Early Development, Rediscovery,
and Colonization of the Philippines

Introduction

The Philippines has colorful traces of the past. From early and prehistoric period to the present, it has come out to be steadfast in coping with the challenges of transition from ancient practices to modern ideas.

Yet as technological advancement continues to dictate the way people live in this modern era, it is still eminent that Filipinos’ knowledge of their ancestry and environment will never be lost as shown by a culture of varied influences obtained from its conquerors and emancipators.

1.1 Origin of the Philippines

No single theory or evidence has unraveled the truth behind the Philippines' prehistoric past. However, newborn proofs are leading to more discoveries on how the country and its people came about.

Geological theories. It is believed that a period of violent tectonic activities had formed the Philippine archipelago. The upheaval of crumbling, folding, and cracking of the sea floor shaped the landscape into uneven heights and lush green tropical forests. Land formations bolster geologists’ theories on the Philippines. Northern Luzon appears to have been two separate islands and the Sulu archipelago seems to have been tacked on to a much larger Mindanao.

The most popular and most accepted theory on the Philippines’ origin is that it was part of Asia’s continental shelf known as the Sunda Shelf. The world’s ice melted during the post-Glacial Age, causing the sea level to rise and submerge lower regions of the earth, including the land bridges adjoining the Philippine islands to other parts of Asia. This theory seeks to support why the rest of Asia and the Philippines share geologic similarities, including some flora and fauna.

Racial affinity. Many theories attempt to trace the origin of Filipinos but none have advanced to be proven. It is one of the persistent arguments, though, that Filipinos were part of the original “population core” existent in Southeast Asia during prehistoric times prior to the coming of other races. They did not have ethnic names, and spoke a language belonging to one family, but showed tremendous dialectical variations due to geographical isolation of some islands.

During historic times, other groups of people—Chinese, Indians, Arabs, Spaniards, Americans, among others—came to trade and later intermarried with the original groups, blending in with the genetic character and structure of the racial base.
Likewise, other inhabitants of Southeast Asia shared this racial base particularly the Malays and the Indonesians.

1.2 The Beginning of Culture

Culture, as often said, begins when man explores the environment to increase his chances of survival. Remnants of the culture of early Filipinos speak of an ability to make crude tools from stone. As had other prehistoric groups, Filipino culture developed in phases or ages of technological advancement.

The Paleolithic Age. Archaeological explorations in Palawan have resulted to the discovery of a fossilized skullcap of a *Homo sapiens* with carbon dating to some 22,000 years ago. However, recent excavation works have led to speculations that there might have been a *Homo erectus*, an earlier form of man, in the Philippines. This *Homo erectus* was presumed to have survived on hunting Pleistocene animals such as elephants, stegodonts, and rhinoceroses.

From all indications, the early man was a food gatherer and hunter. His tool kit or what remains of it, as found by archaeologists, only had lithic materials. These stone tools were mostly sharp flakes knapped off from cryptocrystalline quartz. The flake industry was distinguished by the absence of a core preparation prior to the manufacture of the flakes. What remained of the nodules was worked into certain types referred to as *flaked core tools*. Cobbles were also used to form larger tools. The larger cobble tools were ordinarily flaked only on one side and were referred to as *unifacial cobble tools* or chopping tools. The predominance of flaked tools over cobble tools was the major feature of the Paleolithic Age.

With basis to various estimates, it is presupposed that the first movement of the *Homo sapiens* into the Philippines happened with the exposure of the Sunda Shelf in the last glacial epoch some 45 to 55 thousand years ago. The land bridges of the Riss Glacial estimated 100 to 130 thousand years ago have been too early for any significant movement of modern man into the islands.

The fossilized frontal bone of the earliest known inhabitant of the islands, the *Tabon Man*, found in Palawan, has been tentatively dated at 22 to 24 thousand years. The Tabon Cave, where the fossilized frontal bone was found, has thus far yielded five upper Paleolithic assemblages of a nonhafted technology.

Flake assemblage I-A is estimated to be 8,500 to 9,500 years of age, while Carbon (C)-14 determination of flake assemblage I-B gives a date of 9,250 ± 250 years before the present (B.P.). Flake assemblage II of 21,000 B.P. has a C-14 determination. Flake assemblage III, to which the fossilized frontal bone was classified, dates between 22,000 B.P. and 23,000 ± 1,000 B.P. and also has a C-14 determination. Flake assemblage V yielded a C-14 determination, giving a date of 30,500 ± 1,000 B.P., and flake assemblage VI, based on “Depth Age” estimates, dates 45,000 to 50,000 years or earlier.

Cultural chronologies overlap such that certain artifacts and tools were not exclusive to a period. Guri Cave, a post-Pleistocene habitation in Palawan, is an example. Upper Paleolithic assemblages and a new lithic technology emerged in this site, with two major periods indicated. At the main entrance of the cave, a midden was
formed during the period from about 5,000 B.C. to about 2,000 B.C., and the second assemblage, which began during the early Metal Age, about 500 to 300 B.C.

The shell midden contained flake implements at all depths and blade tools in the upper levels, as well as bones of animals such as wild pigs and deer. Based on the presence of marine shells and on the typology of the flake tools recovered, the cultural assemblage on the floor had been estimated to be early post-Pleistocene 4,000 to 6,000 B.C. after the sea had risen to its present level. C-14 determination yielded a date of 4,070 ± 80 B.P.

Tabonian flake tradition presided in the Guri Cave. These flakes were generally smaller, and a larger percentage of the tools had been retouched. Neolithic people are characterized by their highly developed blade industry. This culture has been associated with the early inhabitants of Albay and Sorsogon. It is possible that the use of the blade tools by Neolithic men developed as a result of the convergence of Neolithic and early Pleistocene periods.

The study of the tool assemblages in Cagayan Valley indicates the dominance of flake tools over such larger cobble tools. The latter consist roughly of seven percent of the entire body of artifacts, a percentage higher than the cobble tools found in Tabon Cave and which is ecologically differentiated. The presence of the cobble tools in Cagayan Valley, together with fossils of large mammals, indicates that the major sources of food then were the large and now extinct mammals. Tools recovered in other sites in Southeast Asia, where man is believed to have coexisted with the Pleistocene mammals show remarkable uniformity with the Philippines' ancient tools.

**The Neolithic Age.** The Neolithic or New Stone Age technology emerged from the preceding Paleolithic or Old Stone Age technologies. The distinguishing features are the manufacture of stone and shell implements through polishing and grinding, and later through shaving and drilling, as well as the production of beads, pendants, and bracelets. A variety of materials were also utilized such as shells, bones, stones, and clay. Resulting from these techniques are sharp and well-sharpened stone blades.

Of great significance also was the introduction of pottery making, a culture usually recognized with settled people and never found among the nomadic people of the Paleolithic age. This technology manifests an appreciable increase in early man's knowledge and control of his environment. With this, he had attained a more stable socioeconomic base and had begun to glimpse the world of values and ideas.

**The Metal Age.** The Metal Age of the Philippines, which succeeded the Stone Age (Paleolithic and Neolithic), dates back to about 1,500 B.C. This Age is divided into subperiods: the Early Metal Age and the Developed Metal Age. The period is characterized not only by metal implements but also by glass beads, jade and gold ornaments, and burial jars.

Metalworking techniques suggest communities developed on the whole. Division of labor, early trading contacts, concerns for prestige, and adoption of religious values marked the sophistication of organized communities. Metal tools simplified agricultural tasks and possibly facilitated the construction of boats and dwellings.
The age of contact and trade with the East. Some 500 years before Magellan set foot on the Philippines, the people had begun to intensify their commercial relations with their neighbors: China, Indo-China, Malaysia, India, and Arabia. Arab dhows, Chinese junks, and Malay praus sailed the length of the Philippines. Chinese and Siamese porcelain and jars, silk, cotton, beads, gold, ivory, and iron were traded for wax, bird’s nest, teakwood, rattan, pearls, precious shells, and other marine and forest products.

Thousands of plates, saucers, bowls, and jars, which have been excavated in archaeological sites throughout the country, provide evidence of trade contacts with Indo-China. On the basis of their characteristics, these wares could be dated to the period of their manufacture-between the Tang and Ching dynasties of China.

The Indian and Arabian influences can be seen in faint traces of Hindu-Buddhist beliefs among the minority groups and in the immense number of Sanskrit loan words adopted in the Philippine language. The Arab influence is kept alive among the Muslim Filipinos of southern Philippines.

Taking into account such early contacts with the great traditions of Asia, it is closer to historical truth to say that Europe did not discover the Philippines. Instead, the Filipinos discovered western cultural traditions that enriched their authentic Asian heritage.

1.3 The Philippines at the Time of European Conquests

Historians claim that the Filipino society was well developed prior to contact with any other country. This is very much evident in various recovered artifact materials all throughout the country. Trade with India, China, Japan, and Arabia predominantly enriched Filipino civilization. Through trade, Filipinos assimilated foreign influences into their everyday life.

Culture. Filipinos prior to Spanish rule had their own system of writing. They used alibata, an alphabet that resembled India’s writing system but later was traced to be of ancient Southeast Asian origin. There had been no common language but the principal dialects were Tagalog, Ilocano, Bicol, some Visayan varieties, Pampango, Pangasinense, Ibanag, and Zambal.

The early Filipinos had both oral tradition and inscribed literature. They were rich in mythological folklore like legends, fables, epics, proverbs, riddles, and poems. They also had musical instruments and songs concerning love, religion, and nature. Their tattoos and deities reflected community crafts of painting and sculpting. They had knowledge of medicine, astronomy, engineering, and architecture. They used herbs and roots of plants for medicinal purposes. They built canals for irrigation. The hand-carved Ifugao Rice Terraces showed the engineering genius of the early people.

The family was the smallest but the most significant social unit of ancient and present society. The children accorded their father and mother with complete obedience. There were four social classes: chiefs, nobles, freemen, and slaves. The chief was called datu, who headed a community or barangay. A noble or maharlika occupied the highest place in society. A freeman or timawa was a freeborn or emancipated slave. The lowest was a slave or alipin, who had no property and was under the control of his or her master.
The parents usually arranged marriages. The groom had to give a dowry or *bigay-kaya*, which consisted of money or a piece of land. He also had to render service in the bride’s household called *pamamanhikan* for a certain period of time. The wedding among nobles was elaborate and pompous while that of freemen was less expensive. The slaves just had to obtain permission from the master to live together.

The women occupied a high position in the early society. They were recognized as equal to men and were granted due respect by men. The mother of the family had the privilege of selecting the names of her children.

**Government and laws.** The smallest unit of government was the barangay. The barangay varied in population from a hundred families to a thousand. The early barangays were independent of each other. Each was ruled by a *datu*, who was the chief executive, legislator, judge, and military commander. However, he had a council of leaders who assisted him in the administration of the barangay.

Written and oral laws bound the barangay. The oral laws were the customs and traditions that were handed down through generations using the spoken word. On the other hand, the *datu* and the council of leaders promulgated the written laws.

**Religion.** Early Filipinos were pantheistic, that is, they believed in a myriad of spirits which inhabited the cosmos and participated in secular affairs. They worshiped and named the Supreme Being as *Bathala*, and called the spirits *anitos*. They also worshiped nature like rivers, mountains, trees, and animals, which they believed were habitats of the spirits.

**Indigenous cultural communities.** Remnants of this ancient Filipino culture exist to the present as proven by various indigenous groups all over the country. These ethnic groups had refused to absorb colonial lifestyle, just to keep their tribal cultures intact. These groups retreated to the hinterlands away from all lowlander or colonizer influence.

### 1.4 Rediscovery of the Philippines

**Magellan takes possession of the Philippines.** Ferdinand Magellan, Portuguese by birth and Spanish by naturalization, opened the colonization of the Philippines for Spain on March 16, 1521. On an Easter Sunday, March 31, 1521, the first mass was celebrated on the shores of Limasawa (now part of Southern Leyte). Magellan named the country *Archipelago of St. Lazarus* because that day happened to be the feast day of St. Lazarus. Magellan and his men proceeded to Cebu to look for more food supplies. The king of Cebu, Rajah Humabon, welcomed the Spaniards and allowed them to trade with the natives.

Magellan was able to convert the ruler of Cebu to Catholicism, and had his whole family baptized. All the other chieftains of Cebu were converted to the faith, and recognized Rajah Humabon as their king. Only the ruler of Mactan, Lapu-Lapu, refused to do so.
Magellan with his men went to Mactan to fight against the natives only to meet his death in the hands of Chieftain Lapu-Lapu. This marked the first triumph of Filipinos in their fight for freedom.

**Other Spanish expeditions after Magellan.** The Loaisa Expedition in 1525 under the command of Garcia Jofre de Loaisa failed to reach the Philippines because Loaisa died on the way. The survivors stayed in Tidore, an island in the Moluccas, to await help from Spain.

The Saavedra Expedition in 1527 sailed from Mexico for the Philippines on the orders of Hernando Cortes, but Saavedra died on the coast of Tidore after losing two of his three ships.

The Villalobos Expedition finally reached the island of Mindanao, and later the island of Tandaya, which was distinguished to be Samar or Leyte. Villalobos labeled the islands "Filipinas" in honor of King Philip II of Spain.

The expedition of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, with Father Urdaneta as chief navigator, reached Cebu in 1565. However, they were met with hostility, so they drifted to Samar and other neighboring islands. A blood compact between Legazpi and the chiefs of Bohol—Sikatuna and Sigala—sealed their friendship. Legazpi later established a Spanish settlement in Cebu and named it *the City of the Most Holy Name of Jesus*. With Cebu and Panay as bases, the conquerors and missionaries worked side by side, spreading Spanish rule and Catholicism to other islands.

In 1570, an expedition was sent to Manila under the command of Martin de Goiti. Manila, ruled by Rajah Soliman, was a rich Muslim kingdom at that time. After a naval battle, de Goiti took possession of the city. When Legazpi came to Manila, he proclaimed it the capital of the country, rebuilt it, and gave it the very charming name *Insigne Y Siempre Leal Ciudad* (Distinguished and Ever Loyal City). After the abundance of the native plant *nilad*, the name Manila persisted, however, up to the present.

### 1.5 The Spanish Colonization

By 17th Century, Spain's sovereignty over the Philippines had been fully established. Her colonization had completely altered the political, economic, and cultural life of the locals. Christianity, particularly Catholicism, was introduced to replace the old paganism and a centralized government was established over the reigns of the barangays. New cities and towns were built and Spanish civilization propagated. In exchange for the blessings of Catholicism and Latin culture, the Filipinos paid *tribute* or an imposed tax, rendered forced labor, and sacrificed personal belongings.

Spanish colonization had the outstanding aim of spreading Christianity. This was attested by the last will and testament of Queen Isabella, the Catholic spirit of the Laws of the Indies, by apostolic labors and achievements of the missionaries, and actual results of Spain’s more than 300 years of colonial work. Spain crossed the seas and colonized heathen lands because of her zeal to serve the cause of God.

The desire for economic wealth was the second aim of the Spanish colonizers. This aim rose from the keen struggle among European nations to control the rich spice trade in the Indies. Magellan and other navigators blazed their way
across the Pacific to secure spices and Oriental wares for the Spanish Crown. But Spain failed to gain monopoly of the spice trade and derived no material profit out of her colonial ventures in the Far East.

The third aim of Spanish colonization was the aspiration for political grandeur. By acquiring the Philippines, Spain emerged as a mighty empire whose frontier comprised both hemispheres. King Philip II then became the first European monarch who could justly claim that the sun never set on his dominions.

Colonial Administration

For 300 years, the Philippines was a colony of Spain. Until 1821, when the Mexicans revolted and won independence from Spain, the Philippines was dependent on Mexico, being administered by the Viceroy in the name of the King. From 1821 to 1898, the country was a distinct governmental unit under the direct control of the home government in Madrid. The King issued cedulas or resident certificates for the administration of the colony and appointed a governor, members of the Royal Audiencia (the Supreme Court then), and other high officials.

Spanish laws. Except for three brief periods (1810-1813, 1820-1823, and 1834-1837), the Philippines did not enjoy the benefits of the Spanish Constitution and the privilege of representation to the Spanish Cortes. Special laws, which consisted of royal decrees, proclamations, and laws of Spain extended to the Philippines by royal sanction, governed the colony. Among the Spanish laws applied to the Philippines were the following: Laws of the Indies, the code of Spanish legislation; Siete Partidas, a compilation of Spanish laws; Leyes de Toro, which dealt with wills and succession; and Novisima Recopilacion, which related to all branches of law.

The governor-general. As head of the centralized government established by Spain in the country, the governor-general symbolized the might and majesty of the Spanish Crown. He was appointed and removed from office by the King. He exercised all kinds of leadership and power: executive, military, judicial, and religious. In his capacity as governor, he had the right to control and to supervise administrative offices, and to appoint officials not named by the King. As captain-general, he was commander-in-chief of all armed forces. He was the president of the Royal Audiencia and was in charge of ecclesiastical matters, as he assumed, in principle, ecclesiastical authority over church offices and missions.

The Royal Audiencia. The first Royal Audiencia was created in 1583 to restrict the powers of the governor-general and to protect the people from the abuses of officials. It was composed of the governor-general as the president, three justices, a prosecuting attorney, and other officials. But because the governor-general and justices were in constant quarrel, the Royal Audiencia bowed out in 1589. It was restored in 1595 when the presidency was given to a regent, instead of the governor. The Audiencia was the Supreme Court and also ran the government whenever the governing office was vacant.

The encomienda system. After the conquest of the country, there was no definite organization in provincial and local governments. Following the Laws of the Indies,
Legazpi divided the country into parcels, each parcel assigned to a deserving Spanish national for administration and care. A parcel, including the inhabitants living therein, was called encomienda, and its administrator was the encomendero. The encomendero took care of the temporal and spiritual welfare of the natives, such as the need to be taught the Christian religion and be protected from harm both in their person and property. The laws related to the encomiendas let loose many evils and abuses. Filipinos were disgruntled over their encomenderos' excesses to a point that the system had to be abolished in the Philippines in 1674. The flawed system of the encomienda crumbled in other colonies as well.

**Tribute and forced labor.** From 1565, when Legazpi arrived in the country, to 1884, the Filipinos paid tribute to Spain. The rate was originally eight reales but was raised to ten in 1602, then to 12 in 1851. One tribute was equivalent to one family consisting of a man, his wife, and their minor children. Every unmarried man aged over 20 years and every unmarried woman over 25 years paid half a tribute. The encomenderos profited greatly in tribute collection.

The people's vassalage to Spain was manifested also in their forced labor. This was compulsory for all natives from 16 to 60 years of age. The people worked in the building and repair of roads and bridges, cut timber in the forests, and labored in foundries and shipyards. The Filipinos were greatly oppressed because they never got paid for their services, and they were even robbed of their rations by the officials.

**Abolition of slavery.** One of the greatest achievements of Spain that spilled over to the Philippine colony was the abolition of slavery. The Laws of the Indies prohibited and penalized slavery in all Spanish colonies. The King of Spain issued a decree ordering the emancipation of all slaves in the country. The Papal Bull of 1591, which threatened to excommunicate those who would not liberate their slaves, strengthened this.

**The galleon trade.** In the early days of the Spanish regime, Manila was the commercial center of the Orient. The strategic position and geographic location of Manila suited her to be the Emporium of Far Eastern Trade and the Mistress of Oriental Marts. Commerce expanded so fast that there was increased demand for Spanish ships to carry Oriental wares to Mexico. Because of mercantilist doctrines of Europe at the time, Spain had to restrict trade between the Philippines and Mexico for two centuries. This monopoly of trade was known as the galleon trade or the Manila-Acapulco Trade. Many of the ships were made and launched in the Philippines because Filipinos were both skilled shipbuilders and inborn sailors.

By 1815, the galleon trade had declined and was no longer lucrative due to the many sailing risks, such as mutiny and piracy on the high seas. Furthermore, Mexico had revolted against Spain, so the trade was officially abolished in the same year. The galleon trade adversely affected the Filipino economic life because the other money-earning industries were neglected in the attempt to promote commerce with other Oriental countries.

**Provincial and municipal government.** For purposes of internal government and administration, the country was divided into provinces and districts according to the dialects spoken by the inhabitants. A province was known as alcaldia and the
executive was called alcalde mayor. A district was known as corregimiento that is under a politico-military officer called Corregidor. The alcalde exercised both executive and judicial functions, and supervised the collection of tribute in the province. He was appointed by the governor-general and received very little salary, but his office was highly lucrative because of his privilege to engage in trade.

The provinces were divided into pueblos, each under a gobernadorcillo but ordinarily called capitán. The other town officials were the chiefs of police, deputies or tenientes, and other functionaries called alguaciles. Pueblos were divided into barangays each under a cabeza de barangay. A cabeza paid no tribute and after serving for sometime he became a member of the aristocracy, the principalia. The chief duty of the cabeza was to collect taxes in his barangay.

**Ecclesiastical Administration**

For ecclesiastical administration, the country was divided into dioceses, parishes, and missions. The country as a whole was a diocese. When Manila was raised into a diocese, the bishoprics of Cebu, Nueva Caceres, and Nueva Segovia became sufragans. The archbishop was the head of the ecclesiastical administration, and under him were the bishops who were heads of the dioceses, and the parish priests who were in charge of the parishes. The Church exercised religious, political, and judicial functions. Political functions came out of the union of the Church and State. Clergymen enjoyed political power and prestige because of such functions. The Archbishop’s Court and the Holy Inquisition discharged judicial functions. The Court tried cases of heresy and those involving the clergy.

**Contributions of the Spanish missionaries.** Spanish missionaries were both evangelists and civil workers. Aside from introducing Christianity, specifically Catholicism, they planted the seed of European civilization in the country. The missionaries founded towns out of the lowland wildernesses and crude settlements. The pueblos that they established exist up to the present as thriving centers of population and culture.

The missionaries were also builders of roads, bridges, ports, irrigation dams, and other public works. They introduced new plants and animals, and taught new industries and crafts.

The Jesuits introduced silk cultivation and manufacture. The Augustinians started the cattle industry in Nueva Ecija and the cultivation of indigo and corn in Ilocos. The Franciscans taught the people how to cultivate coffee and discovered iron and copper deposits in Laguna. The Dominicans introduced the lime and brick industries.

The pioneer missionaries were the first educators of the Filipinos. They founded the first schools and colleges, many of which still stand today as centers of Catholic education in the Pacific. They established the first printing press and trained Filipinos in the trade, notably Tomas Pinpin, the prince of Filipino printers.

The religious orders in their convents and schools established the first libraries and museums. They also founded asylums, orphanages, and hospitals. Early colleges served as home to abandoned children.

The friars deserve praise for their contributions to the arts and sciences. Many of the early missionaries were distinguished musicians and music teachers. The
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churches built in Manila and in the provinces are now priceless collections of Philippine architecture. Convents became schools of the arts where the Filipinos were taught the rudiments of painting and sculpture.

One of the greatest bequests and legacies of the missionaries was the Observatory of Manila founded by the Jesuit Fathers in 1865. It gained apperception for its accurate forecasting of typhoons and certain types of earthquakes. The first sundials were constructed in the churchyard of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur, which gave almost perfect time in those days.

The Church and the State. In the Philippines, as in other Spanish colonies, the Church and the State were united as one. Civil authority came from the governor-general and members of the Royal Audiencia who were representatives of the King.

On the other hand, the ecclesiastical authority came from the archbishop and friars who were representatives of the Pope. They also represented the King, however, in the preservation of Spanish sovereignty. The Church was financially supported by the State - the State paid the salaries of clergymen and defrayed the expenses of the ecclesiastical administration.

The archbishop acted and served as the governor-general in times when the government was unoccupied. Church dignitaries wielded political power, as the priests were both curate and also power behind the town officials.

The union of the Church and State worked well in theory but not in practice, because there was always rivalry for supremacy between the civil authority, in the person of the governor on one hand, and the religious, in the person of the archbishop on the other.

Filipino Revolts Against Spain

Many of the revolts against Spain were caused by the people's desire to win back their lost freedom. Spanish oppression, the hated tribute, and forced labor specifically spurred other revolts. A few were purely economic in nature, having been caused by agrarian disputes with the first friars. The friars converted lands, which were considered by the people as their own, into large haciendas. The people felt the injustices done, so they rose up and fought for their rights. Many of the uprisings started in Cavite, Batangas, Laguna, and Rizal.

Lakandula, the last King of Manila, led the first Filipino revolt in 1574. Lakandula used to be one of Spain's local allies, and it was he who welcomed Legazpi at Manila Bay in 1571. After Legazpi's death, the Spaniards did not keep the promises exempting Lakandula and his people from tribute and forced labor. The people were maltreated, so they rose up in arms against the Spaniards. When the Spaniards learned of this, they went to Lakandula and promised to give the Filipinos better treatment if they would desist from the armed insurrection. The revolt was stopped and Lakandula remained faithful to Spain until his death. He became a Christian, and one of his sons became an Augustinian friar, the first Filipino to become one.

Other revolts ensued but ended in failure. One good thing Filipinos proved in launching such revolts was the unquenchable spirit to fight against oppression and colonial yoke.
**The Philippine Revolution.** The Filipino struggle for freedom came to a bloody climax with the Revolution of 1896. From being mere synapses of Filipino spirit, revolts culminated into a revolution seeking national identity and freedom for the entire country.

Opening the scene was the Cry of Balintawak on August 29, 1896. War was starting to escalate when the Spaniards unexpectedly discovered the Katipunan, a secret society founded by Andres Bonifacio, in an attempt to overthrow colonial government.

A secret revolutionary movement, Katipunan aimed to arouse national feeling. It was envisioned to redeem the Filipinos from Spanish tyranny. Bonifacio saw the misfortunes encountered by Dr. Jose P. Rizal as the leader of the La Liga Filipina, so he kept the existence of the Katipunan a secret, kept hidden with a pact sealed with the blood of the members.

Katipunan's first armed clash with the Spaniards was in San Jose del Monte on August 30, 1896. There were early triumphs, one of which was the battle in Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite.

By that time, Filipinos had become certain of what they were fighting for. Uprisings had ceased to spring from unarticulated regional resentment, but they had solidified into a resistance movement furthering national ideals. The execution of Rizal on December 30, 1896 angered Filipinos even more. It proved to be a colossal blunder for Spanish authorities who thought putting Rizal to death would quell Filipino rebellion.

The ebb tide of the Revolution occurred after Bonifacio died on May 10, 1897. The Revolution suffered reverses with Katipunan splintering in two factions: the Magdalo and the Magdiwang. This weakened position of revolutionary forces and Spain's supremacy in arms led the colonial government to subdue most encounters.

**The First Philippine Republic.** Filipinos had won their independence shortly after General Emilio Aguinaldo organized a dictatorial government that was later changed to a revolutionary government on the advice of Apolinario Mabini. A revolutionary congress and a cabinet were also organized. On June 12, 1898, the leaders of the Revolution assembled in Kawit, Cavite, and declared the independence of the Philippines, with General Aguinaldo exercising full authority to run the government. On August 1, 1898, the general assembly ratified the Declaration of Independence made in Kawit. The revolutionary congress approved the Malolos Constitution on December 23, 1898 and, on January 23, 1899, the Constitutional Republic was proclaimed in Malolos, Bulacan.

**Intellectual and Cultural Growth Under Spain**

Spain's three century-reign over the Philippines had profoundly affected local culture. Through schools and colleges, the Philippines was the first Oriental country to assimilate the cultural influences of the West, hence, the first to be westernized. Schools and colleges did not only propagate Catholic faith and Spanish culture but also raised the intellectual level of the people. Because of these schools, the Philippines had a high percentage of literacy.
The Latin alphabet and Spanish language brought the Filipinos closer to Europe. Filipinos were able to understand the Occident and delved into its literature, arts and sciences, and the teachings of its sages.

One of Spain’s most notable achievements was the introduction of the art of printing. The Dominican Fathers established the first local printing press in Binondo, Manila with the first book it ever printed as *Doctrina Cristiana*.

Spanish influence was also felt in literature. The fantastic *awit* and *corrido* were based on Spanish romances and became popular among the people. The first poet to win recognition in Tagalog poetry was Fernando Bagongbanta who composed poems as early as 1606. The Iloko literature also flourished during the time. Pedro Bukaneg was regarded as the Father of Iloko Literature.

Further, the missionaries bequeathed to the Filipinos the development of music and other fine arts like painting, sculpture, and architecture. In the closing decades of Spanish rule, several Filipino scientists signified themselves into research and medicine. The missionaries likewise introduced pharmacy.

### 1.6 British Invasion of Manila

England and France were engaged in a war for world supremacy, a battle that lasted for seven years. Spain was dragged into this war as an ally of France because both the French and Spanish kings belonged to the Bourbon family and they had pledged to support each other in case of war. After England declared war against Spain in 1672, the British expeditionary forces set out to attack Spanish possessions in the New World and in the Orient. Because Spanish authorities were not prepared for this invasion, British forces were able to occupy Manila on October 5, 1762.

As a result of this invasion, churches, convents, colleges, schools, and public and private buildings were looted and plundered. Don Simon de Anda, a member of the Royal Audiencia, led the Spanish and Filipino troops to fight against the British. During the more than three months of fighting, the Seven Years War had come to a close in Europe, which also ended the British invasion of Manila. By virtue of the Treaty of Paris on February 10, 1763, the Philippines was restored to Spain.

The British occupation had far-reaching effects on the course of Philippine history. It lifted the shroud of isolation that had covered Manila, casting her in the limelight of world attention. The defeat of the Spaniards and the easy capture of Manila tainted Spain’s prestige in the Philippines. The Filipinos seized this chance to rise in arms and fight for freedom and reform. The British invasion opened Manila to foreign trade and awakened the British merchants to the possibilities of lucrative commerce with the country. When the British evacuated Manila, many Indian soldiers (*sepoy*) remained in the country and some married Filipino women.

### 1.7 The American Occupation

While the Revolution was continuing in the Philippines, Cuba, a colony of Spain, was fighting for her independence. Because of American intervention in support of Cuba’s cause, Spain declared war against the United States on April 24, 1898. Admiral George Dewey, commander of the American Asiatic Squadron, was
instructed to proceed to the Philippines to destroy the Spanish fleet. The superiority of American warships and arms led to the defeat of the Spanish armada on May 1, 1898.

On December 10, 1898, Spain gave up the Philippines to the United States for $20,000,000 as sanctioned by the Treaty of Paris. Filipinos resented the fact that they had a new colonizer when they should already have regained independence. This animosity led to the outbreak of the Filipino-American War.

Lasting for three years (1899-1902), the war was eventually won by Americans. Their sovereignty was recognized in the islands, although the people never abandoned their long-held dream of independence.

**America’s policy towards the Philippines.** The policy of the United States leaned on training the Philippines for self-government, preparing her ultimately for independence. All Presidents of America, from William McKinley to Franklin D. Roosevelt, declared in their official statements that independence would someday be granted to the Philippines.

**The Commonwealth Government.** After several attempts of Filipino leaders to secure an act granting independence to the Philippines from the United States, one finally succeeded. Manuel L. Quezon was able to obtain the approval of the Tydings-McDuffie Independence Act, which provided for the establishment of a commonwealth government for a ten-year period, and the adoption of a constitution. A constitutional convention drafted the Constitution that was ratified on May 14, 1935. The election of the Commonwealth officials followed, with Manuel L. Quezon as President and Sergio Osmeña as Vice-President. On November 15, 1935, the new officials assumed office and this began the ten-year period of self-government.

**Progress Under America**

Immediately after implementing her sovereignty in the Philippines, America opened the gates of the archipelago to progress. Under the new regime, agriculture developed rapidly, commerce and trade soared to unprecedented levels, transportation and communication were modernized, banking and currency were improved, and manufacturing industries were given impetus.

The single greatest factor that caused the phenomenal change of Philippine economy was free trade with the United States. Unlimited American exports were admitted free of duty.

With the spread of patriotic ideals, the Filipinos learned to take pride in their race and cast off their inferiority complex. The Filipinos quickly assimilated the lesson that all men are created equal and are equal before the law. Awakened by the liberating influence of democracy, the people broke loose from the shackles of servility and became more assertive of their rights. Society and classes became based on wealth rather than on education and ancestral lineage.

One significant influence of America was the emancipation of Filipino women from social and political restrictions of Spanish days. They were given freedom to associate with men and to enter coeducational schools and universities. They also obtained their right of suffrage in 1937.

The American system of education, language, literature, arts, and sciences were introduced and taught to the Filipinos. The Filipino heritage, enriched by the
culture of Spain, received further enrichment with the coming of the Americans. Just as Spain taught the Filipinos the Catholic mode of living through religion, so America did undertake to teach them the democratic way of life through a system of popular education.

1.8 The Japanese Occupation

Just as the Philippines was waiting for its taste of real freedom, world peace and progress hung in the balance of countries out to war. Europe was in turmoil after Germans invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. The war, however, was fundamentally a discord of democracy and totalitarianism.

In Europe, Germany and Italy were allies, and when Japan was included in the alliance, they were called Axis Powers. By 1941, Japan, with an expanding population, was on its way to surmount other territories, two of which were Manchuria and Indo-China.

While peace negotiations were going on in Washington, D.C., Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on December 8, 1941. This was followed by aerial attacks of Baguio, Manila, and other points in the Philippines. Because of this treachery, the United States declared war against Japan, and the Philippines was drawn into this war as an ally of America. Germany and Italy, as allies of Japan, countered the declaration by waging war against the United States and Great Britain, hence, precipitating World War II.

Japanese troops occupied Manila on January 2, 1942, and consequently the whole country. On October 14, 1943, the Second Republic was inaugurated, with Dr. Jose P. Laurel as President. This Republic established a puppet government under the supervision of Japanese administrators.

On October 24, 1944, Allied troops led by General Douglas McArthur landed in Leyte, heralding the historic liberation of the country from the Japanese invaders. The liberation of the whole Philippines was fully attained in February 1945, and this set in motion the country’s rebuilding efforts.

1.9 The Philippines after World War II

Picking up the pieces, the Philippines held an election immediately after the war. By 1946, Manuel Roxas and members of his Liberal Party rose to power as the new all-Filipino government leadership. The Roxas government kept ties between the United States, the previous colonial government, and the country with trades. In 1947 and 1948, merchandise imports exceeded P1 billion annually, nearly four times the disbursements for foreign trade for any prewar year.

Vice-President Elpidio Quirino succeeded Roxas upon the latter’s sudden death in 1948. Quirino tried to distinguish his leadership by negotiating with disgruntled peasant and worker groups in Central Luzon, but hardly of any avail.

In 1953, Ramon Magsaysay, a former National Defense Secretary, toppled the Quirino government after winning a landslide victory in the national polls. Magsaysay’s thrusts had been to push for rural community development and for land reform. Development in the countryside achieved what Quirino set out to do but did
not, which was to smother rebellion in the countryside. Rural masses’ support for resistance groups dwindled as they saw the transforming landscape.

Magsaysay’s sudden death cut short his tenure as Chief Executive. His replacement was Carlos P. Garcia, whose landmark decision was to uphold the Filipino First Policy despite nagging opposition. The policy, drafted by the National Economic Council, set a 40-percent limit to foreign ownership of domestic businesses. Its other guidelines legalized preferential treatment for Filipinos in acquiring loans and in being extended all forms of assistance.

In January 1962, Diosdado Macapagal won the presidency from Garcia. Macapagal proclaimed his faith in the virtues of free enterprise and lifted exchange controls, making sure these ideals were etched in the tablets of Philippine law. Macapagal’s economic programs included the campaign for the entry of foreign investments via joint ventures, devaluation of the peso, agricultural development, and land reform.

Macapagal ran for a second term in 1966 but vanquished to Ferdinand E. Marcos, who managed to hold on to power that lasted for twenty years. Marcos’ programs ran under the banner Ang Bagong Lipunan. With his militaristic leadership, Marcos avowed Martial Law or Proclamation 1072 in September 1972.

Year 1986 had been a year unlike any other in Philippine history. Marcos’ beleaguered presidency pushed him to call for snap elections. His ticket was pegged against Corazon C. Aquino, widow of a prominent opposition leader Senator Benigno Aquino. Had he won, Marcos thought, public confidence in his leadership would be restored. After the elections, both had declared themselves winners, but it was behind Aquino that people rallied. Throngs of people saw Aquino to the palace.

The Aquino administration moved swiftly to rebuild government, beginning with drafting a new charter. One distinct feature of this Constitution is that no Philippine president can run for a second term. Her administration believed in popular governance, enabling development to work up from the grassroots.

Aquino’s successor to the highest post in 1992 was former National Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos, whose vision was in the slogan Philippines 2000. His administration believed that by pooling the citizenry to be globally competitive, the country could attain the status of a newly industrialized country at the turn of the century.

In 1998, former Vice President Joseph E. Estrada assumed the presidency after winning a landslide victory in the national elections. The Estrada administration veered away from industrialization as the primary government strategy for continuous development but instead focused on efforts to achieve more equitable distribution of the country’s resources. Encapsulated in the slogan Angat Pinoy 2004 was his government’s pursuit of achieving economic recovery and sustainable development through its prooor and environment-friendly policies and programs leading to conjectured economic growth.

Barely two and a half years after assuming the top post, however, Estrada was forced out of the presidency. His downfall began when accusations of corruption led to a six-week Senate impeachment trial that started in December 2000. The trial was aborted in the middle of January 2001 when 11 senators voted against the opening of a sealed envelope that prosecutors believe would implicate Estrada into greater controversies. The controversial vote in the Senate sparked mass protests calling for his resignation.
On January 20, 2001 Estrada was forced from office by the Edsa Revolution of 2001. The Supreme Court ruled that Estrada was in effect resigned and consequently administered oath to Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the country's 14th President.

A period of political and economic uncertainty continued to hound the country during Arroyo's first year of administration. The so-called EDSA III was the first serious political challenge to the Arroyo presidency. In spite of the protests of Estrada's supporters, Arroyo decided to run in the May 2004 presidential election and was proclaimed as president by the Congress on June 23, 2004. Her administration survived several coup attempts. Impeachment cases were filed against Arroyo but were all defeated at the House of Representatives.

The end of Arroyo's administration was shared by many and the anticipation for a renewed, honest, and sincere government was sought of. In 2010 elections, a new president was elected by an overwhelming votes. Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III was seated as 15th President of the Philippines. His policy that centers on “Tuwid na Daan” or Straight Path stands to the present.

### 1.10 The Philippines and the Government at Present

#### Governance in the Aquino Administration

At the helm of government, President Benigno C. Aquino III gave emphasis on avoiding the wang wang mindset. Anchoring on the wang wang slogan, a major policy centered on “Tuwid na Daan” started the no let-up corruption campaign covering the entire beaurucracy which initially resulted to the hospital arrest of the former Philippine president, Gloria M. Arroyo on election related case.

In 2011, the President reported self-rated hunger has gone down from 20.5 percent in March to 15.1 percent in June – equivalent to a million Filipino families who used to go hungry, but who now say they eat properly every day.

On the business side, the stock market reached seven record high which exceeded the PSE Index of 4,000 points. The Philippine's once low credit ratings have now been upgraded in recognition of the prudent use of funds and creative financial management. These improved credit ratings mean lower interest in debts. The innovative fiscal approach has saved taxpayers 23 billion pesos, in the first four months of 2011. This is enough to cover the 2.3 million conditional cash transfer of the beneficiaries for the entire year.

On the investment field, the Department of Energy (DOE) revived the confidence of investors in our energy sector. Some 140 companies all ready to participate in the exploration and strengthening of oil and natural gas resources, can attest to this. A contract was signed for a power plant to be constructed in the Luzon grid, so that by 2014, the country will achieved a cheaper, more reliable source of energy.

To end the wang-wang culture the government employed zero-based budgeting to review programs. For the year and the last, zero-based budgeting has allowed to end many wasteful programs.
Accomplishments for 2010 and 2011

Year 2010 reflects the government’s serious efforts in bringing the economy walking through a tiger level of performance.

Due to its sound macroeconomic policies, the new government enabled the Philippine economy to emerge from the global economic turmoil that resulted to the real gross domestic product (GDP) at constant 2000 prices accelerated by 7.6 percent in 2010. This upswing mode was beyond the government’s official growth target of 5.0-6.0 percent for the year. Based on the records, this was the highest growth rate in 34 years. Economic expansion was led by the services and industry sectors while exports and investments were the main growth drivers on the demand side.

To attain sustainable growth, President Benigno Aquino, has also driven the peace process with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) which aims for a final peace pact by 2016.

One of the most important flagship program to benefit the grassroots populace is the Pantawid Pamilya with a whopping budget of PhP29.6 billion pesos for 2011. The program’s maximum grant package per household amounts to PhP1,400 pesos a month, where PhP300 is paid to every child who complies with the 85 percent required school attendance for the month. Pantawid Pamilya can also be given to a maximum of three children per household. In addition, the household is also entitled to PhP500 per month for complying with health and nutrition conditions. The amount of grant is based on the number of children per household and compliance to program conditions.

Inflation. Stable prices of food and energy-related items in the first three quarters of 2011 sustained the inflation which started in the 1st quarter of 2010.

Trade. Total external trade in goods for January to December 2011 reached $108.800 billion, a 2.2 percent increase from $106.430 billion registered during the same period in 2010. Total imports posted a 10.1 percent annual increase from $54.932 billion to $60.495 billion. Total exports, on the other hand, was down by -6.2 percent from $51.497 billion (2010) to $48.304 billion (2011). Thus, the balance of trade in goods (BOT-G) for the Philippines posted a deficit of $12.190 billion during the 12-month period in 2011, a value more than the $3.435 billion deficit in the same 12-month period last year.

Investments. Seven promotion agencies, namely, the Board of Investments (BOI), Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Clark Development Corporation (CDC), Cagayan Economic Zone Authority (CEZA), Board of Investment-ARMM (BOI-ARMM), and the Authority of the Freeport Area of bataan (AFAB), invested in 2010 a total amount of PhP196.06 billion foreign investments, of which the biggest chunk aggregating PhP142.17 billion was contributed by PEZA representing 72.5 percent of the total. CDC came second, sharing investments of PhP26.25 billion or 13.4 percent.

International reserves. In 2010, the Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas added US$18.15 billion more to its US$43.11 in 2009, translating to a total of US$61.26 billion GIR in custody. The 42.1 percent increase in GIR was the second most highest recorded
since it soared 47 percent increase in 2007. Building up the bulk of BSP’s GIR were foreign investment with 87.2 percent valued at US$53.44 billion, gold reserves with 11.4 percent valued at US$7.01 billion and the remaining 1.4 percent were shared by foreign exchange, IMF reserve position and special drawing rights.

**Exchange rate.** The peso averaged PhP43.31/US$1 for the period 3 January - 29 December 2011, appreciating by 4.2 percent from thePhP45.11/US$1 average in 2010. The steady inflow of remittances, net portfolio investments, and Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) buoyed the strength of the peso. However, in terms of end-of-period levels, the peso depreciated by 0.1 percent to PhP43.93/US$1 at end December 2011, from PhP43.89/US$1 a year ago as the continued uncertainty in the global economic environment weighed down on investor risk appetite.

**Tax collection.** The Bureau of Internal Revenue’s overall collection performance for CY 2011 amounted to PhP924.15 billion. Compared to last year’s collection, it posted a positive growth of 12.34 percent or PhP101.52 billion. The CY 2011 collection attained 98.3 percent of the overall target revenue of PhP940 billion.

**Production**

**Agriculture.** Using the most effective types of seedlings, and careful and efficient spending on irrigation, in 2010, the government irrigated an additional 11,611 hectares of fields, not to mention the near 212,000 hectares of land that were rehabilitated. This resulted to a 15.6 percent increase in rice production. Pinoy administration aims to provide self-sufficiency – that the rice served on every Filipino’s dinner table is planted here, harvested here, and purchased here in the Philippines.

**Energy Production and Consumption.** The country reached 333.18 million barrels of fuel-oil-equivalent (MMBFOE) of total primary energy supply and marked 59.2 percent of self-sufficiency supply in 2010. The primary energy supply increased by 3 percent and energy self-sufficiency also increased by 6.5 percent, compared to the previous year. Of the total primary energy supply, oil and oil products had the highest share with 36.4 percent, followed by geothermal with 21.3 percent. Coal shared 16.3 percent, biomass shared 14.9 percent, and the rest include natural gas (5.5%), hydropower (4.8%), CME and ethanol (0.6%), and solar wind and micro-hydro (0.2%).

On the other hand, total primary energy demand for 2010 posted 3.2 percent increase with 186.21 MMBFOE compared to the total demand in 2009. The transport sector had the highest demand at 63.87 MMBFOE or 34.3 percent of the total, followed by residential and industrial sectors with 52.3 (28.1%) and 47.1 (25.3%) MMBFOE, respectively. Commercial and agriculture industries had the least demand of only 19.9 (10.7%) and 3.07 (1.6%) MMBFOE, correspondingly.

**Services.** About 56.4 percent of the GDP was contributed by the services sector which accounted for 5.1 percent of the 3.9 percent GDP growth rate recorded in 2010-2011 at constant 1985 prices.
Social Justice and Basic Needs

Jobs. Employment in 2011 grew by 5.6 percent consistent with an increase in GDP by 3.9 percent. This is an improvement from the 2.8 percent growth recorded in 2010. The growth of employment translated to almost 2 million employed persons reached 38.5 million in 2011. However, the growth in employment occurred almost entirely among part-time workers by 8.4 percent while full-time employment fell by 0.5 percent. In the same year, the biggest employment contribution came from agriculture, hunting and forestry, (29.1%); wholesale and retail trade, (19.5%); manufacturing, (8.4%); and transport, storage and communication, (7.6%).

Education. DepEd aims to fill all resource gaps by the end of 2013. The DepEd budget was increased by 15 percent from PhP207 billion in 2011 to PhP238.8 billion in 2012, which is being utilized to address the basic education input gaps, among others. The government allots the biggest share of the national budget to public basic education, but the amount barely keeps up with the increasing student population. There are more children who remain out on the streets and who have to be shepherded into the schools, but government resources must further catch up to provide them the free, quality education they are all entitled necessary to achieve these goals.

Healthcare. The fight against high-priced medicine continued. The Cheaper medicine law enabled drug companies to bring down 16 drug prices slashing by half the price. To show the benefit of generics, the Department of Health (DOH) had invested PhP20 million worth on generic medicines for the benefit of children with leukemia. There were about 13,498 Botika ng Bayan nationwide where generic medicines were widely available and accessible. The amendment of Republic Act No. 720 signed on August 2009 strengthened the functions/roles of the Food and Drug Administration in establishing modern and complete testing laboratory facilities in Luzon, Vizayas, and Mindanao to assure the delivery of health services. The DOH garnered 78 percent satisfaction rating for effective response against influenza A (H1N1) based on June 2009 SWS survey. Health insurance likewise covered 86 percent of the total population.

Land Distribution. Millions of hectares of agricultural land were distributed to 700,000 indigenous families and more than a million CARP beneficiaries became legitimate land owners. About PhP42 billion land reform liabilities was condoned of which 18 percent was actually paid.

Housing. A number of agencies work together to deliver the government’s promise of better housing for the population. Working under the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) are the Home Guaranty Corporation (HGC), National Housing authority (NHS), Home Development Mutual fund (HDMF) or the Pag-ibig fund, the Housing and Land Use regulatory Board (HLURB), and National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC).

In 2010, the NHA accomplishments included resettlement, core housing sites and services, and upgrading medium rise housing for a total of 29,413 shelter security
units with a total value of PhP2,279.0 million. NHA in 2010, also disposed 43,528 housing units with a gross value of PhP5,682 million.

**Electricity and Water.** With poverty alleviation as a primary consideration, the DOE developed the O’ Ilaw program, which integrated all electrification initiatives of the National Electrification Administration, NPC and PNOC toward 100 percent barangay electrification. The program’s vision is for electricity to enhance access of basic services and economic opportunities in the countryside.

As of 2011, about 30,186 house connections have been energized. Electricity access was also extended to some 1,520 sitios and puroks nationwide.

Developing the country’s water supply is a shared responsibility of different agencies in both the government and private sectors, namely the LWUA, Maynilad Water Services Incorporation, Manila Water Company Incorporated, NWRB, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), MWSS, and DPWH.

Watering provincial cities and urban communities with a population of 20,000 and over is the concern of the LWUA. Covering the Metropolitan Manila area are two private concessionaires, namely, Maynilad Water Services Incorporated and Manila Water Company Incorporated operating and maintaining systems that used to be handled by the MWSS. Their concession agreement began in August 1997 and will be effective for 25 years

**National Security, Peace and Order**

“What is ours is ours; setting foot on rector Bank is no different from setting foot on Recto Avenue,” a strong warning from His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino III, President of the Philippines during his 2011 State of the Nation Address. He promised that he will upgrade and modernized the equipments of the armed forces of the Philippines. He does not wish to increase tensions with anyone, but will let the world know that we are ready to protect what is ours. He wishes to elevate the case on the West Philippine Sea to the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea, to make certain that all involved nations approach the dispute with calm and forbearance.

**Improving Governance and Fighting Corruption**

In line of weeding out corruption and building a strong justice system, the government invested billions of pesos for anti-graft efforts. Among the anti-corruption measures that are being implemented are the following:

a) Solana Covenant – a joint anti-corruption plan of the CSC, COA, and the Office of the Ombudsman directing all government officials and employees to comply and submit the statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) annually. It also identifies the need to strictly implement the rules regarding the liquidation of cash advances, and presumes that after a formal demand, the failure of the Accountable Officer (AO) to liquidate within the prescribed period shall constitute a prima facie case of gross neglect of duty as defined under existing Civil Service law and rules.
b) Customs Integrity Action Plan – a new tax administration to minimize opportunities for corruption and abuses in the Bureau of Customs (BoC) and in the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR).

c) Government Procurement Act 9184 - redefines procedures in government purchases and enhances transparency, competitiveness and public accountability in government procurement.

d) New Government Accounting System (NGAS) – this strengthens public financial accountability by simplifying the government accounting procedures that conforms to international standards. It also generates periodic and relevant financial statements for better monitoring.

To sustain anti-corruption efforts, three areas of reform shall be needed: (1) Punitive measures that include effective enforcement of anti-corruption laws and enforcement mechanisms within revenue generating agencies; (2) Preventive measures that include the strengthening of anti-corruption laws and improvement of integrity systems; (3) Promotion of zero tolerance for corruption through societal values formation that includes values formation and ethics compliance for government officials and employees, and the strengthening of people’s values.
Early Development, Rediscovery, and Colonization

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