

DepEd honors Mindoro mobile teacher

(Story on Page 3)

“Ciao, Italia”

Mindoreños abroad to hold ‘Balik-Mindoro’

By Raquel Romero Garcia
I RECEIVED an e-mail from Juliet Anonuevo Payabyab, president of Mindoro International, an association of Mindoreños from Oriental and Occidental Mindoro, inviting me and other members of Mindoreños Italia to join them in one great big reunion of Mindoreños, the Balik-Mindoro 2009 in Calapan City on February 20 -22.

I do not know Juliet personally but I wouldlike to help her since Mindoro s a place I call home after years of staying here in Rome. Juliet has

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Wala raw bidding sa kontrata

P20 terminal fee sa Calapan pier tinutulan

CALAPAN CITY, Oriental Mindoro – Mariing tinutulan ng Sangguniang Panlalawigan ng lalawigan ito ang paniningil ng P20 sa bawat pasahero na dumadaan sa passenger terminal building sa Calapan City pier.

Sa isang sulat na may petsang January 15 kay Felix M. Barcala, port manager ng Philippine Ports Authority sa Calapan, sinabi ni Board Member Butch Soller, chairman ng SP Committee on Transportation and Communications, na hindi resonable ang paniningil sa

mga pasahero dahil wala umano itong matibay na basehan.

Tinutulan din nina Soller ang terminal fee nang madiskubre nila na walang naganap na bidding sa pagkuha ng contractor na mangangasiwa sa naturang gusali na nagkakahalaga ng P45.6 milyon.

Titingnan din ng Committee on Laws, Ordinances and Legal Matters ng SP kung

(Sundan sa Pahina 3)



AFTER several inaugurations, the Calapan Port Terminal building finally opens charging each passengers P20 for a brief passage. Photo by Patrick Tan Sigue



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GMA leads inauguration of Mindoro bridges

PRESIDENT Gloria Arroyo and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. will lead the inauguration on Friday (Jan. 23) of six bridges in Sablayan, Mindoro Occidental.

Secretary Ebdane said that the completion of Yapang, Aruyan, Bulale I Bulale II, Ligaya I and Ligaya II all in Sablayan, marks an important step in the improvement of land travel in the region.

Costing P190 million, the completed six bridges were

part of the contract package III of the Urgent Bridges Construction Project for Rural Development.

Undersecretary Rafael Yabut, in-charge of the operation in Region IV-B said that these bridges would pump prime the economy of the island province with the expected increased economic activities and generate additional employment opportunities to the local residents in the area.

Project Director Emil Sadain of the DPWH-PMO-Urgent Bridges Construction Project

for Rural Development said that the bridge project was funded under the loan agreement between the government and Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

Yapang Bridge along Barangay Yapan, Sablayan involves the construction of one 25-lineal-meter span prestressed concrete deck girder type bridge and improvement/concreting of a 24-meter approach road.

The 63 lineal Aruyan Bridge along Barangay Pinakalon is a three span integral reinforced concrete deck

girder type bridge project including concreting works for 21-meter approach road.

Bulale I Bridge Project also along Barangay Pinakalon is a 27-lineal-meter single span integral H-beam type bridge with 239-meter approach road while Bulale II Bridge along Barangay Malisbong is a 29-lineal-meter single span integral reinforced concrete deck girder bridge with 22-meter approach road.

Similarly located in Barangay Pinakalon is the 20-lineal-meter single span

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Sudoku Tricks

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6			2		7			3
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	6							2
	3							9

SAGOT SA PAHINA 4

ANO ang nakita nila kay Hesus at animo'y sa isang iglap ay sumunod sila sa kanyang tawag?

Si Simon at ang kanyang kapatid na si Andres, si Santiago at ang kanyang kapatid na si Juan ay kapwa mga mangingisda.

Buong buhay na nila ang gawaing manghuli ng isda bilang hanapbuhay. Ngunit sa pagkakataong iyon, nang sila'y tawagin ni Hesus upang Manghuli ng "tao" ibang uri ng kapangyarihang ang nakita nila kay Hesus kaya daglian nilang iniwan ang kanilang ginagawa upang sumunod sa Kanya.

Marami akong kilalang tao, na sa unang tingin at pakikinig mo pa lang sa kanya, madarama mo na ang kakaibang uri ng espiritualidad.

Naala-ala natin noong dumating si Pope John Paul II dito sa ating bansa. Isang media personality ang

Nangangamoy halalan na naman

nagsabing noong paglabas na paglabas ng Sto. Papa sa pintuan ng eroplano, sa di niya maipaliwanag na dahilan, siya ay naluha.

Isang uri ng kaligayahan ang nangibabaw sa kanyang damdamin.

Milyong Pilipino ang nagpahayag ng ganun ding damdamin kahit na ang mga nakasaksi sa kanyang pagdating sa pamamagitan lamang ng telebisyon.

Ang tunay na espiritualidad ng isang tao ay tunay ngang nahahayag sa kanyang panlabas na kaanyuan, pananalita at pagkilos.

Kung mapayapa ang kalooban ng isang tao, makikita ito sa kanyang mga mata at kung paano siya manalita. Sabi nga ng isang madreng kakilala ko, tingnan mo lamang ang isang tao sa kanyang mga mata at malalaman mo ang kanyang pagkatao.



Sa Maikling Salita

Ni Fr. Bar Fabella, SVD

Ang may mapayapang kalooban ay pagkakaroon din ng isang uri ng kapangyarihan. Siya ay ginagalang at ang bawat salita niya ay pinakikinggan sapagkat dama mong ang lahat ng kanyang sinasabi ay nanggagaling sa kanyang kaibuturan.

Wala siyang itinatagong masamang hangarin. Ito ang uri ng kapangyarihang nakita nina Simon at Andres, Santiago at Juan

nang una nilang makita at tawagin ni Hesus.

Siya ang taong sa tingin nila ay makapagbibigay ng tunay na kapayapaan sa kanilang mundong punong-puno ng kaguluhan at mga katanungan, kaya nga di sila nag-atubiling tumugon sa kanyang tawag. Siya'y mapagkakatiwalaan.

Nangangamoy halalan na naman. Naglalabasan na naman ang mga "mesias" sa mga TV commercials na umaangkin ng mga solusyon

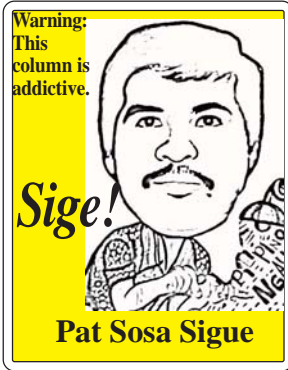
sa problema ng bayan. Nais mo ba talagang maglingkod sa sambayanan?

May mapayapa ka bang kaloobang bunsod ng kawalan mo ng kasalanan sa lipunan? May malalim ka bang pananampalatayang nagbibigay sa iyo ng takot upang ang pangdaraya sa bayan ay iwasan?

Bilang mamamayang pipili ng mga taong mamumuno sa ating bayan, paano ka magpapasya kung sino ang iyong ihahalal?

Anong uri ng kapangyarihan ang nais mo sa mga n a n u n u n g k u l a n ? Kapangyarihan ba ng salapi, o kapangyarihang nagbibigay ng tunay na kapayapaan at kaunlaran sa mahal nating bayan?

(Anuman pong reaksiyon o komento sa mga pagninilay ng may akda ay maaari ninyong ipadala sa e-mail address na ito: ibarra_svd@yahoo.com Maraming salamat po.)



Frying the Fillipinos

THE Calapan Port Terminal building has opened last week and the Philippine Port Authority (PPA) started charging every passenger P20 amid strong opposition of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of Oriental Mindoro.

Calapan port manager Felix Barcala told the Sanggunian that PPA has to recover the fund spent in the construction of the terminal building.

Let's be thinking Filipinos to extirpate corruption in government once and for all.

Come to think of it. The terminal building was built by PPA from government funds. Money raised from taxes paid by the people.

PPA now charges the very people that paid for its construction. Then claim progress and achievements under a strong republic. Making us all stupids and suckers.

Isn't it frying the Filipino people with their own lard. (Ipiniprito ang mga Pilipino sa kanilang sariling mantika).

Its no different with a banking system wherein you make loan from your own savings then charge you with interest higher than what they give to your savings.

And if the purpose is to recover the expenses so that PPA can finance another project, there should be a time frame within which the amount expended may be recovered, then there should be no more collections thereafter.

Then, perhaps, we may agree that this is progress and not exploitation, particularly the Mindoreños.

For sure this is not Build Operate Transper (BOT) scheme because its the PPA that is recovering its fund.

Then why award the collection to a business firm without bidding?

I smell money for the 2010 elections.

Tandaan pag may taga-PPA o suportado nitong kandidato sa 2010, huwag 'nyong iboto.

Global warming to remain a hot issue this year

COLD morning. This may well replace our usual 'Good morning' greetings these days.

The cold weather may become uncomfortable at times but I suggest we welcome and enjoy

it instead of complain about it. After all it will not stay with us for long. A month from now, it may already be hot.

Cold weather is normal at this time of year. It is brought about by the frigid air of Siberian current flowing from Alaska along the eastern coast of Russia through the Sea of Japan down to the Indian Ocean. What may be especially noteworthy is the unusually low temperature the Siberian current brings which may primarily be due to the now fast melting polar ice cap in the Arctic region caused by the twin phenomenon of global warming.

Indeed global warming and climate change will likely remain a hot issue and the focus of public attention and state concern this year and onwards.

Global warming refers to the progressively rising average temperature of the earth and ocean surfaces resulting from the inability of carbon emissions to escape to the atmosphere due to the destruction of the earth's ozone layer. It causes not only ordinary climate change but also spawns destructive typhoons that now regularly visit the Philippines with increasing frequency and intensity.

The year 2009 has just started but we already had typhoon Auring visiting us, a rare occurrence in itself. Unless my memory fails me, I cannot

Perspectives

By Johnny C. Nunez



recall any tropical typhoon visiting the Philippines at the start of the new year in recent decades.

Aside from typhoons, there is now also an increasing frequency of violent hurricanes, cyclones and disastrous weather disturbances in other parts of the world including the United States. Hurricanes are powered by warm ocean surface water.

Meteorologists explain that as global warming heats the surface of the ocean, the increased temperature causes strong air currents to become hurricanes and cyclones that gain further speed, power and severity. They also predict that as global warming intensifies, tropical typhoons and hurricanes will likely become more terrifying with higher wind speeds with heavier precipitation that can bring about more floods that will in turn wreak havoc on agricultural crops and property, and cause more power outages and food supply shortages, aside from increased public health problems.

Medical experts said extreme heat can cause cancer, heart

ailments and other diseases like new flue strains to which people have no resistance, as well as dengue fever and malaria. They also warn that old fungi and viruses frozen in the north and south poles could be released and cause global epidemics once their polar ice glaciers melt.

Dr. Josefino Comiso, a Filipino senior research scientist of the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Cryospheric Sciences branch, said the melting of the polar ice caps could cause the sea water level to rise by 23 feet or seven meters and cause floods in Metro Manila and submerge parts of some islands of the Philippines. Vulnerable to such sea level rises are large areas in Mindanao, Visayas and Luzon including the provinces of Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Masbate and Catanduanes.

The World Wide Fund for Nature has confirmed that the Philippines is extremely vulnerable to the ravages of climate change.

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7 WB-blacklisted companies banned

THE Department of Public Works and Highways has followed the World Bank in temporarily barring the seven construction companies blacklisted by the WB from joining in the bidding of any local and foreign-assisted projects.

In a statement issued by its public information office, Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said, "Following the WB action against the companies involved in a Philippine road project, the DPWH is temporarily suspending the involved companies from participating in any DPWH bidding for locally funded or foreign-assisted projects."

The agency said it "will make a decision whether to pursue blacklisting procedures against these companies within 15 days." It reiterated its commitment to the fight against corruption in government procurement system.

"The Office of the Ombudsman is also set to complete its fact-finding investigation on public officials alleged to be involved in the WB road project by the first week of February," Ebdane said.

Last week, the Washington D.C.-based financial institution barred Philippine construction firms E.C. de Luna Construction Corp., Cavite Ideal International Construction and Development, and CM Pancho Corp. from transacting with the World Bank on its projects.

The WB also suspended China Road and Bridge Corp., China State Construction Engineering Corp., China Wu Yi Co Ltd., and China Geo-Engineering Corp.

Korean firm Dongsung Construction Co Ltd was separately sanctioned in August 2008 for four years for fraud and corruption related to the NRIMP.

According to the World Bank, the seven firms rigged the bidding for the \$33-million National Roads Improvement Project (NRIMP) Phase I by forming a cartel.

Four of the companies accused by the World Bank of corruption, namely E.C. de Luna Construction Corp., Cavite Ideal, China Road and Bridge, and China State Construction, have ongoing projects with the DPWH, according to the agency.

Public Works Undersecretary Rafael Yabut said the agency decided to allow the companies to continue their infrastructure contracts. "As for ongoing projects, it will continue," he said.

The DPWH's decision to prohibit the seven companies from joining the bidding for government contracts effectively bars them from bidding for the NRIMP Phase II, which is also funded by the WB.

The P978 million-project finances the improvement and rehabilitation of various major road networks.

Public Works Undersecretary Romeo S. Momo, officer-in-charge of NRIMP2 projects, said the package included the rehabilitation of Marcos Highway connecting Rizal province to Metro Manila.

Also included in the loan package are the road networks of Magapit-Sta. Ana (Luzon); Mindoro East Coast (Bongabon-Jct. Roxas PR), Mindoro; Zarraga-Ivisan (bridges), Panay; Bacolod-Kabankalan (Bacolod-Bago), Negros; Surigao-Davao Coastal Road (Surigao Bdy-Lanuza) Mindanao; Malalag-Malita-JA Santos (Malita-Don Marcelino), Mindanao; Digos-Cotabato City, Mindanao; Cotabato City-Marawi City (Parang-Malabang), Mindanao; and Landslide Risk Mitigation in 43 sites in Mindanao.

PERSPECTIVE... (From Page 2)

Global warming and climate change was a focus of intense

SAGOT SA SIDUKO

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3	5	6	9	8	1	4	7	2
9	8	7	6	2	4	1	3	5
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4	7	5	8	1	3	2	6	9
6	1	8	2	9	7	5	4	3
8	4	2	3	7	9	6	5	1
5	6	9	1	4	8	3	2	7
7	3	1	5	6	2	8	9	4

discussions at the 13th National Press Congress organized by the Publishers Association of the Philippines Inc. (PAPI) and held on December 11-13 in Baguio City. The media event had for its theme, "Media, Culture and the Global Crisis" aimed at helping focus media and public attention on the crises confronting humanity today. The worsening world economic meltdown, complete the crisis complex. In the face of these problems, what can be done to help

DepEd honors Mindoro mobile teacher

EDUCATION Secretary Jesli Lapus bestowed the Most Outstanding Mobile Teacher award to Jenelyn Baylon of Region IV-Mimaropa Division of Oriental Mindoro, while the Most Outstanding District Alternative Learning System (ALS) Coordinator went to Concepcion Tababa of Region VI, Division of Iloilo.

Lapus said these mobile teachers are heroes in their own right as they play a critical role to reach out to otherwise inaccessible learners. "We need these mobile teachers – our champions of alternative education – to bring us closer to meeting our Education for All (EFA) goals."

Mobile teacher Jenelyn Baylon – known to the community as the "risk taker" because of the very harsh three hour motorcycle ride across a river and a mountain to reach her place of assignment – has been teaching out-of-school

youth and adults since 2004. Baylon said that "it is through ALS *na yung mahirap na katulad ko, nakakapagpayaman.*" Many of her learners have gone abroad to work and help their families.

"I saw the many problems and people asked help from me. I felt it was my calling to teach the out-of-school youth and adults who dream of finishing school to work and help their families. Malapit ang loob ko sa non-formal education. Sa formal education, *madaming teachers na pwede makatulong,*" Tababa recounts.

Her greatest achievement is the mentorship she has started among the Tadjaoan tribe in Oriental Mindoro. Baylon saw the need to educate the tribe members to protect ownership of the vast tracks of land that belong to them. "If they are literate, they will know their rights as well as obligations as owners of the land and

they will not be shortchanged," Baylon said. She did not mind the lack of teaching resources or the day-long travel time she had to endure to reach the Tadjaoans. She did not mind using Manila papers as teaching aids. "Pag nakikita ko sila, nawawala ang pagod ko," shared Baylon.

Tababa, meanwhile, has been involved in non-alternative learning system for the past 23 years. After a four year stint in formal, in-school teaching, she decided to go full time as District ALS Coordinator. "I saw the many problems and people asked me to help. I felt it was my calling to teach out-of-school youth and adults who dream of finishing school to enable them to find work and help their families. *Malapit talaga ang loob ko sa non-formal education,*" Tababa recounts.

Her daily routine includes a 23 kilometer walk from Tubungan, Iloiloto have

farthest barangays – where a precarious peace and order situation looms. Yet reaching out to the rebels and convincing them to resume their studies have become the focus of her advocacy.

Tababa recalls that "many of these rebels have joined my learning sessions and three have already finished high school. One is now even working in Japan. I feel that my goal is to inspire them to change their lives through education."

Lapus urges other teachers to follow the same route taken by Tababa and Baylon. "Of course we need teachers in our public schools but there is the equally pressing need to educate the out-of-school youth and adults. I encourage teachers who have the knack for adventure and out-of-the-box teaching

TERMINAL...

Buhat sa Pahina 1)

nilabag ni Barcala at kanyang mga kasamahan sa PPA ang Procurement Law ng gobyerno na nagtatakda ng mga istriktong patakaran sa pag-award ng government projects sa mga pribadong kontraktor.

Kasama ni Soller na tumututol sina Board Members Romeo Buena-ventura Jr., Humerlito Dolor,

Romeo Infantado at Abraham Abas.

Ayon naman kay Barcala, hindi niya mapipigilan ang paniningil sa P20 terminal fee dahil ito ang iniutos sa kanya ng kanyang mga superior sa PPA at iyon lamang ang paraan upang maibalik ang nagastos ng PPA mula sa corporate funds nito sa pagpapagawa ng building.

Sinabi ni Barcala na ang PPA ay may kapangyarihang magtataka at mangolekta ng

taripa sa mga pasilidad nito base sa itinatadhana ng Presidential Decree No. 857.

Binigyang-diin ni Barcala na ang PPA ay hindi na kailangang humingi ng pahintulot sa National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) upang isagawa ang proyekto dahil hindi umano sila kasali sa mga

government corporations na kinakailangang makakuha muna ng approval ng NEDA bago simulan ang anumang proyekto.

Ang P20 terminal fee ay sinisingil sa lahat ng pasahero ng interim contractor na nakilala lamang na sa pangalang Manalo.

mitigate and solve the problem eventually?

For certain, everyone is directly and intimately affected by global warming and climate change. And for sure, every person, one way or the other, contributes directly to the crisis, especially in terms of compounding the carbon emission problem. Everyone of us, therefore, must contribute our individual share to solving the global warming problem and the time for mobilization is now. What then can we do? Here are simple things we can do to help:

1. Let us do away with our old incandescent electric bulbs and change them with compact florescent lamps

(CFL). Let us also save electricity by using simple power-saving gadgets;

2. Let us minimize the use of air-conditioners if we can help it by keeping our windows for natural fresh air to come in;
3. If you use a car, make sure it is in top shape always to save on wasteful burning of fossil fuel; better yet, minimize your car use and use a bicycle instead for short-run trips;
4. From now on, don't or at least minimize burning your organic waste; compost them instead and use them as fertilizer;
5. Let's use other energy alternatives.

Reactions and comments may be e-mailed to jcqunuez@yahoo.com

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Tawa-Tawa Bulaklak ng Saya

Kahit mahirap ang buhay dahil sa pandaigdigang krisis pangkabuhayan na nararanasa ngayon, harapin natin ang Taong 2009 na nakangiti.

Tatlong Lolo

Lolo 1: Grabe na ang pagka-malimutin ko. Kapag ako'y nasa hagdan, di ko matandaan kung aakyat o baba.

Lolo 2: Ako naman, pag nakauupo sa kama, di ko matandaan kung hihiga o babangon.

Lolo 3: Sana hindi pa ako katulad 'nyo. (Knock on wood x 3)... Oops! Teka, may kumakatok. Sisilipin ko lang kung sino...

Entra ang isang meroon: Wala kayo sa lolo ko. Yung lolo ko, nagdeposito ng milyong piso sa banko, nung tanungin sa hearing sa Senado, hindi matandaan kung magkano ang deposito at kung saang banko.

Ilongitis

Doc: Ano ba ang sakit mo?

Lalaki: Nauutot po ako tuwing 5 minuto pero walang amoy.

Doc: Ngayon, nautot ka ba?

Lalaki: Upo.

Doc: Kung gayun, operahan kita sa ilong. Walanghiya ka! Ang baho! – padala ni RV

Pangako

Ama: Anak, ang pangako ay tinutupad. Hindi ka dapat

sumisira sa pangako.

Kaya kung hindi mo rin lamang magagawa, ipagtatapat mo agad.

Nang magtungo ang mag-ama sa mall.

Ama: Anak, hindi kita maibibili ng jeans ngayon, wala akong pera.

Nalungkot ang bata.

Ama: Bakit, anak?

Anak: Pangako ko po kasi sa sarili na magkaroon ng bagong jeans.

Sigaw ng bayan!

Kapag nagsasalita ang presidente ng America, ang sigaw ng mga Amerikano ay – Obama! Obama! Obama! Pag nagsasalita ang presidente ng Pilipinas, ang sigaw ay – Baba na! Baba na! Baba na!

Dun po sa langit

Pagdating sa langit ng isang operations team leader ng PDEA, nakita niyang naroon ang nadakip nilang drug pusher, samantalang ang kanilang deep penetration agent (DPA) ay nasa impiyerno.

Nagreklamo siya kay San Pedro.

Agad namang tinawagan ni San Pedro si Satan.

Malakas na halakhak lang ang naging tugon ni Satan.

“Aapela kami,” sabi ni San Pedro.

Lalong napahalakhak si Satan. “Sige, tingnan ko lang kung may makukuha kayong abogado ryan sa langit.”

U can send in ur jokes n dis corner.

IO Website... (From Page 1)

They will directly communicate to a special group of Mindoreños residing and working in other countries with the buying capacity and say on their families back home.

It will be strictly on a first-come, first reserved basis.

Reservations can be placed through our email: tworivers_inc@yahoo.com or call 0963133165 and 09206348533. Our landline in Manila is 563-1707.

The website will be maintained and managed by brothers Patrick and Princetone Tan Sigue with the help of their younger sister Marubeni Patrisha, a software engineer at Accenture, a global service company.

Watch for our formal launching.

GMA LEADS... (From Page 1)

Ligaya 1 (San Isidro 3) Bridge, which is an integral H-beam type bridge with 166-meter

approach while the 20-lineal-meter Ligaya 2 (San Isidro 1) Bridge is an integral reinforced concrete deck girder type bridge with 21-meter concrete approach.

DOT urges more discounts, promos for tourists in RP

TO encourage more domestic and international arrivals in the country even in a time of crisis, the Department of Tourism (DOT) called on all hotels and other operators to offer more discounts and promotional offers.

DOT Secretary Ace Durano said that the surge of tourism in the country will help local businesses and provide more jobs for Filipinos.

“We also urge our partners – hotels, resorts, spas, tour operators, and transportation stakeholders – to create more options and flexible packages. We have a very broad range of options to offer the most picky tourist. Group tours will also be big as we all know that Filipinos love to travel with their families and friends,” Durano said in a statement.

Hotels in Metro Manila showed a slight decline in occupancy at 71.07 percent for the first 11 months of 2008, 3.31 percent lower than the 73.50 percent level in the same period in 2007. Hotel occupancy is one of the 11 leading economic indicators (LEI) used by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) and the National Economic Development Authority to get a short-term forecast of macroeconomic activity in the country.

The NSCB reported that the composite LEI dropped further in the last three months of 2008

MINDOREÑOS... (From Page 1)

been in New York for 34 years and a native of Calapan. She read my article in the *Island Observer* about Mindoreños trip to Monte Carlo and asked for my e-mail address from my editor.

A number of Mindoreños from Italy, however, have plans to go home this coming March because many of their children will graduate on that month and in time for the summer vacation. For those who will be there on February, the itinerary for Balik-Mindoro 2009 is as follows:

February 19- The event will start in Greenbelt area with a sightseeing tour in Manila, and a possible trip to Malacañang. At night, shopping and entertainment will be done after a gathering in Greenbelt area. ASB Condotel in Greenbelt is available for those who want to stay in Makati.

February 20 - The group at Greenbelt will leave early in the morning for Batangas pier and entertainment and light breakfast will take place while waiting for the ro-ro or fastcraft. A band shall greet the



THE VP AND THE SINGER. Vice President Noli “Kabayan” De Castro meets singing sensation Charice Pempengco at the People of the Year 2008 Awards Night at the hotel Sofitel in Pasay City. De Castro, a major recipient during the event last week (January 15) expressed gratitude for the recognition given. Looking on is US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney.

with 0.102 from 0.269 in the third quarter, signifying a slowdown in the country’s economic performance. Hotel occupancy rate was said to have been a negative contributor for the composite LEI in the period under review.

With the expected decline in foreign tourist arrivals due to the global financial crisis, Durano visitors at the Calapan pier and a lunch for registered participants shall follow. At night, there will be a mardi gras or street dancing which is open to the public.

February 21- A motorcade shall start and ends at the Calapan Town Plaza. The visitors shall be treated to barrio fiesta style lunch beside the *tabing dagat* with entertainment and games. At night, there will be a formal ball and crowning of “Ms. Balik-Mindoro,” with live music band and DJs for dancing and more.

February 22- A concelebrated mass will be held at the Sto. Niño Cathedral.

There is a registration fee of \$50 per person which will cover lunches, dinners, formal ball, etc. while in Mindoro. Mindoreños from Manila or other parts of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao can also join.

Mindoro International had been preparing for this event for a year now. Let us support our fellow kababayans! For more information, visit www.mindorousea.com and go to the page called Balik Mindoro 09.

also encouraged Filipinos to patronize the country’s vacation destinations.

“We are confident we can hurdle the expected slow down in foreign arrivals especially if the whole nation contributes through domestic tourism. We can all enjoy our holiday while helping out our economy,” he said.

DOT Undersecretary Eduardo Jarque Jr., for his part, said that they are advocating the discovery of unexplored

sites to maximize the country’s tourism growth.

For instance, Jarque said that beaches in Mindoro, Siquijor, Camiguin, Quezon, Zamboanga del Sur and del Norte, Camarines Sur, Batangas, Dumaguete, Leyte, and Negros can actually rival the popular beaches in Boracay.

Aside from Vigan in Ilocos Sur, he added that Iloilo, Bacolod, and Laguna also have their own old heritage sites.

We are read worldwide. We send our copies to big associations of Mindoreños abroad through the electronic mail ...And now our Website is on test



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