

Pacific Daily News

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HAAFA ADAI, IT'S FRIDAY

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75¢ on Guam



Don't forget to vote in today's Pacific Daily News poll. Today's question:

Do you agree with the governor's decision to take over Guam Memorial Hospital?

Results from yesterday's PDN poll are on **PAGE 2**

GMH CAPACITY

▲ GMH adult beds were at 98% of capacity and maternal child beds were at 84% of capacity as of 8 p.m. yesterday. No patients were waiting for beds. If you are in need of hospital care, you are urged to seek it immediately. For updated information, call the GMH switchboard at 647-2939 and ask for the nursing supervisor.

This box will appear on Page 1 daily. It will appear red when patients are waiting for beds.



PROMISE IN WRITING

Defense Department agrees in writing to keep out of Págat village and Págat Cave.

SEE STORY, **PAGE 3**

Pacific Daily News

ON THE AIR

Listen to live news Monday through Friday at:

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Calvo takes over at GMH

Governor names Rey Vega to head hospital

By **Oyaol Ngirairiki**

Pacific Daily News
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Guam Memorial Hospital's new management and Board of Trustees will be touring the hospital and meeting with staff this morning.

Rey Vega, the new interim hospital administrator, yesterday said the goal of the new administration and board is to address the hospital's financial situation.



"They will manage the money in the hospital and make sure nothing is wasted. They will make sure medicines and supplies are in stock to treat patients. They will earn your and my confidence in GMH."

- Gov. Eddie Calvo

"We're going to tour GMH with an open mind, meet with the department directors and walk the halls," Vega said. "As we see it, we're go-

INSIDE

▲ **Message:** Awards in Government Claims Act must be updated. **Page 24**

▲ **Opinion:** Calvo explains reason for shakeup at GMH. **Page 25**

ing to call it and make recommendations for change."

Gov. Eddie Calvo yesterday invoked

▲ See **Hospital**. Page 4

Cha guilty on all counts



Rick Cruz/Pacific Daily News/rmcruz@guampdn.com

Verdict reached: U.S. Attorney Alicia Limtiaco speaks to reporters just after the verdict was announced for Song Ja Cha outside the U.S. District Court of Guam, yesterday. Cha, the owner of Blue House Lounge, was found guilty on 20 counts of sex trafficking and prostitution.

By **Erin Thompson**

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In the moments before she faced a jury that would tell her whether she would go free or spend what could be the rest of her life in federal prison, Song Ja Cha waited like everyone else in the hallway outside a federal courtroom, clutching a pink handbag.

When the jury shuffled into Federal Judge Dean Pregerson's courtroom, the frail woman stood stoically, and listened to the verdict: guilty on all counts.

Jurors found Cha guilty on all 20 charges of which she was accused, covering conspiracy, sex trafficking and coercion and enticement to travel for the purpose of prostitution.

The charges stem from Cha's role as the owner of the Blue House



Cha

▲ See **Verdict**. Page 5

Doctor: I told boy's family to stay

By **Brett Kelman**

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A Guam Memorial Hospital doctor accused of discharging an injured boy too early, which has led to a

\$300,000 government settlement, said yesterday that he urged the boy's family to stay on Guam and continue care.

The family allegedly ignored his advice and returned home to Kentucky anyway, Dr. Glenn Cunningham said yesterday.

ham said yesterday.

Cunningham said the 5-year-old boy was visiting Guam when he broke his leg, and since the family already had purchased a round-trip ticket, they kept their travel schedule despite the injury.

Later, the boy had his leg amputated, because he allegedly left GMH prematurely. Cunningham said he knew the boy wasn't ready to travel, but he couldn't force the family

▲ See **Settlement**. Page 4

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Verdict: Sentence up to life

▲ Continued from Page 1

Pacific Daily News, Friday, February 18, 2011 guampdn.com

Lounge, where young Chuukese women offered sex for money in the club's VIP rooms. Cha paid for the passports and plane tickets for the Chuukese women, who traveled under the belief that they would get jobs in legitimate businesses.

U.S. Attorney Alicia Limtiaco said the Department of Justice was "pleased and satisfied" with the jury's verdict, and said it would send a "message" to those engaged in sex and labor trafficking in the region.

Although Limtiaco wouldn't speak to the specific sentence the U.S. Attorney's office would recommend, she said the penalties could mean "up to life imprisonment" for Cha.

The multiple counts carry sentences ranging from five years to 15 years to life in prison. There is no parole in the federal prison system.

Limtiaco said the severity of the charges and the "trauma" caused to the victims, which include a woman who was underage at the time she worked at the Blue House, "will warrant the most serious of a sentence."

She also thanked the women who provided graphic testimony during the trial.

"We want to thank the victims who were extremely courageous and strong in coming forward and being a part of this trial," said Limtiaco. "It took a lot of them to do this."

Former Blue House employees testified that Cha had been physically and verbally abusive, and said in one case Cha had forced a woman into an abortion. The prosecutor told jurors that the threat of arrest, reinforced by the regular presence of police, had kept the women from running away.

That allegation was supported by the testimony of Guam Police Department Officer David Manila, who testified last Friday that he had been a regular visitor to the Blue House Lounge. Manila admitted having sex with a Blue House employee in the club's VIP room, and said he was "friendly" with Cha.

In his official capacity as a police officer, he said he responded three or four times a week to various disturbances with customers, as well as problems with Cha's employees.

Limtiaco declined to comment on whether there would be a further action against members of the Guam Police Department, but she said the office was "looking into the matter regarding testimony and statements in regards to the police officer."

Following the verdict, defense attorney Howard Trapp requested that Cha not be remanded into custody until after a bench trial dealing with assets related to the case. The bench trial was scheduled for May.

Trapp noted that Cha had been allowed to travel during the trial, and had showed up faithfully throughout the trial.

"I think things have changed now that the verdict has been rendered," Gregerson said.

Cha was remanded into custody.

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