

Tokyo gives P2B grant aid to RP

TOKYO has provided P2 billion grant aid to Manila to finance the installation of weather monitoring system and the construction of bridges, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) said.

The agency said the governments of Japan and the Philippines signed the grant on Wednesday, May 27 through Socioeconomic Planning Secretary and NEDA Director General Ralph G. Recto and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), represented by JICA-Philippines Chief Representative Norio Matsuda.

The projects include the improvement of the Meteorological Radar System in the Philippines worth P1.64 billion; P302 million worth bridge construction for expanded agrarian reform communities development and the P149 million grant aid for human resource development scholarship.

"We appreciate the Japanese government's initiative to provide, among others, radar systems, dams and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure such as bridges in the country. These equipment and infrastructure support are very much aligned with one of the Philippine government's priorities, that is, natural disaster prevention and mitigation," Recto said.

The radar system project, with the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services (PAGASA) as proponent, involves the replacement of three existing meteorological radar systems in Aparri, Cagayan; Virac, Catanduanes; and Guian, Samar.

The radar system project aims to effectively prevent damages caused by tropical storms or typhoons by enhancing the capability of PAGASA in weather monitoring and weather information or

warning dissemination. The diplomatic exchange of notes for this project was signed last March 30.

Meanwhile, the Bazal bridge construction project involves the construction and replacement of existing wooden bridge that crosses Bazal river along the boundary between two barangays in Maria Aurora, Aurora province.

The grant agreement for the conduct of the detailed design study for this project was signed by Recto and Matsuda last April 20.

The JDS, another Japan grant-assisted project, aims to provide qualified Filipinos with the opportunity to obtain Master's degree at Japanese universities to support the human resource development policy of Japan, and eventually to extend and strengthen the bilateral relationship between Japan and the Philippines.

The JDS project funds

20 scholarship slots for young Filipino government employees who are expected to play leadership roles in the Philippines and those who will contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country in the following fields of study: Economics, Business Administration, Public Administration, Information and Communications Technology, and Industrial Development.

About 84 scholars out of 159 grantees had graduated and came back to use their skills and knowledge gained in Japan while 50 grantees have ongoing studies in Japan and 25 more successful candidates were selected under the seventh batch for July 2009 intake.

The exchange of notes for the eighth batch of JDS scholars was signed last May 19. (PNA)

Robust growth in RP online advertising seen

by ALEXANDER VILLAFANIA
Inquirer.net

MAKATI CITY—Amid the economic downturn affecting the advertising business in the Philippines, robust growth in online advertising is still expected this year.

With falling prices of Internet connection and computers, more Filipinos are expected to install Internet in their homes, Yahoo! Philippines General Manager Jojo Anonuevo said.

But he was quick to admit that Internet usage in the Philippines remains relatively small in terms of home penetration, which limits the use of other online services.

As usage increases, so would the variety of online services that can cater to specific market, Anonuevo said in an interview prior to the launch of its campaign dubbed Project Purple which targets Filipino artists.

"This will increase demand for various online services and with higher usage frequency there will be more markets for online advertising," he added.

Local companies are slowly starting to see the value of online advertising, the executive said.

However, some advertisers still see benefits from combining different advertising platforms, including print, broadcast and online.

The business model for online advertising continues to evolve and there are still areas that remain unexplored, he said. ■

House starts debate on Right of Reply Bill

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will be the one to be sponsored and debated in the plenary.

It was sponsored by Representatives Monico Puentevella of Bacolod City, Abante, Orlando Fua of Siquijor, Jeci Lapus of Tarlac, Irwin Tieng of party-list Buhay, Eduardo Zialcita of Parañaque

and Speaker Prospero Nograles.

The amendments provide that the editor-in-chief and publisher of print media outfits, and the station manager and owners of radio/TV stations who "fails or refuses to receive" or publish or broadcast the reply or correction

of the news item as mandated will be fined an amount of P10,000 for the first offense, P20,000 for the second and P30,000 for the third offense.

The measure struck down the original proposal of a P200,000 fine and imprisonment of not more than 30 days and the threat of closure for five-time offenders. It now provides that repeated violations be fined P50,000.

Puentevella earlier proposed that the penalty for fifth and repeated offenses be raised to P100,000 and suspension of franchise of broadcast or print medium outlet or station for 30 days.

The final version has also removed the provision which demands same space and air time for the reply "as far as practicable and respecting the editorial judgment and availability of space or airtime, especially in regard to demands for the right of reply made by more than one person in relation to the same material or the reply shall be published in a space provided for reactions and reply.

It said the reply shall be published or broadcast not later than three days after the reply is received by the editorial office of a daily publication or station. ■

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Crispin Caday Lozano, Esq.

Graduated Juris Doctor from Western State University in Fullerton, CA. He is a CPA, and a BBA Cum Laude and an active member of the State Bar of California. All legal services are performed under the supervision of an active member of the State Bar of California.

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