

Walking the Extra Mile For
The Youth of Puerto Galera



The Puerto Galera Fortnightly JOURNAL

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Council holds public hearing on two-points of entry ordinance

The Town Council held a public hearing for the proposed two-points of entry ordinance last August 22. This new ordinance was an amendment to Municipal Ordinance 05-06 which was passed September 21, 2005, making Balatero pier as the only point of entry and exit.

Vice Mayor Johnny Ascan said that the Council acceded to the Provincial Board's recommendation to amend the ordinance and include Sabang as a point of entry.

Sabang Barangay Chair Renato Cataquis said that Sabang was united in its opposition to the single point of entry ordinance. He said Sabang had petitioned the Provincial Board and even had a delegation to formally present their request to junk the approved ordinance and include Sabang as a point of entry.

The Provincial Board, in turn, went to Puerto Galera and conducted its own public hearing. Many Sabang residents and business owners attended that public hearing prompting the Provincial Board to recommend

the inclusion of Sabang as a point of entry.

Meanwhile, White Beach and Muelle business owners were one in denouncing the proposed amended ordinance saying that it is unfair to exclude White Beach and Muelle as ports of entry.

There were around 200 people that came to the public hearing. It was a curious mix of foreign business owners, shipping operators, business associations and politicians. Unlike previous public hearings, White Beach business owners came in bigger number to show their objection to the ordinance.

The meeting which lasted for more than 3 hours started with Municipal Administrator Venancio Yap welcoming the people and apologizing for the Mayor's absence whom he said was somewhere in Davao.

The Oppositors

Below are the major points raised by those who spoke against the ordinance.

Peter Manalo, a White Beach businessman, said that "outrigger boats" are designed to load and unload on beaches.

He said that it is more convenient to tourists if they can arrive straight on the beach of choice.

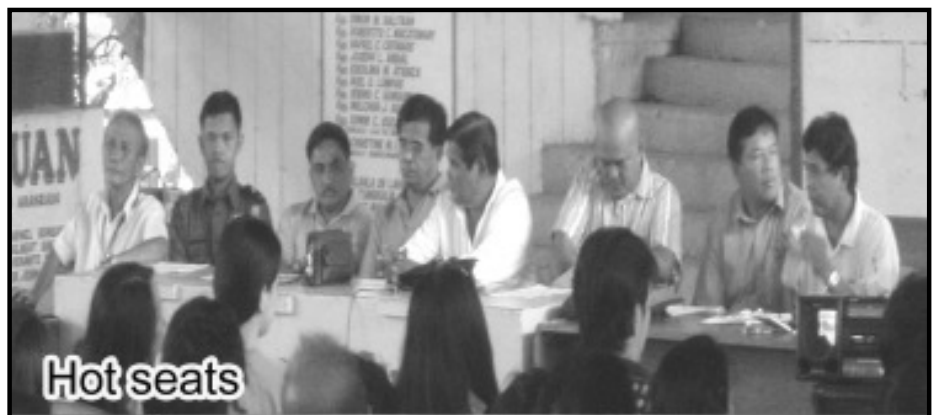
Danny Visayana said that reducing the number of points of entry will not necessarily have a positive impact on the environment since private vessels are exempted and can dock anywhere in Puerto Galera. He added that the ordinance was flawed because of another exemption which states that the vessels should leave Muelle once a typhoon signal has been lifted. There are times, he said when there are rough seas even when there is no typhoon making it dangerous for outriggers to dock at Balatero.

Ruben Ilagan of Father and Son Shipping said that the Council should have studied the condition of the waves during the monsoon season. During this time, he said, it is dangerous to dock in Sabang or Balatero because of rough seas and that if anything happens to the passengers, the ship owner will be the one held accountable.

Henry Arago of the Muelle
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How to exempt your business from income tax --- page 5

Vice Gov: one-point of entry ordinance was approved --- page 2



Hot seats



Same people at public hearing no. 4



Curious mix, none like this in OZ



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Council holds public hearing ...

Traders Association said that the public hearing was "lutong macaw" (a prejudice case) because the ordinance will be passed regardless of popular dissent as five Councilors have sponsored it. He said that a rich family is behind the point of entry ordinance. He criticized the Councilors for not preparing a feasibility study and warned them that they could be imprisoned if a boat forced out of Muelle to dock at Balatero cauzes.

Rocky Ilagan said that some of the provisions in the ordinance are in conflict with each other. The ordinance states that only passenger vessels defined as vessels offering their services for a fee will be required to dock at Balatero or Sabang. Private vessels, Ilagan argued, also offer their services for a fee and thus, are not exempted from the ordinance.

San Isidro Barangay Chair appealed to the Councilors to include White Beach as a point of entry.

Freddie Cabuhal said he is opposed to the two-points of entry ordinance because if Sabang will become a point of entry, then RORO vessels and more outriggers will pollute the marine environment. He lamented that "outsiders" are more conscious on the state of our environment than us here in Puerto Galera. Cabuhal stressed the importance of safeguarding the fragile environ-

ment which is the main reason tourists come to Puerto Galera and re-iterated his support to the one-point of entry ordinance.

Atty. Christian Garcia said that the local shipping industry will "die" as big companies will come in with bigger ships. He said that a criminal will not bring his contraband if he knows there is an established checking station and so the notion that this will improve security is flawed. He said that the solution to the degeneration of the marine environment is the imposition of higher penalties against violators of environmental laws and ordinances and not the reduction of the points of entry.

PGA Principal Rosalinda Cuervo said that all she is asking is for the Council to designate the safest harbor. She said that the government will be wasting money if Balatero cannot be used because it is unsafe. She appealed to the Councilors not to close down Muelle pier.

The Vice Mayor's Reply

After every speaker the Vice Mayor responded to some of the comments and questions posed to the Council.

The Vice Mayor emphasized that the rationale behind the ordinance was rooted in their desire to protect the environment. He said that Puerto Galera's unique natural asset have been recognized world-wide earning the town great titles like "the most beautiful bay in the world",

and "the best dive site in Asia".

Ascan denied that the Locsin family is behind the proposed ordinance and said that they are just doing their job to ensure that future generations will not hold them responsible for doing nothing to protect the environment.

Ascan said that there will not be chaos in Balatero because the Maritime industry Authority (MARINA) promised him that they will handle the scheduling of the trips for the more than 38 vessels plying the Puerto Galera-Batangas route.

Ascan said that "private vessels" are different from "passenger vessels" because the latter's passenger is pre-determined and that payment is part of the resort's package.

The Vice Mayor stated that it is part of their duty to find new revenue sources. The Fortnightly estimates that the government will earn more than 100 million pesos if the government's figure of 3 million tourists a year is to be believed. The money will come from the entrance fee, environmental fee and terminal fee that will be collected from each tourist.

Ascan said that reducing the number of entry points will act as a deterrent against criminals.

Finally, the Vice Mayor said that all the objections and comments have been noted and it is up to the Councilors to consider the points raised by the oppositors.

Vice Gov: one-point of entry ordinance was approved

Two hours after the August 22 public hearing on the two-points of entry issue, Vice Governor Estee Aceron came to town to organize a civic organization but the news she brought was a big surprise to many people in Puerto Galera.

After organizing the Rotary Club of Puerto Galera, the Vice Governor met with politicians and repeatedly told Vice Mayor Johnny Ascan that the one-point of entry ordinance was duly approved by the Provincial Board.

The visibly shocked Vice Mayor told the Vice Governor, the presiding officer of the Provincial Board, that the town council thought that the ordinance has been sent back to be amended and that the councilors would like to include Sabang as a point of entry; hence, the August 22 public hearing on the amended two-points of entry ordinance. Ascan added that the council received no written communication on the point of entry ordinance from the Provincial Board except for the report of the Committee on Legal Matters.

The Committee on Legal Matters of the Provincial Board, composed mostly of lawyers, in their committee report made the following observations:

1. The ordinance was within the power of the Town Council.

2. The ordinance is not infringing on existing laws, rules and regulations. The Committee reported that the ordinance does not contravene with provisions of RA9295 known as the Domestic Shipping Development Act which was one of the main arguments raised by the oppositors.

However, the Committee noted that the views of the oppositors were not properly heard and that the members of Town Council are amenable to the two points of entry scheme. The ordinance was remanded back to the council for further consideration.

If an ordinance is not against the law, public morale and public policy then the Provincial Board has no recourse but to approve the ordinance regardless of popular opposition to it.

The Vice Governor argued that the Committee Report clearly stated that no law was infringed and that the probable inclusion of Sabang was a mere recommendation.

Vice Mayor Ascan said that they will ask the Provincial Board for a copy of the resolution approving the one-point of entry ordinance.

Ascan said that if the ordinance was approved it is now the Mayor's job to implement it. "The Ball is now with the Mayor."

One-entry port may kill booming tourism industry

By Maniano T. Amarao,
Manila Bulletin, June 20, 2006

"Zurecht ein Platz fur einen unvergesslichen Tauchurlaub!" says a promotional statement posted on a website of a German-managed dive resort in this premier coastal barangay of Puerto Galera.

Translated by a Filipino staff, the text means that Sabang, located in the eastern side of one of the country's top tourist destinations, is the best "place for an unforgettable diving vacation."

The volume of tourists coming to Sabang from Metro Manila and elsewhere, through the Batangas International Port, is 1,500 to 2,000 passengers daily during peak season, from March to May. In White Beach, Bgy. San Isidro, the statistics is between 5,000 to 6,000 tourists daily during the same months.

Most of these tourists avail of the public sea transport system to and from Puerto Galera such as taxi ferries, outriggers, and ro-ros.

"Outriggers are the favorite and frequently used mode of sea transport in coming in and out of Puerto Galera, including Sabang and White Beach, which accounts for 98 percent," said Rocky D. Ilagan, owner of the Father and Son Shipping Lines, which operates a fleet of outriggers plying the Sabang-Batangas route.

Unlike the far-away Boracay and other places of interest in

the country, Puerto Galera is the favorite hang-out of tourists, foreign and locals alike, because of its low-budget accommodations, affordability, and most of all, its accessibility.

However, resort operators like Ilagan, who also owns the Anegeline Beach Resort in the area, have expressed disappointment over a proposed municipal ordinance...establishing a "one-entry, one-exit port" in Puerto Galera.

Crafted by the Puerto Galera Sangguniang Bayan, Municipal Ordinance No. 05-06 calls for the establishment of "onepoint of entry and exit for all vessels plying the Batangas-Puerto Galera route" purportedly to "check the entry of illegal drugs and to prevent terrorist attacks on any spot" in the municipality.

From the present six points of entry, Sabang, Muelle, Balatero, Minolo, White Beach, and Talipanan, the municipal ordinance will establish only one-entry-one exit port in Bgy. Balatero. The Balatero Port was donated by a private family to the Puerto Galera municipal government in 2002.

Former Puerto Galera Vice-Mayor Robinhood D. Ylagan explained that it is impractical to unify six points of entry into one main port in Balatero considering the fact that there are about 100 passenger vessels

coming in and out of various coastal villages using the six entry points.

"And besides, it is not safe to both the vessels, mostly outriggers, and tourists to use Balatero Port for docking and undocking maneuvers, because it can only accommodate two outriggers at a time," Ylagan said, explaining that the small port is located near an open sea that is dangerous to both the vessels and the passengers.

"I can assure you that all there will be, if the ordinance is enacted, is a 25 to 35 percent decline in the regular and returning visitations of tourists if they have to endure a two-hour bypass in a meaningless checkpoint," lamented Roger A. Bigler, of the Portofino Resort and a founding trustee of the Puerto Galera Business Development Association.

A petition of protest containing 3,000 signatures was submitted to the Oriental Mindoro provincial board, through Gov. Arnan C. Panaligan.

"It is a bad idea," Anthony Welsh, 43, of Bristol, England, said of Municipal Ordinance 05-06, explaining that if the present six points of entry in Puerto Galera is transferred to Balatero Port as the single and main port, the travel, through a tricycle to Sabang is "very dusty and expensive."

Editorial: VM Ascan wins

The Public Hearing, last August 22, was a failure of reasonable men to present reasonable arguments to arrive at a sound proposition.

To the proponents, it was a necessary requirement in making an ordinance.

To the opponents, it was a political rally, one where an argument can be as fallacious and invalid provided it is popular and appeals to the fears and emotion of the viewing public.

The proponents have clearly outlined a set of premises which were feebly addressed by the opponents.

Although most observers say that some of the arguments in favor of the ordinance were weak, the Vice Mayor, was able to sway the discussion towards the strong points of the ordinance, which tilted the result in favor of the proponents, despite the overwhelming opposition to the ordinance.

The proposition is: That making Balatero Pier and Sabang Beach as the only points of entry for passenger vessels will be

beneficial to Puerto Galera, because of the following assumptions:

1. The economic benefits of tourism will be felt in other barangays and the operators of tricycles, jeepneys, and motorbancas will earn money from transporting passengers from Balatero and Sabang to other Barangays.

a) The Councilors did not elaborate.

b) The Opponents did not debunk the premise.

c) The Councilors win by default.

2. The peace and order will be "ensured" if there are only 2 points of entry.

a) Pro - The Chief of Police said that it would be easier to check criminals, terrorist, and drug trafficker if there are only 2 points of entry and exit.

b) Con - Atty. Ian Garcia said that the criminals will naturally avoid established checking stations when bringing contraband.

c) "Ensured" is a heavy word. Opponents win.

3. The healthy competition among shipping operators would mean lower fares and better amenities to the riding public.

a) Pro - No explanation.
b) Con - Danny Visayana said that cut-throat competition will occur because of the similar departure schedules and that fare hikes are subject to the rising cost of fuel and maintenance.

c) The Opponents win.

4. The ordinance will have a positive impact on the fragile marine environment.

a) Pro - The explicit points made by the Vice Mayor are as follows:

"Muelle is getting polluted."
"A DENR report proves this."

"We don't want Muelle to become another Bolinao." (referring to an area whose waters are contaminated)

"We are doing this for future generations."

b) The tacit implications of the Vice Mayor's remarks, vis a

>>> on page 6

One Point of Entry

By the Puerto Galera Dive Association (PGDA)

WHY ARE THEY making our lives harder? Strange, how we sat down at the municipal gym on the 22nd August for 3 hours discussing the 2 point of entry ordinance, finding out later that the Provincial Board had passed the old dreaded one point of entry ordinance which everybody thought was long gone.

Now here we go again. We could go on forever about this, but to make easier we have made a list of the good and bad things about the one point entry ordinance.

GOOD THINGS

1. Expected Revenues P100,000,000 - (This is good but we will never see where it goes)
2. Less boats at Muelle pier.

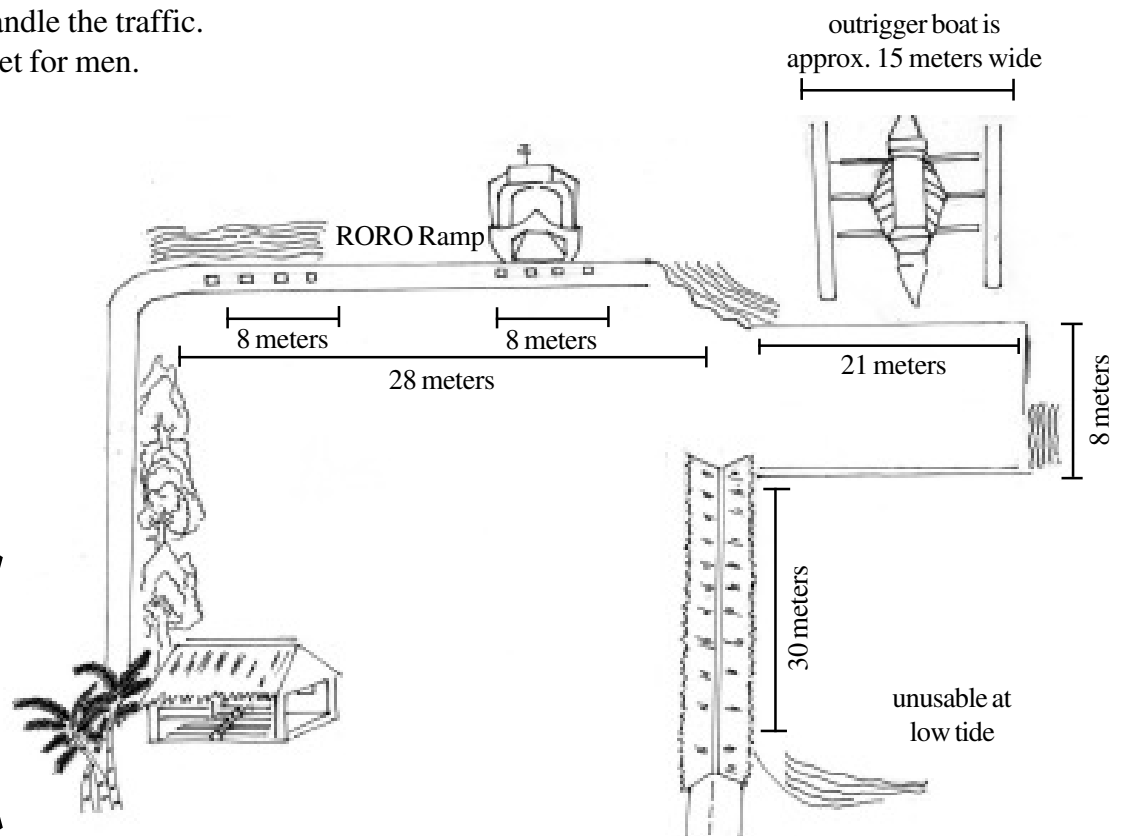
BAD THINGS

1. Balatero pier is not made for 38 trips a day. Need 18 hours per day or interval of two boats every 30 minutes to accommodate all passenger vessels.
2. Its not made for outriggers boats, the pier is 21 meters wide. Outriggers are 15 meters wide.
3. Weather factor - its rough 6 months a year.
4. Increase in travel time - Sabang to Balatero approximately 30 to 45 minutes.
5. Extra cost to get to Balatero - 30 pesos to Balatero from Sabang.
6. Roads are a disgrace.
7. Tourism will drop.
8. The road to Balatero Pier cannot handle the traffic.
9. Only one toilet for women, one toilet for men.

So now you know...
but the real question is
who really will benefit
out of the one point of entry.

Not us working people.

The diagram on the right clearly shows that Balatero pier would not be able to accommodate 38 or more vessels. Only 2 vessels at a time will be able to dock at the pier. The result would be utter chaos which would further inconvenience tourists coming to Puerto Galera.



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SILVER BULLET BY NOE LINESES

Travesty of a budget

A concerned employee gave me a copy of the municipal budget with a request that I would not reveal the identity of the source. I hurriedly photocopied the 95-page document, returned it immediately, aware of the many risks this employee took to give us this public document. There is, after all, a memorandum in effect, directing employees not to provide information unless approved by the head honcho (you know who).

After leafing through the pages, my mind went blank as I struggle to find the politically correct word to describe the municipal budget. There is none except to say that it is a complete disgrace.

Sa aking opinyon nakakahiya ang mga taong gumawa ng "budget" ng munisipyo. Nakakalusot ang ganitong klase ng budget dahil hindi alam ng mga tao ang nangyayari sa munisipyo. Kung hindi dahil sa isang nagmamalasakit na empleyado, hindi sana namin malalaman kung paano ginagasta ang pera ng bayan.

Many people believe that the annual budget should be crafted in such a way that it will reflect the projects and programs most needed by the community. That it will be representative of the state of the economy. That it will be guided by the principles of transparency and accountability. Well, in our part of the world, these words mean nothing.

Allow me to cite one glaring example of this travesty. Under the 20% Economic Development Fund (EDF), there was no allocation for any projects in Sabang and San Isidro. The EDF was supposed to be the source of fund for municipal projects intended to spur economic progress. White Beach and Sabang are the commercial centers, the biggest taxpayers, and should logically get a good slice of the EDF. But they got nothing, zilch, nada.

So where did the 6 million pesos EDF go? Around 60 percent was spent for payment of loan amortization for the public market. The rest of the money was allocated for projects in Poblacion, a sizable portion was for the improvement of the plaza in Balete. Around 500,000 pesos for the stage at the plaza and

another 250,000 pesos for a fountain, both projects are expected to be finished before the Mayor's birthday.

The total appropriated budget for the Mayor's Office is more than 12 million pesos. More than 5 million pesos were allocated for salaries, bonuses and other fringe benefits. More than 6 million pesos were allocated for maintenance and operating expenses. It is interesting to note the following items which were given generous allocations:

1. Electricity – 900,000
2. Office Supplies – 1,044,000
3. Gasoline – 1,000,000
4. Telephone (Landline) – 300,000
5. Purchase of vehicles – 590,000
6. Peace & Order Fund – 1,000,000

The total budget for 2006 is more than 51 million pesos. The municipal government expects more than 100 million pesos will be earned once the "One-Point of Entry Ordinance" is fully implemented. Many, however, are doubtful if this huge amount will redound to the general welfare. And with good reason. Consider, the budget allocated for a computer, 50,000 pesos. I bought a Pentium 4 computer for less than 25,000 pesos.

Indeed, this is our nightmarish reality. Still, no one will dare do anything.

If there will be a next issue, we will give you a breakdown of the items in the budget.

The Fortnightly is dependent on charity, but how we wish the people of Puerto Galera will appreciate what we are doing, so you, dear reader, will know and be informed of the events happening in this community.

Kofi Annan once said "Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family."

We shall continue to provide you information, if not through the newspaper, then by whatever means available. A knowledgeable public can make officials accountable to their deeds. An educated public can make better decisions come Election Day.

They can fool us once, hopefully never again.

Murang isda, Salamat po, Ka Imon

Nagpapasalamat kami kay G. Imon Garcia, na pagkatapos mabasa ang Fortnightly ay naglagay ng pwesto sa palengke na kung saan ngayon makakabili kayo ng isda sa murang halaga.

Makikita ninyo na mas mabilis maubos ang tindang isda ni Ka Imon, na kumikita kahit maliit lang ang dagdag na tubo.

Sana sundan ng iba pa si Ka Imon sa kanyang pagmamalasakit sa mga kababayan na mahihirap. Muli, hindi dahil ang pagiging tourist town para sobrang itaas ang presyo ng isda.

To our dear readers:

Please buy your fish at Mr. Garcia's shop at the public market, who after reading our last issue regarding the price of fish, decided to sell fish at fair prices.

In the last issue, we reported the high prices of fish and we thank Mr. Garcia for heeding our call to reduce the prices of fish.

Sa nag-text sa amin, eto yung pangako ko. Naniniwala kami sa itenext mo na dapat ang mga maglalako ng isda ay dapat may pwesto sa palengke. Mayroong ordinansa dito subalit mukhang ningas-kugon ang pagpapatupad nito.

I-text mo kabayan (0926-8484500)

Mula 0926-9620859 - Gd am. Ngayon ko lng po nbase ang Fortnightly. Congrats po. Sna po sapmmagitan nito magising ang mga kinaaukulan at mga mmyan upang matarok nila kung ano uri ng lidars tau meron, upang sa snd ay maging matalino tau sa pgpili ng lidars. sna mabasa ito ng lhat. More power and God Bless.

Going to the dogs

This is a letter received by Danding Taylor, a long-time resident, and who forwarded it to the PG Fortnightly with the request that we find space to reproduce it. He thinks hundreds of people agree with the writer.

Dear Danding:

As you asked me to do, here are my comments after spending a week in Puerto Galera.

Sorry to say, but I think PG is slowly but surely deteriorating. Before long, the place will be avoided by the right kind of tourists and the right kind of expat residents you should be able to attract to your area.

Specifically, the White Beach area will become an unsightly ghetto unless remedial measures will be implemented soon. I don't think there is any planning or zoning regulations and just about anything goes by way of fleeing tourists. The Sabang area is not far behind and except for a few resorts managed by expats, the rest of the area is literally going to the dogs.

The Poblacion is one big mess with one tricycle for every two pedestrians. The traffic, noise and pollution already aggravate the filthy conditions in town.

What are the local authorities doing? They should have the good sense to know that tourism is the main source of income for the local residents but I do not see how you and your friends can reverse this deterioration. Unless something drastic happens soon, many other communities with better planning and better governance will surely overtake your area.

Sincerely,

(Name of writer withheld upon request)

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How To Exempt Your Business From Income Tax

Businessmen, especially small entrepreneurs, are often times challenged with the dilemma of how to generate more income and minimize their expenditures. It is in recognition of this that Republic Act ("RA") No. 9178, otherwise known as the "Barangay Micro Business Enterprises (BMBEs) Act of 2002", was enacted.

The policy underlying RA No. 9178 is a noble one. RA No. 9178 was crafted to encourage the formation and growth of BMBEs, which effectively serve as seedbeds of Filipino entrepreneurial talents, and to integrate those in the informal sector with the mainstream economy. Its most salient feature pertains to the tax incentives granted to BMBEs, specifically the exemption from tax of the income arising from the operation of the enterprise; exemption from or reduced rates of local taxes, fees and charges; and exemption from gross receipts tax ("GRT").

How to Register

One can register as a BMBE if it is a business entity or enterprise, whether operated as a sole proprietorship or a corporation, partnership, cooperative or association, organized/incorporated and existing under Philippine laws and is: (a) engaged in the production, processing or manufacturing of products or commodities, including agro-processing, trading and services, and which activities are barangay-based and micro-business in nature and scope; and (b) whose total assets, real or personal, inclusive of those arising from loans but exclusive of the land on which the particular business entity's office, plant and equipment are situated, shall not be more than PhP3,000,000.00.

The application for registration as a BMBE, or BMBE Form 01, should be accomplished in

triplicate and filed with the Office of the City or Municipal Treasurer where the principal place of business of the BMBE is located. The application should be processed within fifteen (15) working days upon submission of complete documents, otherwise, the BMBE shall be deemed registered. If the business entity or enterprise is found to be eligible, the Office of the City or Municipal Treasurer will register the business entity or enterprise as a BMBE and issue a Certificate of Authority ("CA"), which shall be effective for a period of two (2) years, and renewable for a period of two (2) years for every renewal. The Office of the Treasurer shall issue the CA promptly and free of charge, unless a fee, not exceeding One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00), is imposed by the local government unit concerned through a properly enacted ordinance.

Tax Incentives

The income of a BMBE arising purely from its operations is exempt from income tax. To avail of such tax incentive, all that is needed is to register the BMBE with the BIR Revenue District Office ("RDO") where the principal office or place of business of the BMBE is located. If the enterprise is currently registered with the BIR, the BIR shall record its registration as a BMBE and shall correspondingly amend the registration certificate. On the other hand, if the BMBE has not yet been registered, the BMBE shall register for each type of internal revenue tax, except income tax, but including withholding taxes for which it is liable. If a BMBE is also entitled to exemption from income tax under any law other than RA No. 9178, it has to disclose this fact in its registration form and indicate whether it shall avail itself of such exemption or the privilege under RA No.

9178. The choice made is binding on the BMBE for the entire period of validity of its registration with the BIR, which is usually 1 year.

Every BMBE entitled to full income tax exemption is required to file an Annual Information Return, together with an Account Information Form, or its equivalent, containing data from audited financial statements and a sworn statement of assets owned and/or used in business. The Return shall be filed with the RDO or the duly authorized Treasurer of the city or municipality in which the BMBE has its principal place of business on or before the 15th day of the fourth month following the close of the taxable year.

It should be noted that the income tax exemption privilege of a BMBE can be revoked under any of the following circumstances:

(a) When the BMBE transfers its place of business to another locality; (b) When the value of its total assets exceeds PhP3,000,000.00; (c) When the BMBE voluntarily surrenders its Certificate of Authority to the Office of the City or Municipal Treasurer; (d) In case of death of the registered individual owner of the BMBE, if it is a sole proprietorship; (e) In case of violation or non-compliance with the provisions of RA No. 9178, the Implementing Rules and DOF Department Order No. 17-04; (f) In case of merger or consolidation with an entity which is not eligible to be a BMBE; (g) In case of sale or transfer of the BMBE, if it is a sole proprietorship, without prejudice to the transferee applying for registration should it be qualified under the terms of DOF Department Order No. 17-04; (h) Submission of fake or false or falsified documents; (i) In case of retirement from business, or cessation/suspension of operations for one year; and (j) Making

false or omitting required declarations or statements.

If any of the above circumstances is found to exist, the BIR will notify the BMBE in writing of its findings and require the BMBE to pay the corresponding income tax.

Aside from exempting the BMBE's income from tax, RA No. 9178 also encourages the local government units to either reduce the amount of local taxes, fees and charges imposed or to exempt the BMBEs from local taxes, fees and charges. Moreover, the BMBEs are exempt from the coverage of the Minimum Wage Law. However, its employees shall be entitled to the same benefits given to any regular employee such as social security and healthcare benefits.

Likewise, the interests, commissions and discounts derived from the loans granted by the Land Bank of the Philippines, the Development Bank of the Philippines, the People's Credit and Finance Corporation, and the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation to duly-registered BMBEs, as well as loans extended by the Government Service Insurance System and Social Security System to their respective member-employees for the purpose of establishing BMBEs, shall be exempt from GRT. To avail of the exemption, a certified copy of the BMBE's registration with the BIR should be submitted to the lending institution concerned.

The incentives herein mentioned are only a few of those granted under RA No. 9178. While operating a BMBE is not expected to turn one into a business tycoon, the benefits that the law grants guarantees the micro businessman a better opportunity to compete in a more diverse and free market. (by Rochelle Magnolia F. Tamin)



White Beach Nipa Hut/ White Beach Resort

White Beach, San Isidro, Puerto Galera, Or. Mindoro, Philippines

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Cell . # 0916-534-0484
Landline Manila:
Precious - 742-7925

FRANKIE D. MAGBUHOS
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Merlyn - 0920-418-6087
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Gin Juice
Very Cold Beer
All Rooms With Cable TV
Hot And Cold Water
Chuck Burger

Talk of the Town

I had a long interesting chat with Mr. Ven Magbuhos, a successful businessman from White Beach, who owns an antique shop in Ermita, Manila. His collection of precious Chinese porcelains and early Filipino artifacts are one of the best in the country.

When I told Manong Ven that we are organizing a Historical Society for Puerto Galera, he thought this was an excellent idea. Puerto Galera's history is but bits and pieces of mostly unverified stories handed down through generations. No one has really made a serious study of how Puerto Galera came to be. No one has made a serious effort to separate facts from fiction.

A Historical Society is a big help for efforts to write the true history of Puerto Galera. Manong Ven also promised to donate some items if ever Puerto Galera will have a municipal museum.

The most eligible bachelorette in the province came to town recently to organize a Rotary Club in Puerto Galera. Vice Governor Estee Aceron said that the Rotary is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service, encourages high ethical standards in all vocations, and helps build goodwill and peace in the world. Approximately 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 32,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas.



Vice Gov. Estee Aceron and the Rotary

Before she left Interim Officers were elected and tasked to recruit more members to the local Rotary. I believe this could be the organization that will have the credibility and the experience to do good things for the community. Great thing about it too, is unlike most organizations here, foreign business owners are most welcome to join the club.

To generate more interest in the Rotary, the Interim Officers, in coordination with the NGBCC will sponsor a seminar for businessmen regarding the Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE) and the many benefits enjoyed by a qualified BMBE.

For more info, kindly text or call (0926) 8484500.

by Noe Lineses

Another organization that was recently formed was the Puerto Galera Academy Alumni Association. The PGA is the first and biggest high school and was founded in the late 60's by Fr. Erwin Thiel, a German SVD missionary. It has produced 36 batches of graduates with an alumni population of more than 6,000.

Elected at the helm of the new organization is Dr. Oscar Evangelista.

We wish to extend our condolence to the family of the late Adelaida Cobarrubias.

We also wish to extend our heartfelt condolence to the family of the late Augusto Enriquez, father of my dear friend Danny Enriquez.

It is unfortunate that Mayor Teo Atienza did not see fit to reply to written questions we have sent him regarding the controversies hounding the Bantay Dagat.

Our letter requesting the Mayor to give his side of the story "in the interest of fair play and balanced journalism" was even read at the session of the Sangguniang Bayan.

We are still hoping that the Mayor will find time to answer the questions we asked.

We have assured him that his answers will be published verbatim and that this newspaper is non-partisan and strives to be as objective as far as possible.

There are many side issues that emerge from the recently concluded public hearing.

It was Rocky Ilagan who pointed out that the Councilors are biased in favor of foreign business owners when they drafted the two-points of entry ordinance and exempted "private vessels" which are mostly servicing the resorts of the foreign businessmen.

Ilagan said that the businessmen do not vote and do not try to influence their employees to vote for a particular candidate.

However, I have had several meetings with some of the more visible foreign businessmen and the prevailing mood is to be more actively involved in political gatherings.

Another issue was when our new Chief of Police, Major Madamba, said that there are minors working at the girlie bars.

Tell us something we don't know, Major?

The Urgent-Care Clinic of Dr. Oscar Evangelista and some of his foreign friends are now in full swing. People say it is an idea whose time has come in Puerto Galera. There is a growing elderly and retiree population and what is most needed is an acceptable health care center equipped with modern medical facilities.

DOLE holds seminar for foreign employers

The Department of Labor and Employment recently held a seminar on Labor Issues for foreign employers last August 23.

However, only 3 foreigners came and the rest of the nearly jam-packed conference hall at White Beach Lodge were Filipinos.

Although meant for foreign employers, the topics discussed was interesting and educational to Filipino employers as well.

The minimum wage now is 209 pesos per day for establishments with more than 10 workers. The minimum wage for establishment with less than 10 workers is 115 day.

Workers mean permanent and temporary employees.

Another interesting topic is cross culture management aimed at educating foreign employers to understand Filipino employees.

Filipinos do not like bossy-type employers and would prefer fatherly-like bosses. This behavior is rooted in the family-centered culture of Filipinos.

Filipinos also are not time-conscious and foreigners are urged to understand if an employee whose relative died will not be able to show up for work.

Filipinos also hates to be criticized in public. They view it as an attack to their honor, dignity and pride.

Chuck Driver of Capt'n Greggs was there and finished the seminar.

Chuck commented that "women workers are better workers."

VM Ascan wins...

vis The Ordinance, are as follows:

- The outriggers docking at Muelle and the commercial traffic that follows are polluting the waters.

- The Council has knowledge of a DENR report saying that Muelle/Puerto Galera Bay's marine environment is deteriorating.

- A solution to the destruction of the marine environment is stopping outriggers from docking at Muelle.

- Future generations will benefit from Muelle as we do now.

c) The opponents failed to debunk these claims and the Vice Mayor wins with flying colors.

5. The sinking of the "April Boy" outrigger banca is a grim reminder to serve as an effective safeguard to prevent the occurrence of such tragic accident.

a) Pro - No explanation. The unspoken implication is that the reason why that banca sunk was because of the current multiple points of entry setup which made it virtually impossible for law enforcement agencies, including the Coast Guard to monitor and enforce the law.

b) Con - No reply.

c) The assumption that the ordinance will prevent non-compliance with the law, thus prevent accidents, stays valid.

6. The government will generate much needed revenues for eco-tourism and infra projects.

a) Pro - Vice Mayor Ascan said that it was their duty to find revenue sources and that the government will earn millions from terminal and other fees.

b) Con - No valid argument.

c) Vice Mayor Ascan again wins.

by The Editor

Portofino

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Walking the Extra Mile For
The Youth of Puerto Galera



The Puerto Galera Fortnightly JOURNAL

Opinyon:

'Wag haluan ng pulitika ang kalikasan

Nakakalungkot na sa maraming pagpupulong, na kapag kalikasan na ang pinag-usapan, palagi na lamang lilitaw ang pangalan ng Locsin at makakalimutan na ang mahahalagang isyu tungkol sa ating natatanging kapaligiran.

Hindi lang naman ang pamilya Locsin ang may karapatang magmahal sa kalikasan.

Kaming mga isinilang at lumaki dito sa bayang ito, kaming mga nag-aral at nabukas ang isipan sa samut-saring ideolohiya - Mahal namin ang Kalikasan.

Malimit pinapasaringan ng mga makikitid ang isipan na pag ikaw ay maka-Kalikasan ay ikaw ay maka-Locsin, na ikaw ay "tuta ni Locsin."

Nakikiusap ako na 'wag sana ganyan ang ating maging paniniwala sa dahilang tayo namang mga taga-Puerto Galera ay may kakayahang malaman kung ano ang mali at ano ang tama. Hindi naman tayo mga "mangmang" para sumunod sa mga dikta nang kung sino man.

Ang katotohanan ay hindi lingid sa ating mga kababayan na ang kinabukasan ng bayang ito, ang kinabukasan ng industriya ng turismo ay

nakasalalay sa kagandahan ng ating kalikasan.

Itanong mo sa sarili, kung bakit nga ba dinarayo tayo ng mga turista. Ito ba ay dahil sa mga gusaling ipinatayo, sa mga bars at restaurants, sa Kaaldawan Festival ni Mayor.

Ang mga turista ay pumupunta dito upang ma-aluw, makita ang likas na kagandahan ng Puerto Galera, ang malalawak at mapuputing dalampasigan, ang luntian at mayamang kabundukan, ang makulay nating mga coral reefs at ang malinis na simoy ng hangin.

Kung kayo ay galit sa Locsin, huwag sana ninyo idamay ang kalikasan.

Nakakalungkot na may nagsalita laban sa Marine Protected Areas (MPA) noong nakaraang public hearing. Hindi makatarungan ang mga binitiwang paratang.

Ang MPA ay isang programa na tutulong sa mangingisda na makahuli ng marami pang isda sapamamagitan ng pangangalaga sa lugar na itlogan/palakihan ng mga isda. Ito ay magandang programa na dapat nating suportahan may kinalaman man o wala ang pamilyang Locsin.

Ano ang BMBE?

Ang RA 9168 ay isang batas na ipinasa noong 2002 na nagbibigay ng maraming insentibo sa mga maliliit na negosyo. Isa rito ay ang hindi pagbabayad ng buwis sa BIR.

Bagama't mahigit tatlong taon na ang RA 9168 o kilala sa tawag na BMBE Law (Barangay Micro Business Enterprise), hindi ito alam sa Puerto Galera. Maging ang mga opisyal ng ating munisipyo ay wala o konti lang ang alam tungkol sa batas na ito.

Dahilan ito kung bakit wala pang BMBE dito sa ating bayan habang maraming Filipino na ang matagal na nagbebenipisyo sa pagiging BMBE.

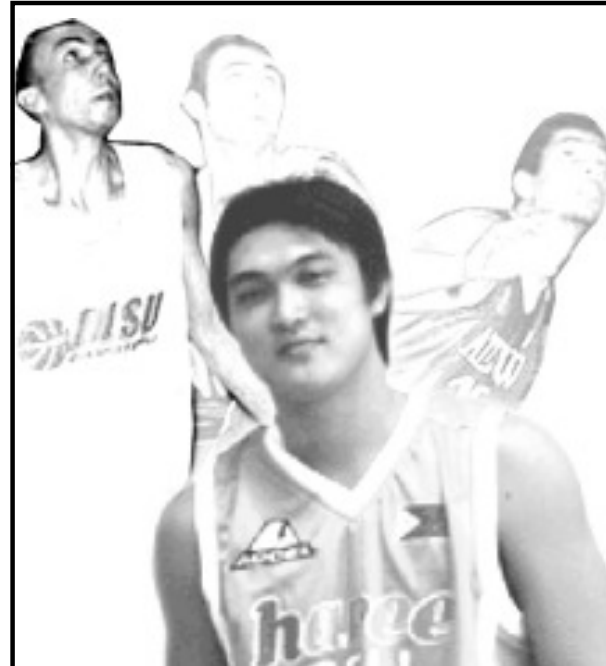
Kung ikaw ay BMBE, bukod sa hindi ka kailangang magbayad ng "Income Tax", ikaw din ay "exempted" sa Minimum Wage Law. Ang pagiging "exempted" sa "Minimum Wage Law" ang dahilan kung bakit ang ilang kongresista ay nagbabalak na amendahan ang BMBE Law.

Ang nakakalungkot ay malapit na amendahan ang batas subalit wala man lang tagarito na nagbenipisyo sa nasabing batas.

Sino ba ang pwedeng maging BMBE?

Kung ang negosyo ay hindi lalampas sa tatlong milyong piso, pwede kang maging BMBE. Ang hindi lamang pwedeng maging BMBE ay ang mga doktor, abogado o iba pang "professional" na kumuha ng lisensiya sa PRC.

Paano ba maging BMBE? Kung susundin ang nakalagay sa batas, simple lang ang proseso para maging BMBE. Mag fill-up ka lang ng isang "application form" na isusumite sa Municipal Treasurer. Ayon sa batas, kailangan sa loob ng 15 araw ay bibigyan ka ng Certificate bilang BMBE ng Treasurer. Ang Certificate ay "valid" hanggang 2 taon at pagkatapos ay pwede mong i-renew ito ng 2 pang taon.



Proud kami sa inyong tagumpay!

Si Paul Rico Maierhofer at Robert Sanz, taga-Puerto Galera na patuloy na nakikilala sa husay sa paglalaro ng basketball. Si Rico ay naglalro sa Harbour Centre ng PBL habang si Robert ay naging MVP ng NCAA sa koponang PCU Dolphins. Si Rico ay taga-Sabang, anak ng may-ari ng Tropicana Castle habang si Robert ay taga-Poblacion anak ni Mrs. Linda Sanz.

Sa aming pagsasaliksik tungkol sa BMBE, napag-alaman namin na kailangan munang magpasa ng ordinansa ang Sangguniang Bayan para makasingil ng tinatawag na "processing fee" ang Municipal Treasurer. Kung walang ordinansa, walang legal na basehan para makasingil ng "processing fee" ang Treasurer.

Ayon sa BMBE Law, hinihimok ang mga lokal na pamahalaan na kung maari ay bawasan ang mga buwis na ipapataw sa isang BMBE. Sa aking palagay, malaking benepisyo na ang hindi pagbabayad sa BIR at hindi na kailangan ma-apektuhan ang kita ng munisipyo mula sa "Business Tax".

Ang unang step ay kailangan makumbinsi natin ang mga konsehal na magpasa ng kailangang ordinansa.

Malaki ang maitutulong ng BMBE na dinesenyo talaga para pasiglahin ang mga maliliit na negosyo. Isang malaking karangalan para sa isang konsehal ang makatulong sa mga negosyante dito sa ating bayan.

Kapag nakuha na ang BMBE Certificate, ito ay

kailangan ipakita sa BIR sa Calapan City. Babaguhin ng BIR ang iyong Certificate of Registration at hindi mo na kailangang magbayad ng Income Tax sa BIR.

Isa pa sa benepisyo ng pagiging BMBE ay ang madaling pag-utang sa SSS o GSIS at iba pang financial institutions. Subalit, gaya nga ng nasabi ko, ang unang hakbang ay kailangang magpasa ng ordinansa ang Sangguniang Bayan.

Marami sa ating kababayan ang kwalipikado na maging BMBE.

Kinausap na namin sina Konsehal Raffy Cataquis at Danny Enriquez at sinabi nila na pag-aaralan nila ang RA 9168.

Kung may katanungan ka sa BMBE, mag-text o tumawag sa telepono 0926-8484500.

Inaanyayahan din namin kayo sa isang seminar tungkol sa pagiging BMBE na ilulunsad ng Rotary Club ng Puerto Galera sa pakikiisa ng NGBCC. Ang seminar ay dadaluhan ng mga kinatawan mula sa DOLE, BIR, LGU-Puerto Galera at gaganapin ito sa lugar at petsa na makikita ninyo sa mga kalatas na ipamimigay sa Puerto Galera.

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