



*“Ang sabi niya sa akin,
‘Ma, gusto ko yung tindahan
natin kahit ganyan na nagsimula
sa maliit mapalaki natin.”*

LEAH DINGLASAN

Widow of Marine Technical Sergeant Aldrin Cadiz
Dinglasan, killed in action in Marawi City

A soldier’s dream: A nation’s tribute

No one is really ever prepared to cope with a loss of a loved one but for military wives every assignment and every deployment may mean the last time they will see their husbands alive.

For the last time Leah Dinglasan bid goodbye to her husband who received orders to join the troops in Marawi City. It was supposed to be Marine Technical Sergeant Aldrin Cadiz Dinglasan’s, then 41 years old, last deployment as he had plans of retiring upon return. But that did not happen.

What was supposed to be a very happy homecoming and retirement turned into Leah’s worst nightmare.

Tech. Sgt. Dinglasan, was already three days into the siege when a sniper bullet struck his cheek on that fateful morning of May 31, 2017.

After receiving a call and hearing the news of the soldier’s demise from his commander, Leah was at first in disbelief. She argued that he just called moments before. A few hours before his death, he called Leah and they talked about his return from his tour of duty, his retirement and how they will manage together the small sari-sari store business they had started.

Leah narrated how Tech. Sgt. Dinglasan’s body can’t be recovered due to heavy firing from enemy snipers. His body was recovered three days after his death.

“Mahirap, siyempre iniisip ko pa rin siya. Pero tuloy lang ang buhay,” Leah said, adding that she was left to care for their three children.

A soldier’s dream

Back in March 2017, the couple started a small variety store business for their family’s additional upkeep and to finance their children’s school expenses.

With P20,000 in hand, Tech. Sgt. Dinglasan started the small variety store before leaving for his tour of duty and Leah was left to manage the business, while her husband is in Marawi City.

Sgt. Dinglasan hoped that soon, once he retires, he and Leah could expand the business into a mini-grocery store.

A dream Leah was able to fulfill in memory and

celebration of her husband’s life and their family’s sacrifice.

The Nation’s tribute

After her husband’s death, Leah received assistance from the government and private sector in various forms.

Leah in March 2018 received a P100,000 loan assistance from the Small Business Corporation (SB Corp.) under its special lending program for Wounded-and-Killed in Action (WIA-KIA), an offshoot program from the Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-asenso (P3) program designed to assist soldiers, and policemen who were wounded in action or the families of those killed in action during the Marawi siege.

“Mayroon ding pension from the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine Veterans Affairs Office, Employees Compensation Commission, financial and educational assistance para sa mga anak namin, at mayroon din galing sa private sector,” Leah added.

With the P3 loan she received, Leah made a few changes in the store, expanding it and adding more stocks.

Five months after she received the financial assistance, the store is now worth almost double.

“Malaking tulong po talaga lalo pa at wala itong interest sa unang dalawang taon at ang buwanang hulog ay magsisimula lamang matapos ang dalawang taon,” she related.

She also hopes that after she completes the payment for the P100,000 loan from SB Corp., she can borrow money from the P3 program to further expand her business.

On a regular day, Leah earns as much P8,000 a day. Leah explained that it was Tech. Sgt. Dinglasan’s dream for the business to grow.

“Ang sabi niya sa akin, ‘Ma, gusto ko yung tindahan natin kahit ganyan na nagsimula sa maliit mapalaki natin,’” she said, holding back tears.

According to Leah it was like some premonition that he invested on a small sari-sari store months before he left for Marawi. It was as if he has provided his family a means to survive on their own.

“Nawalan ako ng kabiyak dahil sa pagseserbisyo nya sa bayan at kaming kanyang naiwan ay di naman pinabayaang ng kanyang bayang pinagsilbihan. Sayang lang at di na nya makikita ang katuparan ng pangarap nya.”




“Nagpapasalamat po ako sa Programang P3 ni Presidente Duterte na naging instrumento sa pagsasakatuparan ko ng pangarap ng aking asawa, at sa patuloy na pagsisikap maitataguyod ko ang kinabukasan ng aming mga anak.”

Asked what her most unforgettable memory of his husband is? Leah said that the memory of her husband’s return in a casket, draped with the Philippine flag will remain with her forever.

“Habang papalapit ako, unti-unting nabubuo sa isip ko na sya talaga yun. Hindi na talaga sya babalik.”

While she understands that her husband is gone, Leah is grateful and proud of her husband.

“Gusto kong alalahanin ang aking asawa bilang kawal. Hindi lang sya bayani ng bayan, bayani din sya para sa akin at sa kanyang mga anak.”



Pondo sa Pagbabago at Pag-asenso

Ang Programang P3 ng Department of Trade and Industry at ng Small Business Corporation ay nagpapautang ng puhunang pang-negosyo para sa mga nasugatang sundalo o pamilya ng mga nasawi o nasugatang sundalo sa pakikipaglaban.

Sa kasalukuyan ang P3 Program ay may 255 micro finance institution partners na nakapaghatid ng P3 loans sa mahigit 52,000 microenterprises sa 77 lalawigan sa buong Pilipinas.

Maging P3 microfinance institution partner. Bumisita o makipag-ugnayan sa pinakamalapit na tanggapan ng SB Corp o DTI Negosyo Center sa inyong lugar.



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