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N.Y. Senate nixes Dream Act bill

By JOSEFA VELASQUEZ

ALBANY — The New York Senate rejected a bill Monday that would open up state tuition assistance to students in the

country illegally, dashing long-held hopes of immigration advocates and prompting finger-pointing among rival Democrats. The 30-29 vote was short of

the 32 votes needed to pass, a rare defeat for a bill on the floor of the Senate. There are 63 seats, two are vacant, and two senators did not vote.

The Senate's ruling coalition of Republicans and breakaway Democrats brought the closely watched bill to the floor late in the day with little notice.

Supporters of the measure said that was intentional.

"It certainly seems that it was bought up to fail, given the outcome," Batino said.

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Dylan roots for Pacman



Music legend Bob Dylan (left) drops by the Los Angeles training session of boxing champ Manny Pacquiao last week as the Filipino fighter prepares for his April 12 Las Vegas rematch with Timothy Bradley. "We were all awestruck," Pacquiao spokesman Fred Sternberg tells Rolling Stone. "Manny sparred eight different rounds with two different fighters while Dylan stayed for an hour and sat on a bench...My God, it was Bob Dylan! It was like seeing one of the apostles." More on Pacquiao in sports section.

'Average' U.P. student tops 2013 Bar exams

By EDU PUNAY

MANILA — For Nielson Pangan, topping the 2013 Bar examinations was sweet redemption — both for himself and for his university.

Pangan, a graduate of the University of the Philippines College of Law, admitted the results announced by the Supreme Court (SC) Tuesday came as "a big surprise."

"I was not really expecting this. Until now I am shocked. I don't know how it happened," Pangan said.

He admitted that while waiting for the results in the last five months, he considered pursuing a master's degree in business administration should he fail the Bar.

"I had doubts. I even told my family that I might not make it. Turn to page 15



Nielson Pangan gives interview to the media.

PH offers U.S. access to bases

To deter China's growing hostility

By MANUEL MORGATO

MANILA — The Philippines has agreed to allow the United States access to its military bases under a new security deal being negotiated by the two allies, amid mounting concern over China's increasing assertiveness in the disputed waters of the South China Sea.

The offer was made during a sixth round of talks held in Washington last week, Filipino

officials said on March 14. The two sides hope to finalize terms before U.S. President Barack Obama embarks on a visit to Asia, including the Philippines, next month.

"Consensus was arrived at on many provisions of the draft agreement," Defense Undersecretary Pio Lorenz Batino told a news conference, adding the deal is 80 percent done.

"The proposed agreement will allow the sharing of defined areas within certain AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) facilities with elements of the U.S. military," Batino said.

The United States plans to "rebalance" its forces in Asia-Pacific region, and has similar arrangements with Australia and Singapore, as part of its strategy to counter China.

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Linked to Pag-IBIG anomaly

House to call Noli de Castro

MANILA — Speaker Feliciano Belmonte has greenlighted a move in the House of Representatives to summon former Vice President Noli de Castro (pictured at right) and other housing officials under the Arroyo administration, as Congress investigates the multi-billion housing scam that further ran to the ground the state firm that guarantee businessman Delfin Lee's property projects.

The House leadership acted on the initiative of Abakada party-



list Rep. Jonathan dela Cruz, who noted that Housing Guaranty Corp. (HGC), despite its poor financial condition, had issued the guarantee for the projects of Lee, who is accused of having used ghost borrowers, among others.

He is now detained in Pampanga on syndicated estafa charges after being arrested on

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9 out of 10 Pinoys are cyber prey

MANILA — Nine out of 10 Filipino Internet users fell victim to cybercrime due to lack of awareness on security features of social networks, the Philippine National Police (PNP) bared this week.

PNP chief Director General Alan Purisima said he is relying on the capability of the PNP Anti-Cybercrime Group (ACG)

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Sympathy for Malaysians



Students gather around a three-dimensional artwork, based on the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, that was painted on a school ground in Makati City this week. The artwork is an expression of sympathy towards the relatives of passengers onboard the missing jetliner. (Kramer photo)

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