



Bhargava:
New WB ResRep
in the Philippines

Vinay K. Bhargava, an Indian national, takes his official post as the Resident Representative of the Resident Mission in the Philippines (RMP) this January.

Vinay's experience at the World Bank has been extensive, spanning several sectors and many countries in Europe, Middle East and Western Africa Regions. He joined the Bank in 1975 as a credit specialist and worked on agriculture and rural development projects in Yugoslavia, Turkey, Romania, and Afghanistan. He later moved to the Western Africa Department covering Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Liberia as

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WB SUPPORTS BALANCED PRO-POOR GROWTH

The Philippine Government and its international donors agreed on the need to distribute the gains of growth more equitably across the various segments of Philippine society, particularly among the poor, Mr. Callisto Madavo, World Bank Director for East Asia and the Pacific, Country support for the vastly improved macroeconomic environment which has been marked by broad-based structural reforms in major areas of the economy. Growth has accelerated to about 6%; exports have increased by 30%, and foreign private investments doubled.



WB Director & Chairperson of the Consultative Group Meeting, Callisto E. Madavo with Philippine Government officials (from left to right), CCPAP's Francisco del Rosario, Jr., Congressman Renato Diaz, and Secretary of Finance Roberto de Ocampo.

Department 1, announced at the closing of the recently-concluded 19th Consultative Group Meeting for the Philippines held in Tokyo last December.

Donors commended the Philippine Government for its vibrant economic performance. It also expressed strong

The Philippines has moved rapidly towards consolidating and advancing the policy reform process and has positioned itself solidly within the mainstream of the global market, Secretary of Finance and head of the Philippine delegation, Roberto de Ocampo reported to the delegates of the annual Consultative Group Meeting chaired by the World Bank.

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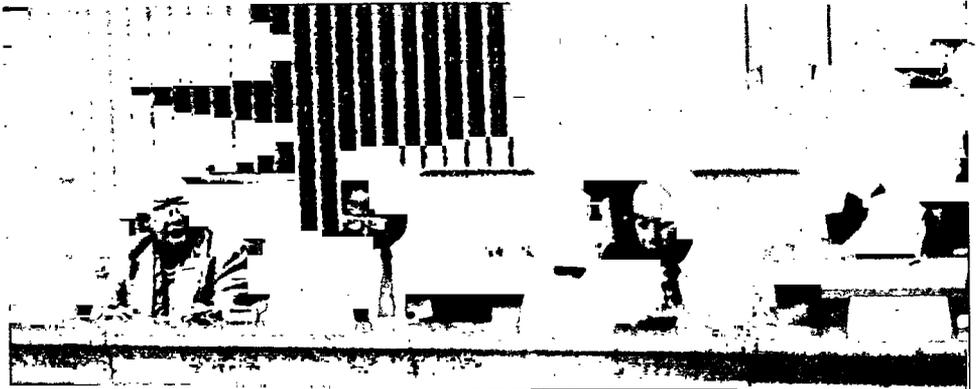
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Now that growth has resumed, it is important to focus more sharply on poverty alleviation. *Continued robust growth - with special attention to poverty alleviation and to investments in human resources - is the key to meaningful progress with visible improvement to people's lives,* Mr. Madavo, Chairman of the Meeting, continued.

The participants welcomed the Government's presentation on the Social Reform Agenda, a package of initiatives aimed at addressing the minimum basic needs of the poor. The Government suggested three areas where donor support would be needed: addressing the root causes of poverty, targeting the priority poverty groups and improving the design and implementation of poverty alleviation programs.

At the closing session, donors endorsed the Government's economic plans and indicated new commitments amounting to about US\$2.9 billion. The level of donor commitments was consistent with the country's estimated external financing requirements and was viewed by observers as a reflection of the official donors' continued confidence in the Philippine economy.



Ms. Marietta Goco, Chairperson of the Presidential Commission to Fight Poverty, Secretary Ernesto Garilao, Dept. of Agrarian Reform and Vice-Chairman and Lead Convenor, Social Reform Council, with Secretary Roberto de Ocampo during the session on poverty alleviation and the social reform agenda.



The Director-General of NEDA and Secretary of Socio-Economic Planning Cielito Habito in an informal discussion with Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco and another delegate.



Presidential Assistant for Visayas, Rhett Pelaez, after his presentation on the Growth Center in Cebu and the Visayas.



from left: WB officials Pamela Cox, Chief, Country Operations Division; Director Callisto Madavo; Satoru Miyamura, Director, WB Tokyo Office; Sanjay Dhar, Principal Economist; Ohene O. Nyanin, Acting Resident Representative for the Philippines; and Kip Thompson, IFC Regional Representative at the special session with the investors in the Philippines.

Francisco del Rosario, Undersecretary/Executive Director, CCPAP, in a lively interaction with some participants.



The World Bank intends to provide support of up to US\$500 million for 1996, depending on available appropriate projects and the maintenance of an adequate policy framework. The Bank will focus intensely on strategies and interventions that will help the Filipino poor improve their lives and create a better future for their children. Upgrading of basic social services will be very much linked to this. The strategies will be based on improving economic growth to reduce poverty, on design and implementation of programs in targeted poverty areas, and on strengthening the strategic framework for poverty alleviation and improved resource use. Assistance for rural development and human resource development will continue to play a key role.

The Consultative Group Meeting, chaired by the World Bank, serves as a regular forum for policy dialogue between the Government and the donor community and provides a mechanism for mobilizing official development assistance to support the public investment program. ■

Chairperson of the Presidential Council on Countryside Development, Daniel L. Lacson, Jr. with some delegates.

Meet the World Bank Family in the Philippines

Many people still get surprised when I give them our office address at the Central Bank Complex. *You mean, there is a World Bank office here in the Philippines?* Oh, yes... I would answer, and not only is there an office but there are even people manning (or should I say, womanning the office). One look at the picture below and that will explain why I was very specific about the gender.



The RMP family

The photo was taken on the last day in the office of outgoing Resident Representative, Thomas W. Allen. (See related story, Bhargava: New RMP Head). We pulled ourselves together in front of the painting that we have dubbed, Mang Pandoy.

From left to right: **Cecilia Vales** (Cecile) is our Operations Officer, in charge of Procurement, Disbursement, and Audit. She is our A-T-T-Y. and that means she gives free legal advise to us because she is a lawyer, not to mention that she is also a certified public accountant. Next to Cecile is **Maribel Belizario**, also an Operations Officer, who looks into all the other facets of operations. Maribel has earlier worked at the World Bank Office in Washington for 10 years, as Operations Analyst in the South Asia Region. Standing right beside Maribel is **Liberty Alexandra Reposar** or Sandy, our staff assistant for Programs and External Relations. She is one of the faces behind this newsletter and the numerous publications that we send out. The lady next to her is **Evelyn Quirante**. Evy, assists both Maribel and Cecile in the Operations Unit. Vivacious Evy has been with RMP for close to three years. The man with a wide smile is **Ohene O. Nyanin**, our Deputy Resident Representative who hails from Ghana. He was assigned to the Resident Mission in 1992 but has been in the Bank since 1985. Before his post in Manila, he was a Senior Economist in the Country Department 3 (Indonesia,

Papua New Guinea, Pacific Islands) of the East Asia and Pacific Region. The long-haired beauty and the vegetarian in the family is **Len. Marilene Montemayor**, is the favorite among the visiting missions because she takes charge of the itineraries and other needs of the missions.

At the center is **Tom Allen**, our Resident Representative for four years. Many people were asking why we did not give a formal farewell party for Tom. Well, that's Tom. He did not want any special fanfare for his departure. *Besides*, he would say, *I'm not exactly leaving. I am just being given another assignment in Washington. I'll definitely come back for special family occasions.* Tom, as many know is married to Mary Lou, a Filipina. Standing behind Tom is **Loida Faustino**, our Records Assistant. Loids used to work with ABC Channel 5 as chief librarian. **Lilitz or Liberty Cardenas** processes and assists in the disbursement operations of the World Bank's local consultants. Wearing Cory-like attire is **Mary Lou Allen**, Tom's wife, who up to this day has remained a dear friend to the staff. Still smarting from the touching farewell scene is **Zenaida Uson**, our friendly Administrative Officer. Zeny has been with the RMP for nine years and is the person who could tell the history of RMP. Together with Zeny since 1987 is **Efren Vallejo**, our driver who could be as articulate as any politician on burning issues of the day. Next is **Susan Aquino**, the darling of everybody, who is willing and able to assist anybody in distress during our everyday grind.

On the front row from right to left: **Shobha Shetty** from India, is here for six months for her first

rotational assignment under the Young Professionals Program of the World Bank. She has been working on the Water Resources Development Project. Vir or Virgilio Serna is one of our drivers who can cleverly weave through the monstrous traffic of Metro Manila to get his passengers promptly to their destinations.

Try calling us up and you will hear the sweet voice of Cheryl Ip. Cheryl, who recently got married, is our lovely and friendly receptionist. The lady who is kneeling at the front section is Brenda Bermudez who is all of 5' 5" when standing up. Brenda is the Secretary to the Resident Representative and doubles up also as Administrative Secretary. Cheerful Eva Cardenas is all smiles here because she has just balanced and closed the imprest. Eva, a certified public accountant, assists our Administrative Officer. To the right of Eva is Araceli Tria, who is Cheloy to friends and CT to Ohene, our Deputy ResRep whom she has been assisting for close to three years now. Leaning on the center table is yours truly, Leonora Gonzales, External Relations Officer. I am Nor to many of my friends, most of whom belong to the NGO community where I came from.

Inset photos show Lani Azarcon. Lani, our Program Officer was in Washington, acting as Country Officer for the Philippines at the time this photo was taken.

Another person who was not in the group photo is Ronnie or Sofronio Abubo. Ronnie is the person who rides the motorbike with a pager on his waist, and knocks on your door to deliver World Bank documents. ■

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*Changing of the guards at RMP:
Bhargava and Allen*

an Operations Officer in the Industrial Development and Finance Division. From 1987 to 1993, he became Chief of the Industry and Energy Operations Division in the Middle East Country Department. At this post, he covered projects in the areas of industry, power, oil and gas, telecommunications, state-owned enterprise reforms and privatization in Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, and

Oman. Just prior to his new assignment as Resident Representative to the Philippines, he was the chief of the Division which handles poverty alleviation, health, education, and labor market reform projects in China and Mongolia. Mr. Bhargava looks forward to taking up his new assignment in the Philippines. *I come at such an exciting time when the Philippines is in the midst of an impressive economic recovery. I see how the Resident Mission in the Philippines can continue to play a key role in enriching the partnership of the Philippine Government and the World Bank.*

Vinay is the third Resident Representative since the World Bank opened an office in Manila in 1987. Mr. Rolando Arrivillaga was the first Resident Representative. Vinay succeeds Mr. Thomas W. Allen who was Resident Representative from 1991 to 1994. Mr. Allen has been reassigned to the Bank's Headquarters in Washington in the Eastern Africa Department.

Vinay is married to Nimmi and has two sons, Rohit and Rahul. ■

Procurement Seminar



Mr. Nyanin, Acting ResRep, welcomes the participants (L-R): Mr. Linard, of the WB Procurement Policy & Coordination Unit; Director Tungpalan of NEDA and Mr. Gimenez, Departmental Procurement Adviser, WB East Asia Country Department I.

For five straight days, more than 30 personnel from government line and oversight agencies participated in a seminar on procurement policies and guidelines of the World Bank. The seminar was one of a series of the Bank's on-going activities aimed at enhancing the capacity of government agencies in their implementation of World Bank-assisted projects.

The resource speakers were Mr. Federico Gimenez, Mr. Etienne Linard and Mr. Ohene O. Nyanin of the World Bank. Mr. Nyanin welcomed the participants by explaining the rationale for the seminar. Director Rolando Tungpalan of the Project Monitoring Staff, NEDA, also welcomed the participants, on behalf of the Government. ■

 WORLD BANK

A partner in strengthening economies and expanding markets to improve the quality of life for people everywhere, especially the poorest



We are happy to introduce INTOUCH, our way of keeping our communication lines open. We encourage you to give us your feedback, either addressed to Mr. Vinay K. Bhargava, our Resident Representative or to Mr. Ohene O. Nyanin, Deputy Resident Representative, or to the editorial staff. Do keep in touch.



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Strategy to Fight Poverty

Over the long run, what is really needed?

We often hear parents from low and middle class families admonish their children this way: *Tanging edukasyon lamang ang kayamanang maipamamana namin sa inyo, mga anak.* (Education is the only wealth you can inherit from us.) And so we hear of heart-rending tales of parents in the provinces selling their precious carabaos or inherited farmlands to send their children to the city to study.

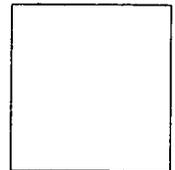
largest single contributor to the economic growth rates of the high-performing Asian economies.

Besides education for the poor, the Report attempts to crystallize other key, but unresolved issues in poverty alleviation. The Report also gave further thought to rural and urban development. *Success in poverty alleviation will require a comprehensive rural development effort and the focused provision of key services for the urban poor.*

The hope of these parents to rise above their poor conditions through education has after all a good basis. According to the latest publication of the World Bank on poverty, *Philippines: A Strategy to Fight Poverty*, a country must develop and make use of its people's skills, knowledge and health to be able to reduce poverty in the long run. The Report states, *For the economy as a whole, there is a strong link between education and economic growth: primary education was the*

With this report, the Bank hopes to stimulate an informed dialogue with Government and stakeholders like the NGOs, business sector, media and others. Health and nutrition, land reform, microcredit, rural infrastructure and an efficient but effective safety net for the poor are some of the other issues covered by the Report. The outcome of these discussions will contribute to the continuing partnership of the World Bank with the Philippines in the task of poverty alleviation.

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Printed matter

