP on Nov. 16, 1999, Lacson sought to restore the old glory of the policemen. He instilled discipline while raising the morale of police personnel by getting rid of what he called ICUs: Inept, Corrupt, Undisciplined cops.

One of his first directives as Chief PNP was to have police personnel immediately return the recovered carnapped vehicles they were using – whether personally or incognito. In less than two weeks, Camp Crame and the nearby flyover became a virtual parking lot for 600 of such vehicles, which were returned to their rightful owners.

Lacson also cracked down on PNP personnel abusing the institution's sports days, barring police officers from golf courses during duty hours. He then reestablished in-camp sports activities to reinforce comradeship among officers.

He also gave pot-bellied police officers a deadline to bring down their waistlines to 34 inches.

Meanwhile, Lacson downloaded 85% of the PNP's budget to the operating units to improve the overall management, and removed the excess privileges of top police officials.

But most importantly, Lacson stopped the practice of "kotong" (extortion) by many policemen victimizing public utility drivers, vegetable and rice dealers, and vendors. The so-called "kotong cops" disappeared under his watch.

Meanwhile, Lacson enforced a "No-Take Policy" on protection money from illegal gambling, dismissing more than 2,000 police officers in the process.

With his actions, Lacson achieved what no PNP head has ever done: earn a whopping 64% approval rating for the institution in July and October 2000, the highest ever recorded from the Filipino people. Lacson himself got an approval rating of 73% as Chief PNP in July 2000, thus regaining the PNP's glory years by restoring public trust in the police force. [Source: Pulse Asia, May 1999 to October 2000]

Senate terms (2001-2013; 2016-2022)

In 2001, Lacson earned a Senate seat after overcoming trumped-up charges, fake news and other insinuations from his foes.

As a lawmaker, Lacson stuck to his credo that what is right must be kept right, and what is wrong must be set right.

When he got his first mandate in the Senate in 2001, Lacson went to work on righting another wrong: taking down the multibillion-peso pork barrel system, which has bedeviled the national budget, the lifeblood of the nation. He even filed corruption charges against several public officials and contractors, including two of his own staff, who tried to make money from pork.

Ten years before the multibillion-peso Priority Development Assistance Fund (pork) scam exploded, Lacson detailed in a March 2003 privilege speech how public funds were pocketed via PDAF.

He also had his PhP200-million-a-year PDAF allocations returned to the National Treasury, saving the government PhP2.4 billion in 12 years.

Lacson was the principal sponsor and one of the authors of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (Republic Act 11479), which gives Philippine authorities much-needed legal tools to strengthen their efforts against the menace of terrorism.

He was one of the authors of the Bayanihan to Heal As One Act (RA 11469); and a co-author of the GMRC and Values Education Act (RA 11476).

Lacson was the principal sponsor of the National ID Law (Republic Act 11055), which allows for greater financial inclusion, efficient delivery of public services, easier transactions with the government and private entities and effective response to criminality. Lacson had been a perennial author of the measure since his first term as senator in 2001.

He was one of the principal authors of Joint Resolution 1, which sought to authorize the increase in the base pay of military and other uniformed personnel (MUP) in the government. Among those who benefit from the increase of the base pay are the retired MUP of the Armed Forces of the Philippines – General Headquarters (AFP- GHQ), Philippine National Police (PNP), Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP), Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), and the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA).

Also, Lacson authored and sponsored Republic Act 11053, The Anti-Hazing Law of 2018, which provides heavier penalties that would prevent hazing-related deaths.

Lacson authored and sponsored as well Republic Act 9485, the Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007, which brings down the number of steps and days involved in a government transaction, and in turn paves the way for efficient and expeditious public service.

Other key measures authored, sponsored or co-authored by Lacson from the 12th to 17th Congresses include:

- * Republic Act 11279: Act Transferring the Training of Police Recruits from the Philippine Public Safety College to the Philippine National Police
- * Republic Act 11200: An Act Providing for Rank Classification in the Philippine National Police
- * Republic Act 11059: An Act Establishing a Retirement Benefit System in the Office of the Ombudsman
- * Republic Act 10973: Restoring the Subpoena Powers of the PNP-CIDG
- * Republic Act 10969: The Free Irrigation Law
- * Republic Act 10927: Amending the Anti-Money Laundering Act to Include Casinos as ‘Covered Persons’
- * Republic Act 10591: An Act Providing for a Comprehensive Law on Firearms, Light Weapons and Ammunition
- * Republic Act 10354: the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012
- * Republic Act 10351: The Sin Tax Reform Law
- * Republic Act 10349: An Act Amending the Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Program

- * Republic Act 10167: An Act to Further Strengthen the Anti-Money Laundering Law
- * Republic Act 9160 (as amended by RA 9194): Anti-Money Laundering Act
- * Republic Act 9165: Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002
- * Republic Act 9163: National Service Training Program Act of 2001
- * Republic Act 9166: An Act Increasing the Base Pay of the Members of the AFP
- * Republic Act 9208: Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003
- * Republic Act 9416: Anti-Cheating Act of 2007
- * Republic Act 9484: The Philippine Dental Act of 2007

Lacson also authored bills to curb criminality and corruption; and to streamline the bureaucracy, including:

- * the proposed Budget Reform for Village Empowerment Act
- * the proposed Expanded Anti-Wiretapping Act
- * a bill requiring the registration of prepaid subscriber identity module (SIM) cards to prevent scams and crimes involving identity theft
- * a bill imposing heavier penalties on those giving false testimonies
- * a bill that offers substantial rewards and better protection to witnesses testifying against government officials or employees involved in corruption
- * a bill that strips drug pushers, manufacturers, cultivators, importers and financiers of their rights under the Bank Secrecy Act, so they can no longer hide their ill-gotten money in banks.

Lacson has been unflinching in his fight against corruption and wrongdoings, exposing – as well as calling for investigations of – anomalous activities in the government, such as:

- * irregularities in the Philippine government’s deal with Argentine firm Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona Sociedad Anonima (IMPISA)
- * the money-laundering scheme by one “Jose Pidal”
- * the continued operations of jueteng in the country
- * diversion of P728 million in fertilizer funds engineered by one Jocjoc Bolante
- * the “Hello Garci” tapes indicating cheating in the 2004 elections
- * alleged overpricing involving the decorative lamp posts used in the Asean summit in Cebu City
- * plight of Filipino nurses recruited by Sentosa Recruitment Agency
- * alleged bribery in the failed impeachment bid against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
- * the botched \$329-million contract between the Philippine government and China’s ZTE for a national broadband network project
- * irregularities in the multibillion-peso Quedancor swine program
- * the “chopper scam” where secondhand helicopters were sold as brand-new to the Philippine National Police
- * a plan by the Social Security System to channel workers’ pension funds into a government economic stimulus program
- * alleged irregularities in the purchase of video equipment for the Senate’s Public Relations and Information Bureau
- * the “tara list” and payola (payoffs) in the Bureau of Customs

* pork barrel in its various incarnations

In the 17th Congress, Lacson's tenacity remained strong in abolishing the unconstitutional pork barrel and its many evil incarnations in the national budget. In a sequel of his 2003 speech, he detailed in a 2019 privilege speech, "Living Without Pork II," a reinvention of pork barrel allocations in the pork-ridden, cholesterol-rich 2019 budget, particularly those lodged in the budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH).

Among the many questionable appropriations exposed by Senator Lacson was the billions of "pork insertions" of Congressmen realigned to fund programs and projects under the then proposed 2019 Budget. The said "pork" was among the P95 billion in appropriations vetoed by President Rodrigo Duterte in Republic Act No. 11260, or the General Appropriations Act of 2019.

In the 18th Congress, Lacson chairs the Senate Committees on National Defense and Security and Accounts. He is a member of several Senate committees, a list of which can be accessed [here](#).

The first batch of bills Lacson filed in the current Congress include the Budget Reform for Village Empowerment Act of 2019, and a bill ensuring people's participation in the budget process.

He also re-filed a bill excluding government officials from the Bank Secrecy Act, the Prepaid SIM Cards Regulations Act of 2019, a bill reinstating the death penalty for heinous crimes, a bill imposing heavier penalties on lying witnesses, and the proposed Anti-Political Dynasty Act of 2019.

Lacson also filed a "Designated Survivor" bill to guarantee the continuity and stability of operations in government in case of a terrorist attack, major disaster or other "exceptional circumstances" where the President and those specified by the Constitution to succeed him or her are killed or permanently disabled.

Yolanda (Haiyan) Rehabilitation

Lacson also served as Presidential Assistant for Rehabilitation and Recovery, coordinating efforts to help victims of Super Typhoon Yolanda.

Despite the limitations and difficulties encountered in terms of support from the national government, Lacson and his staff managed to coordinate and consolidate the efforts of the private sector and non-government organizations which amounted to almost P30 billion worth of rehabilitation and recovery projects and programs. He also managed to put together the Yolanda Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Recovery Plan (CRRP) in record time, which detailed institutional arrangements, including public-private partnerships; and cluster structures for infrastructure, social services, resettlement, livelihood and support.

The CRRP also detailed rehabilitation and recovery plans for local governments, as well as guidelines for engaging with the non-government sector.

PING LACSON'S RESUME

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

- * Born on June 1, 1948 in Imus, Cavite
- * Married to Alice de Perio-Lacson
- * Children: Reginald, Ronald Jay, Panfilo Jr., Jeric
- * Adopted son of Cebu
- * Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila: 2019

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

- * Master in Government Management, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (1995-1996)
- * Bachelor of Science, Philippine Military Academy (1967-1971)
- * High School: Imus Institute (1960-1964)
- * Grade School: Bayang Luma Elementary School (1954-1960)

CAREER AS PUBLIC SERVANT:

- * Senator: 2001 to 2013; 2016 to present
- * Presidential Assistant on Rehabilitation and Recovery: 2013 to 2015
- * Chief, Philippine National Police: Nov. 16, 1999 to Jan. 20, 2001
- * Chief, Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force: June 26, 1998 to Jan. 21, 2001
- * Project Officer, Special Project Alpha: 1996 to April 1997
- * Chief, Task Force Habagat, PACC: 1992 to 1995
- * Provincial Director, Laguna, PC: February to July, 1992
- * Commander, Cebu Metrodiscom: 1989 to 1992
- * Provincial Commander, Isabela PC: 1988 to 1989
- * PC-INP Anti Carnapping Task Force: 1986 to 1988
- * Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group: 1971 to 1986

TRAINING, SCHOLARSHIP COURSES:

- * Bachelor Science Degree, Philippine Military Academy: 1967 to 1971
- * Intel Officers Basic Course, SITS, Fort Bonifacio: 1973
- * Military Intel Collection Course, SITS, Fort Bonifacio: 1974
- * Counter URBAN Guerilla Warfare Course, Fort Magsaysay: 1972
- * Incident Management Course, PSG, Malacañang
- * Airmobile Operations Course Command and General Staff Course, Camp Crame, Quezon City
- * Command General Staff College, Fort Bonifacio

AWARDS:

- * Outstanding Cavalier Award for Public Administration, Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association Inc.: 2020
- * Doctor of Laws, Honoris Causa, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila: 2019
- * Ten Outstanding Policemen of the Philippines, Philippine Jaycees Inc.: 1998
- * Special Medal of Honor, Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP)
- * Police Director of the Year, Regional Command (RECOM) 7, Cebu City: 1992
- * Adopted Son of Cebu, Cebu City Council Resolution: 1991
- * Philippine Constabulary Officer of the Year, Regional Command (RECOM) 7, Cebu City: 1989-1990 and 1990-1991
- * Certificate of Academic Excellence, AFP Command and General Staff College: 1983
- * PMA Alumni Cavalier Award (Special Operations), Philippine Military Academy Alumni Association Inc.: 1983
- * PC Metrocom Officer of the Year, Philippine Constabulary: 1982

Medals:

- 17 Military Merit Medals
- 3 Medalya ng Kadakilaan
- 3 Medalya ng Kagalingan
- 2 Outstanding Achievement Medals
- 5 Military Commendation Medals
- 5 Bronze Cross Medals
- 2 Medalya ng Papuri
- Luzon Campaign Medal
- Visayas Campaign Medal
- Combat Efficiency Medal

Special Citations:

- * Philippine College of Rotary Governor, Rotary Club of Manila
- * Lions President League of the Philippines
- * Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- * Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption
- * Manila Downtown Y's Men's Club
- * Council of Past Lions Governors of the Philippines
- * Cebu Chamber of Commerce
- * Cebu Bankers Club
- * Cebu City Office for Substance Abuse Prevention
- * Metro Cebu Uptown Jaycees
- * Rotary Club of San Fernando (LU)
- * Asusasyon ng Kumentarista at Announcer ng Pilipinas
- * Pugad Lawin Philippines, Inc.
- * Police Cavaliers Association, Inc.
- * National Police Commission
- * Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce
- * PMA Class '71 (MATATAG)

- * Rotary Club of Caloocan
- * Rotary Club of Metro Cebu Rotary Club of Cebu
- * West Rotary Club of Cebu Port Center
- * Rotary International District 390
- * Rotary Club of Binan
- * Direct Commission Batch '71 PNPC Chapter
- * KBP Metro Manila Chapter
- * Guest of Honor and Commencement Speaker at the Commencement Exercises of Bicol University, Daraga, Albay
