

Filipinos begin race for presidency, 18,000 other offices



PUNCHING POLITICIAN. Manny Pacquiao takes questions at the Asia Society in New York on October 12, 2015. Pacquiao says his surgically repaired shoulder is 80 percent to 90 percent healed and he expects to resume training in November or December, with a return to the ring in March. (AP Photo/Seth Wenig)

Manny Pacquiao says shoulder is healing

NEW YORK (AP) — Manny Pacquiao says his surgically repaired shoulder is 80 percent to 90 percent healed and he expects to resume training in November or December, with a return to the ring in March.

Pacquiao acknowledged that Amir Khan was a possible opponent, but added no determination had been made.

Pacquiao had surgery on his right shoulder four days after he lost by unanimous decision to Floyd Mayweather Jr. in boxing's richest fight ever in May. Mayweather says he's retiring, though Pacquiao recognizes that in boxing, those vows don't always hold up.

"If you ask me, of course, I want a rematch," Pacquiao said. "I heard that he retired already. If he really retired, then there's no rematch. But if not ..."

Pacquiao injured his shoulder three weeks before the fight. He later said he aggravated it in the fourth round, when he landed some of his best punches of the night against Mayweather.

"He kept moving around and didn't want to fight toe to toe with me, exchanging punches," Pacquiao said.

Asked if he could change that in a rematch, Pacquiao said, "I think so, especially (after) I fixed my shoulder."

Pacquiao, a congressman in the Philippines, was in Manhattan to be honored with the Asia Society's "Asia Game Changer of the Year" award. He is running for the Philippines' 24-seat senate, a national position that has been used as a springboard for vice president or president.

China seizes 804kg of ivory along with rhino horns and bear paws

BEIJING (AP) — Chinese state media say authorities have seized hundreds of kilograms of ivory along with rhino horns and bear paws and arrested 16 suspected members of a smuggling ring.

The *People's Daily* online said

police in Beijing announced the seizure of 804 kilograms of ivory, 11 kilograms of rhino horns, and 35 bear paws in a haul worth \$3.8 million.

This was the result of a crackdown from May to August on the illegal purchase, selling, and transport of

wildlife products. The article cited a news conference in Beijing by forest police, who investigate crimes involving wildlife.

The 16 suspects were arrested in Beijing, Guangdong, Hebei, and Shandong, among other places.

MANILA, The Philippines (AP) — The race for the Philippine presidency next year began this month with the country's vice president being the first major contender to register his candidacy to lead one of Asia's most unwieldy democracies.

Vice president Jejomar Binay filed his certificate of candidacy before Manila's Commission on Elections with senator Gregorio Honasan as his vice presidential running mate. The ex-army officer is best known for helping lead a number of failed coup attempts in the 1980s.

President Benigno Aquino III's six-year term ends in June.

At least two other key contenders, senator Grace Poe and interior secretary Mar Roxas, have also registered their candidacies.

Poe, the adopted daughter of a famous movie couple who lived and worked for years in America, has been leading voter-preference polls, but has faced questions about her citizenship. Running as an independent, she also lacks a formidable political party unlike Roxas, whose candidacy was endorsed by partymate Aquino.

Binay, a former human-rights lawyer and city mayor, topped polls for years until he faced a senate investigation for alleged large-scale corruption that dragged on for months. He has denied any wrongdoing and although his survey standing has dipped, analysts still consider him among the major contenders.

Unlike in the last elections, when Aquino surged comfortably ahead and won with a landslide margin on a promise to fight corruption and poverty, next year's vote is close, said Steven Rood of the Asia Foundation, a U.S.-based nongovernment group that helps the Philippines and other Asian countries improve governance.

"This far out, there is no overwhelming favorite," Rood said. "It really is anybody's game."

Nearly three decades after the country emerged from a dictatorship through a 1986 "people power" revolt that catapulted his mother to the presidency, Aquino said the Philippines is back on the road to prosperity and hope after years of political instability. But critics say problems like poverty and corruption remain considerable.

Aquino, whose ruling party presented its 12 senatorial candidates, said next year's elections would be a barometer of the battle for good governance that he has waged.

Aside from the presidency, more than 18,000 congressional and local posts will be decided in the May 9 elections.



KEY CONTENDERS. Senator Grace Poe (top photo) outlines her political platform while announcing her intention to run for the 2016 presidential elections at the alumni hall of the country's premier university, the University of the Philippines, at suburban Quezon city, northeast of Manila, the Philippines. In the bottom photo, Philippine vice president and now presidential candidate Jejomar Binay, center, eats breakfast, known as "boodle fight," with informal settlers prior to filing his certificate of candidacy for next year's presidential elections. (AP Photos/Bullit Marquez)



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