

Editor's Notes

Devolution, administrative reforms and development are the cross cutting concerns of the articles in this issue.

Niceto S. Poblador's "Devolution and Public Sector Governance: A Critical Reappraisal" dwells on the tradeoffs and benefits of adhering to the tenets of devolution and participatory governance. Using neoclassical analytical tools, the author realistically examines perceived benefits brought about by direct popular participation in public decisionmaking and argues that devolution is not a panacea for public sector inefficiencies, primarily resource allocation imbalances. He debunks widely held notions on the positive impact of devolution and posits that devolution strategies must be applied discriminately, in cognizance of externalities, long-run effects, cost implications and the general economic well-being of the community.

Alex B. Brillantes, Jr. analyzes local government units' capability to perform a major function devolved through the Local Government Code of 1991—fisheries conservation and management (FCM)—in "Local Governments and Fisheries Conservation and Management in the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion: An Institutional Development Study". In examining the overall policy framework governing FCM down to the minute details of implementation, he critically delves into the intricate problems of implementation from the Executive level—which includes the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture—to the various subnational, regional and local level institutions responsible for implementing FCM on one hand, while also considering various stakeholders, local actors and civil society on the other.

Romeo B. Ocampo wrote the article "Administrative and Policymaking Reforms in Japan: Comparative Pointers for the Philippines" while he was Visiting Professor at Kobe University. In this thinkpiece, the author encapsulates Japan's postwar administrative reform efforts and explains to the international community the dynamics of organizational reform as well as the highlights of the 2001 Reform Plan of the Japanese. He winds up this major piece of work by giving pointers to Filipino policymakers on how to conduct and come up with viable reorganization plans.

Fermin D. Adriano's "National and International Development Efforts for Mindanao" analyzes government support to the Mindanao group of islands, including Regions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 (CARAGA) and ARMM. Applying basic statistical tools uniformly across official data on resource and budget allocation for education, health and nutrition sanitation, roads and highways, the author illustrates in this data-rich article the magnitude of poverty in Mindanao and the

meager amount of resources actually channeled to the area despite generous development assistance from international funding institutions. This, according to him, fuels the growing dissent and armed conflict in this part of the globe. His recommendations are worth pondering.

This PJPA issue also contains the State-of-the-Nation Address by President Joseph Estrada-Ejercito entitled "Towards New Beginnings" that he delivered before the Third Joint Session of the Eleventh Congress in July 2000. The Chief Executive asked the lawmakers to support administration-sponsored bills in his bid to upswing the economy, appease the Mindanaoans and families of soldiers and civilian who perished or were injured as a result of the conflict, fight corruption in government and in the private sector.