

The Philippines "strongly" protested China's establishment of two new districts in the disputed South China Sea and the illegal designation of Kagitingan Reef within the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG) as administrative center of "Nansha" district.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said the Philippines also objects and does not recognize the Chinese names given to some features in the KIG.

"The Philippine government strongly protests the establishment of the so-called districts of 'Nansha' and 'Xisha' under the supposed administrative jurisdiction of its self-declared 'Sansha City' announced on April 18, 2020, by the People's Republic of China," the DFA said in a

"It does not recognize Sansha, nor its constituent parts, nor any subsequent actions emanating from them," the DFA said.

The Philippine government, the DFA said, has protested since 2012 China's unlawful establishment of Sansha City and the extent of its administrative jurisdiction, which encompasses Philippine territory and maritime zones in the West Philippine Sea.

"The establishment and supposed extent of jurisdiction of 'Sansha City,' of which the new two districts are part, violate Philippine territorial sovereignty over the Kalayaan Island Group and Bajo de Masinloc, and infringes on Philippine sovereign rights over the waters and continental shelf in the West Philippine Sea," the DFA said.



NOVO ECIJANO TEACHERS' MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION, INC.

Notice of Annual General Meeting of Members

Notice is hereby given to all members that the Annual General Meeting of Novo Ecijano Teachers Mutual Benefit Association Inc. (NETMBAI) will be held on May 25, 2020 at 1:00 p.m., NETMBAI Building, 228 Gabaldon St., Brgy. San Roque, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Proof of Notice of Meeting
3. Certification of Quorum
4. Approval of Minutes of the Annual General Membership Meeting Held on March 28, 2019
5. Report of the President
6. Ratification of the Acts of the Board of Trustees
7. Election of the Members of the Board of Trustees for the year 2020-2021
8. Appointment of External Auditor
9. Other Matters
10. Adjournment

In case you cannot personally attend the meeting, you may accomplish a proxy form and file the same to NETMBAI Office, 228 Gabaldon St., Brgy. San Roque, Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija or email it to netmbai@gmail.com on or before May 25, 2020. Proxy form is available for download on our website (novo.com.ph). For clarification and other queries, you may call us at (044) 463-9112, (044) 464-2063 and 0919-9114092.

Cabanatuan City, April 27, 2020.

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make sure that we are able to control the situation," he said. To make it effective, travelers will also have to do their share by following the basic protocols, such as proper hand washing and wearing of face mask, when moving around.

"We believe that it is the domestic travelers that will move around before international travelers. We are confident that in the months to come, it will really be domestic tourism that will keep many enterprises, especially in the provinces, afloat," Bengzon said.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that the tourism sector contributed 12.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product in 2018 and became a huge employment generator.

Bengzon said the DOT is working on completing the Tourism Response and Recovery Plan (TRRP), which has consolidated the inputs from all concerned industry sub-sectors to make for an inclusive planning process and an integrated implementation with the support of both the government and private sector.

The TRRP aims to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the tourism industry with emphasis on infrastructure, social services and livelihood, business and product development to maximize the socio-economic benefits.

"We're doing our best to ensure business continuity of MSMEs by providing them access to low-interest rate lending facilities and wage subsidies," Bengzon added.

The DOT said earlier it is in talks with the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP)

and the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to provide rehabilitation financing support such as extending low interest loans for tourism enterprises that have been severely affected by the pandemic.

"The department has also made appropriate representation with the Social Security System, Pag-IBIG and PhilHealth for the deferment of tourism workers' contributions. Upon these representations PhilHealth has agreed to

extend the deadline to remit the members' savings/contributions until two weeks after the lifting of the quarantine without any penalty," the DOT said earlier.

It said Pag-IBIG has also agreed to extend its deadline of payment of premium contributions for the first quarter of 2020 to April 30. The Social Security System agreed to extend the deadline for the remittance of contributions until June 1.

— With Catherine Talavera



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