



(Left photo) Consul General Renato P.O. Villa (standing, fourth from left) joins Attaches Rachel Roxas (seated, left) and Normandy Macadangdang (standing, right) with the Filipino community in Kuching who availed of consular and overseas absentee voting (right photo). The community who gathered for the mass at the St. Joseph's Church awaits the start of the program.

22 June 2012-The Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur reported to the Department of Foreign Affairs that the Filipino community in Kuching commemorated the 114th anniversary of the proclamation of Philippine independence with an early evening mass, a program and a fellowship program at St. Joseph's Church on June 17.

The mass was co-celebrated by parish priest and long-time spiritual adviser of the Filipino community Fr. Albert Jacobse, and Filipino missionary priest Fr. Henry Delfin of the Maryhill order. Fr. Delfin came all the way for the mass from the interior Sibu District, where he ministers to the indigenous Iban community.

During the offertory, the community offered fruits and other crops, as June also marks the harvest festival celebration in Sarawak. They also offered an image of the Santo Niño from Cebu province, which was garbed in resplendent red.

The Embassy was represented by Consul General Renato Villa, Administrative Officer Faith Bautista, and Attachés Normandy Macadangdang and Rachel Roxas.

Vice Consul Ibu Monica Ari Wijayanti of the Indonesian Consulate General in Kuching was the guest of honor.

In his remarks, Consul General Villa urged the community to register and vote so that Filipino migrants will have a greater voice in the political life of the country.

"As Filipinos, we have a right and a responsibility to chart the course of our country, even when we are far away from our home country. Enlisting in the ongoing overseas absentee voting (OAV) is one way of doing so. Let us not waste this chance to have a voice in Philippine political life," he said.

The Embassy team also conducted consular services and OAV registration at the Telang Usan Hotel during their two-day stay in Kuching.

Kuching is the capital of the eastern Malaysian state of Sarawak, and home to around 1,300 Filipinos. END