



World Eye Reports

# The Philippines

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## Monumental year for Japan-Philippines relations

It has been 60 years since Japan and the Philippines normalized diplomatic relations, after the ravages of war. Over the ensuing decades, both countries have built strong partnerships with each other. Today, throughout the Philippines, Japanese-Philippine partnerships thrive in almost every sector.

Much of the strength of this relationship stems from the governments of both countries prioritizing this special relationship. In fact, the year 2016 also marks the 10th anniversary of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA).

Ten years of the JPEPA have allowed both countries to trade more openly and companies to feel more confident in Philippine-Japanese partnerships. As Crisanto S. Frianeza, secretary general of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) noted: "The JPEPA is more than just about the free movement of goods and services. Deriving benefits from such an agreement requires policies that will promote the competitiveness of local companies and a mindset to acquire best practices and explore potential business partnerships with their Japanese counterparts."



Emperor Akihito (center), Empress Michiko (left), and Philippine President Benigno S. Aquino III stand at attention as the national anthems are played upon their arrival at Manila's Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Recently, Japan has seen a tremendous influx into the country of Filipino workers in sectors where they are badly needed. Many Japanese companies with

operations in the Philippines also regularly send their workers for training in Japan.

PCCI has likewise established links with METI, through a part-

nership with the Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship (AOTS) in Japan, now HIDA. This partnership involved training key personnel of Filipino

companies on management and productivity improvement. Filipino and Japanese experts were tapped to share their knowledge. The chamber has also worked with JETRO in harnessing the potentials of local chambers and industry associations to enable their members, mostly small and medium enterprises, to be competitive. Aside from these, PCCI also works with key private sector groups in Japan such as the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Kansai Economic Federation (Kankeiren) in providing Filipino professionals access to new trends in Japanese and international management.

Tomohiro Ando, executive director of JETRO Manila, noted that industrial growth in the Philippines has partially stemmed from the strength of manufacturing in the country. Of particular note has been the demand for electric, electronic and business machine parts, including parts for computer and office automation products. This has attracted significant Japanese investment because of Japan's strength in these sectors.

"While it is generally agreed that a substantial part of the Philippines' economic growth has been achieved by increasing

household consumption, another big portion has also come from investment," said Ando. This investment — from both the public and private sectors — is responsible for much of the positive long-term economic forecasts for the country.

Beyond business, Japan and the Philippines are finding increasingly more factors that unite their people. This year's historic first-ever visit by a Japanese emperor to the Philippines was a signal to the world of how close the two countries have become.

On the Philippine visit of His Imperial Majesty Emperor Akihito, Ando remarked, "(It) was a hugely symbolic event, which expresses the current state of extremely good relations between the two countries."

As the year has progressed, the economies of both Japan and the Philippines face problems of uncertainty, but both countries are uniquely suited to help each other address their challenges. At this point, both Japan and the Philippines are the closest they have ever been. Sixty years on, tragedy and war have turned into peaceful coexistence and active partnership for a mutually beneficial future. ♦



Meinan Philippines plant in Biñan, Laguna

## When human values are core values, safety and quality prevail

One of the country's leading manufacturers of electronic and auto components, Meinan Philippines started out making precision metal cutting parts for the auto industry more than two decades ago. Its current success is due in large part to its constant adaptation to industry challenges over the years.

“For us, the two aspects we take most seriously are safety and quality.”

— TATSUHIKO SASAI  
President of Meinan Philippines

"For us, the two aspects we take most seriously are safety and quality," said Tatsuhiko Sasai, the company's president, speaking in Meinan's main office south of Manila. "We aim to provide local clients with the same quality as we deliver to customers in Japan. Our motto is "Check, Do and Check" — which ensures the highest quality, from the raw materials to the finished products."

Sasai oversees a company that puts people at the center of the organization. For example, Filipino employees benefit from a three-year training program in Japan and every year it sends 10 employees from the Philippine subsidiary to Meinan's Japanese headquarters.

"Thanks to this, these employees become familiar with Japanese culture and its obsession with quality," said Sasai. "Most important, they understand the reasons behind how

and why operations are done a certain way. My goal is to instruct them and train them to become autonomous. In the future, employees should be independent."

Meinan Philippines has already started its next expansion and diversification operations. Already today, only 50 percent of its total production is supplied to local Japanese companies. Previously, the entire amount went to them.

"We have been diversifying our activities, with our involvement in the ATM sector only the most recent of our initiatives," Sasai pointed out. "We will carry on as new opportunities arise, just as we have always done in the past." ♦

[www.meinan-vn.com](http://www.meinan-vn.com)

## A sustainable future for energy in the Philippines

In response to past difficulties meeting the country's energy demands, the Philippines has taken dramatic steps to ensure a viable future. This is being done both through government mandates, as well as through the initiatives of private companies such as Bronzeoak Philippines, which has designed its business around demonstrating the poten-

tial of new forms of alternative energy for the country.

To date, Bronzeoak has already played a major role in the dramatic increase of clean energy in the Philippines. The year 2016 marks the completion of its seventh solar plant. And now that the targets for solar power generation set by the Philippine government have been met, the

company is transitioning to a more diverse focus, though still within the sustainable energy sector.

While it fully intends to remain heavily involved in, and at the forefront of the Philippines' solar energy sector, Bronzeoak is also starting to direct more attention to other, less-developed green technologies in the coun-

try.

Jose Maria P. Zabaleta Jr., the president of Bronzeoak Philippines, is aware of the unique challenges faced by the country's energy sector. It can be said that he has developed a company uniquely suited to addressing them.

The company's vision "has been to introduce proven and

viable sustainable energy businesses to the Philippines, from elsewhere in the world, and demonstrate that they can be applied here successfully," he explained. This has been achieved in biofuels and solar energy, and implementation has already begun in power generation from biomass.

The new focus on biomass has the potential of tremendous im-

pact on both the country's economy and on the local communities in which projects are implemented. The ability to turn trash into a fuel source could well provide cheap energy to communities that previously had unreliable and insufficient fuel. Beyond the potential infrastructure growth, this will allow for the country, each biomass plant should create up to 500 jobs, most of which require high skill sets.

It's another win-win situation that, in just the past ten years, Bronzeoak has demonstrated through a myriad of success stories in sustainable energy. By consistently seeking out and surpassing ambitious targets set by the government, the company has proven there is a viable business in the Philippines for green energy production. ♦

[www.bronzeoakph.com](http://www.bronzeoakph.com)



Bronzeoak is at the center of Philippine clean energy infrastructure development, with pioneering work in establishing sugarcane to ethanol power cogeneration, utility scale solar facilities and greenfield biomass energy systems.

## Filipino-Japanese relationship is key to successful business

Established in 1973, Yazaki-Torres Manufacturing is a joint venture between the Yazaki group of Japan and the entrepreneurial Torres family of the Philippines.

The company is now the largest wiring harness manufacturer in the Philippines, and its top exporter of automotive parts — specializing in its proprietary automotive wiring harnesses that constitute the electrical systems of the vehicles.

Originally a trading agreement for the distribution of the famous Arrow Tapes and automotive gauges in the Philippines, the Yazaki-Torres partnership has grown into one of the most successful Filipino-Japanese joint ventures. Today, 97 percent of its production is intended for overseas markets, primarily the U.S., with customers such as Ford, Toyota, Chrysler, Mitsubishi, Fuso and Nissan.

Feliciano Torres, president of Yazaki-Torres Manufacturing,

“I cannot imagine having this success with any other partner, I foresee nothing but growth in the coming decades.”

— FELICIANO TORRES  
President of Yazaki-Torres Manufacturing



recalls that the Yazaki group invested in the Philippines based on the partnership between the Yazaki and Torres families that goes back more than 60 years. "I cannot imagine having this success with any other partner," he said. "I fore-

see nothing but growth in the coming decades."

Beyond this partnership, Yazaki-Torres values its personnel structure as a key aspect of its success. "We also credit our achievements to the strong relationships we have built with the local community and our employees," explained Torres. "We value our people; it's important to maintain a sound and mutually beneficial relationship with them. They are the backbone of our success, and we do our best to keep them up-to-date by sending people abroad for training and continuously upgrading our in-house education programs."

"From the very beginning we have maintained the same values in our relationships," Torres concluded. "The value we put in them is the key to and the heart of our success." ♦

[www.yazaki-group.com](http://www.yazaki-group.com)

## Giving back to employees — simply good business sense

Since its foundation in 1989, NT Philippines has continuously expanded its operations and expanded into other fields. Under the name Nampow Philippines, it initially exported small machinery from Japan to the Philippines. Later on, it progressed to tobacco and mango processing and exporting.

A subsequent change in Japanese fumigation requirements for these agricultural products severely limited the business, leading to the company's evolution into the next stage of its growth and expansion.

Nobuyuki Takahashi, founder and president of NT Philippines, first ventured into the manufacturing business in 1989. Starting with 50 employees, the company started producing noise filters for cordless phones and then beepers, moving on to mobile phones to smartphone components.

The latest step in NT's continuing growth has resulted in its expanding into the BPO (business process outsourcing) sector of the electric parts industry. The company now counts a total of 1,200 em-

ployees.

In 2015, with most of its clientele Japanese and most of its employees Filipino, NT also established a Japanese-English language school in Alabang, Manila. The school — NT Language Academy — helps its employees widen their opportunities by giving them the tools to communicate with both nationalities.

Takahashi firmly believes in empowering NT's employees by further training them both in the Philippines and in Japan. He looks at it as a way of giving back to the community



Nobuyuki Takahashi, Founder and President of NT Philippines

and opening up opportunities for them and their families.

For him, it's just good practice. "In any business, the key to success is quite simple: you deliver on time and keep up the quality standards. We accomplish these only because of our employees," he explained.

Currently, the company is also exploring opportunities in the Philippine real estate and retirement development sectors, and looking further at providing skilled manpower from the Philippines for Japan's needs. ♦

[www.ntphil.com](http://www.ntphil.com)

## Lapanday Foods Corp.: 3 decades of strong relations with Japan

Lapanday Foods Corp., founded 34 years ago by Luis F. Lorenzo Sr., specializes in the production, packaging and export of premium fresh Cavendish bananas and pineapples to over 15 countries in Asia and the Middle East. With operations in over 25 locations across the southern island of Mindanao, the company employs close to 6,000 people.

Lapanday has several house brands, including Estrella, Aloha, Mabuhay and Island Sun, but it can also accommodate the different requirements of its clients around the world. These include different specifications for the fruit, as well as its packaging.

Regina Angela Lorenzo-Davila, chairman and CEO of Lapanday Foods Corp., has continued her family's efforts to develop a resilient,



Lapanday Foods Corporation strongly commits to quality from seed-to-shelf, to deliver high-quality and value-added fresh produce to our customers in Asia-Pacific and the Middle East.

efficient, customer-focused and compassionate company. She describes Lapanday

With partnerships throughout the Philippines and around the world, it has been working innovatively to address the industry's most pressing concerns to assure sound, environmentally sustainable production practices, including research and development on disease prevention, logistics, packaging, quality assurance and a host of technology support systems around its seed-to-shelf business model.

In addition, Lapanday makes sure all its employees are treated fairly, having built a hard-won reputation as an employee-focused Filipino company. Its managers learn to embrace what Davila calls the "family touch" to its management style.

Today, Lapanday ships most of its produce to destinations in the Asia-Pacific and the Middle East. Of these, Japan has be-

come one of the company's best and strongest markets. The history of mutual benefit and cooperation between Lapanday and its Japanese partners has developed into a prosperous relationship built on respect.

Both Japan and the Philippines have had to face natural disasters in recent years. Each time, Lapanday has worked with its Japanese partners to assist them in need in both countries, by supplying free fruit during the Fukushima earthquake and donating funds for housing those displaced due to super storm Haiyan.

Davila emphasizes that her company and its Japanese associates "view each other as true partners, in more than just the business sense." And Lapanday will continue to strengthen its partnership with Japan. ♦

[www.lapanday.com](http://www.lapanday.com)

One for All,  
All for One.



YAZAKI-TORRES MANUFACTURING, INCORPORATED  
YTMI REALTY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE  
Brgy. Makiling, Calamba City, Laguna, Philippines

YTM COMPONENT, INCORPORATED  
YTMI REALTY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE  
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# A 30-year-old daruma — still one-eyed

Daruma Corp's operations in the Philippines began with a humble office in Makati City, the business heart of metropolitan Manila. Incorporated on June 17, 1986 as a trading company for Filipino and Japanese products, Daruma marks its 30th anniversary this year as an established and trusted component of the Philippine construction and project management landscape.

"Along the way, we have gained a lot of experience that has definitely guided us," said Yukio Mizoguchi, its founder, president and a resident of the Philippines for almost 40 years.

He leads the company on the basis of his long professional history



Yukio Mizoguchi, Founder and President of Daruma

in the country, having first gone to the Philippines right after graduating from university in Japan in 1977. He quickly fell in love with the country and the die was cast.

Starting in 1986, the company expanded into consulting and the management of offices and facto-

ries. It was in 1992 that the company started work in what has become its major activity today: construction. "It brought us our pioneer building project: a residential development for expat employees in Batangas," explained Mizoguchi.

"Most of our clients are Japanese companies in the Philippines," he continued. Daruma is known in the Nippon business community as a trustworthy partner capable of quality work at a competitive cost.

However, Mizoguchi has no intention of resting on his laurels: "We are constantly looking to expand our horizons. In fact, Daruma has just received its AAA license from the Philippine government that will encourage us to bid on public projects starting this year."

He feels that Daruma owes its continued success to the company's constant desire to satisfy client requirements. "If concerns arise, we face them and fix the

situation," he stated. "We always do our best to satisfy our clients. We strongly believe that clear communication can make a huge difference."

Named after and, inspired by, Mizoguchi's father's rubber boot factory in Japan, Daruma continues to consider options for diversification of its activities in order to maintain steady revenue. "The growing real estate business in the Philippines is another area that we would like to look into more and more," Mizoguchi noted. As you may have guessed, he is far from painting in the remaining eye in the company's constantly renewed daruma doll mascot. ♦

www.darumacorp.com

# Building — and keeping — talent in-country

## Filipino engineers support global oil and gas specialist

A little over 20 years ago, the global engineering specialist based in Yokohama — Chiyoda Corp — partnered with the Philippine construction company EEI to set up an office with more than 50 employees in Manila that would support the Japanese group's growing presence worldwide. As the business — and its importance for Chiyoda — grew, the parent company bought out EEI's shares 10 years ago to form Chiyoda Philippines. With 950 employees, it is now the group's most important back office for detail engineering and the supply of field engineers for its project sites.

Chiyoda's global reach touches sites as far as Qatar, Papua New Guinea, Australia and Russia:



Fumiaki Tanaka, former President and CEO of Chiyoda Corp.

All have been provided with vital support from Chiyoda Philippines, based in Mandaluyong in

metropolitan Manila. "We specialize in LNG plant engineering," said Fumiaki Tanaka, former president and CEO of the Philippine subsidiary. "From here, our engineers prepare calculation notes, design notes and drawings which are crucial for the construction of Chiyoda's mega-projects around the world."

The Chiyoda group has several operation bases globally to realize multiple operations, of which the Philippine base is one of the most important — together with its India base. Both supply a good share of well-educated engineering talent who also speak English fluently — crucial advantages for a global contractor in the oil and gas sector.

Tanaka is particularly proud of

Chiyoda Philippines' keen focus on CSR work in the inner-city local community surrounding its offices. "Every year, we assist the elementary school in need of help in our area by collecting and distributing school supplies, and also participating in tree-planting activities to improve the environment," he explained. "Our company impacts on our community, and on the lives of our employees, so we must maintain a good relationship with the city and local districts."

He believes that, in the Philippines, when it comes to the choice between "building or buying talent," it is better to choose the former. To compete with overseas job opportunities that lure some of the country's best engineers

and other workers far from its borders, Chiyoda Philippines offers its employees improved pay scales and multiple opportunities to travel and work outside the country in Japan and in Chiyoda's global project sites.

"There is an abundance of good engineers in this country," Tanaka stressed. "By providing more attractive opportunities to work in the country and — at the same time — be able to travel abroad, I aim to cultivate loyal employees who can contribute even more to the global Chiyoda network and to their country, the Philippines."

Yutaka Koizumi took over the position of president and CEO of Chiyoda Philippines from May 1, 2016. ♦

www.chiyodaphil.com.ph

# Improving crops and communities in rural Philippines

In the increasingly diverse economy of the Philippines there has always been a strong agricultural sector, though rural communities have faced difficult challenges from natural disasters in recent years. However, even in good times, it has become harder than ever for farmers to make a living.

Takashi Sumi, president and CEO of Atlas Fertilizer, positions the company's mission exactly at that point "to continuously contribute to Philippine agriculture through quality fertilizer."

Atlas Fertilizer has brought world-class techniques to its products designed for the diverse regions of the Philippines. In fact, its mission statement goes beyond crops to benefiting the farmers themselves.

Much of his success in implementing these strategies came from his strong appreciation of the company's workers. Sumi fully understood the important part his company has played in the many communities in which Atlas Fertilizer operates by providing jobs, often to multiple generations of families.

The company has also exerted tremendous effort in empowering Philippine rural communities. Its fertilizers enable greater farming efficiency, while it holds hundreds of technical seminars and farm demonstrations around the archipelago to educate people even in its most remote parts.

As a member of Sojitz Corp., and the Philippines' largest fertilizer company, Atlas Fertilizer has had the resources to deliver tangible change to the country's agricultural sector. By partnering with organizations such as the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Baños, Laguna, south of Manila, Atlas



Takashi Sumi, President and CEO of Atlas Fertilizer

Fertilizer in 2014 has been able to create and launch a breakthrough software called "Rice Crop Manager." This software automatically calculates the amount and variety of fertilizer required for a specific type of soil where the farm is located or situated depending on the climate or season. Through this simple technology, the company was able to address some of the most pressing challenges facing agriculture in the Philippines and allowed it to provide customized assistance to farmers by adapting the most effective fertilization technology for a variety of farming conditions in different regions.

The challenges facing the farmers and rural communities of the Philippines are unlikely to disappear anytime soon. Meanwhile, Atlas Fertilizer continues to work as an advocate through its products and educational efforts. ♦

www.sojitz.com/en/business/service/chemical/post-77.php



Atlas Fertilizer Corp.'s manufacturing plant complex located in Toledo City, Cebu, Philippines

## Japan Perspective: Insight on Japanese investment in the Philippines from its corporate leaders

“The portion of growth in the Philippines from investment has been remarkable over the past five years.”

— TOMOHIRO ANDO  
Executive Director  
JETRO Philippines

“The culture in the Philippines makes the country especially attractive to Japanese businesses.”

— YASUKI SEKI  
Director, General Affairs Department  
Toei Chemical Industry Co., Ltd.

“We have had incredible success bringing the science and techniques of the Japanese here to the Philippines.”

— DR. RUDIE FREDERICK B. MENDIOLA  
Medical Director  
Kato Repro Biotech Center

“We came to the Philippines in 1996 because the quality of engineers is so high.”

— SHUNJI OYABU  
President  
Line Seiki Phil., Inc.

“Labor in the Philippines is so competitive, it makes the country extremely attractive to foreign companies.”

— YOSHIDASU TAMARU  
President  
Vacuumtech Philippines Inc.

“When The Philippines shifts from analog to digital broadcasting, our products will play an important role.”

— YASUTAKA SAGIYAMA  
President  
DX Antenna Philippines

“The education level in the Philippines is very high and they have adapted well to the Japanese way of management.”

— SUMIO ITO  
Chairman and President  
Ito-Seisakusho Philippines Corporation

“The Philippines has offered us a great competitive advantage compared to other countries. This is one of the reasons we’ve tried so hard to give back to our local community here.”

— TOSHIYUKI IWAKI  
Vice-President  
Sohbi Kohgei (Phil.), Inc.

“There is a need for more Japanese big players. They will contribute to develop diverse industries as they will attract other Japanese suppliers in the Philippines.”

— SHIGERU SATO  
General Manager  
MSpecialty Printing Philippines

“We are currently providing language training in order to send workers to Japan this year. It will be beneficial to the agricultural and caregiving industries.”

— MASATOSHI SAITO  
Data Entry Operations Officer  
CCK City Network, Inc.

“Beyond providing power to local communities, we take pride in the great success of our microfinance and education efforts in the areas we operate.”

— KENSHI ISERI  
President and CEO  
San Roque Power Corporation

“More Japanese investment here would give us increased opportunities, and would be good for the Philippines as well. We support the continued development of the country’s infrastructure.”

— TETSURO HACHIMURA  
President  
Philippine Resins Industries

“Our dream is to have the factory lasting 100 years. The employees are our most precious resources.”

— SACHIE SUMITA  
Managing Director  
Pasig Industries, Inc.

“The company will always keep a flexible approach. In the future, it will not only be a subsidiary, but another arm of Muraki.”

— YOSHIHIRO KIUCHI  
President  
Manila MKP, Inc.

“One of our main strengths is our approach in adapting our products to the countries we are in to match with the food cultures.”

— TETSUYA NAKANO  
President  
Ajinomoto Philippines Corporation

“The environment business in the Philippines is good. For now, it is mostly service oriented. The manufacturing industry is at its beginning, but it has an unlimited potential.”

— SHINJI HOSHI  
President  
Doho Metal (Philippines) Corporation

“We are starting our production in the country this year. Nonetheless, we are already thinking to develop other products for the Filipino market specifically.”

— KAZUO MAEHARA  
President  
JMS Healthcare PHL, Inc.

“To succeed in the manufacturing business in the Philippines, one should make a policy that can be adapted locally. Japan and The Philippines will support each other.”

— TOSHIMASA NISHI  
Vice-President  
Philippines TRC Inc.

“We have already increased our production capacities in order to accompany and supply our clients in their growth.”

— YUTAKA KAGOSHIMA  
Sales General Manager  
Daiho Philippines, Inc.

“We would like to grow and diversify our business lines with the ambition to become the number one compounds manufacturer in the Philippines.”

— TAKAHIRO OCHIAI  
President  
Toyo Ink Compounds Corporation

“We had aggressive growth last year and it is continuing to increase this year. We will increase our overseas sales as well.”

— MICHIHARU KOYAMA  
President and General Manager  
FCC (Philippines) Corporation

Atlas Fertilizer Corporation (AFC) has been a manufacturing and distributing company of quality fertilizers for more than **58 years**.

We control more than a 40 percent market share of inorganic compound fertilizer commonly used in the Philippine Agricultural Industry.

We promote fertilization technology known as “**Crop Specific and Soil Specific**” for better yield, better production, better income and better life for the farmers and a steady food supply for the country.

**SINCE 1957**

**ATLAS FERTILIZER CORPORATION**

Owned and Operated by **sojitz**



# Yuchengco group of companies forms solid ties with Japanese business community

Keenly aware that the Philippines is now one of the most-favored destinations in Asia for investors, the Yuchengco Group of Companies (YGC) — one of the largest and most diversified conglomerates in the Philippines — continues to foster strategic alliances with foreign corporations.

Since the 1950s, YGC has formed solid ties with its corporate neighbors, particularly in Japan, as it takes steps to expand its clout in industries such as banking and finance, construction and real estate, insurance, education and energy development.

To cater to the growing interest in Philippine equities among Japanese institutional investors, YGC, through its member companies, has established strategic alliances with the Japanese business community. The most prominent of these collaborations to date are with Resona Holdings, Okasan Securities, SBI Holdings, Tokio Marine Holdings and JCB International.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp (RCBC) is a prominent member company of YGC. The bank's Vice Chairman, Cesar E. A. Virata, recently expressed gratitude and hopes for the



Cesar E. A. Virata, RCBC Vice Chairman of the Board

future to its Japanese corporate allies, saying: "Thank you very much for your enduring support for our financial services in growing your businesses. We look forward to continuing our mutually beneficial partnerships through more projects and tie-ups with other ASEAN institutions for many more years to come."

RCBC has been in partnership with the Japanese business community in the country for over 40 years, since its first collaboration with Sanwa Bank in 1974. Since then, RCBC has been fostering its relations with Resona Bank and Okasan Securities by providing them with access to investments in the country. In 2013, RCBC also entered into a cooperative agreement with Resona and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority for the promotion of direct investment between Japan and the Philippines and the fostering of business partnerships between Filipino and Japanese entrepreneurs and companies.

Likewise, YGC has existing business dealings with such Japanese companies as Honda, Isuzu and Tokio Marine Insurance. ♦ [www.ygc.com](http://www.ygc.com)

# RCBC leads campaign to attract Japanese SME investors

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) and Resona Bank, the leading bank for small and medium enterprises in Japan's Kansai and Osaka areas, are both spearheading a campaign to entice more Japanese small and medium enterprises to invest in the Philippines.

To date, 55 Japanese firms have established their facilities in the Philippines following the tie-up agreement they entered in 2012.

In its latest campaign, RCBC's Japanese Business Relationship Office First Senior Vice President, Yasuhiro Matsumoto, recently accompanied the Philippines' trade secretary, Adrian Cristobal Jr., to a Philippine Investment Opportunities Forum in Osaka. Attended by 350 corporate clients, the forum was organized by the Resona Foundation for Asia and Oceania, together with its co-organizers, the Osaka Prefectural Government, the Osaka Municipal Government, the



Yasuhiro Matsumoto, First Senior Vice President of RCBC's Japanese Business Relationship Office

Kansai Economic Federation, the Osaka Foundation for Trade and Industry and the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This event was also supported by JET-RO, Resona Bank and the Kinki

clients, Matsumoto has seen and supported the entry and growth of Japanese companies to the country, especially in export processing zones. He further cited the growing spending power of the Filipino consumer, as shown by the surge in business by a range of consumer-focused companies in food, beverage, and middle-end retail outlets that are supplanting the formerly ubiquitous low-end sari-sari stores in urban centers. With the second-largest population in ASEAN and a young average age, the Philippine potential for investments is huge.

Representatives of Japanese companies that have established their facilities in the Philippines also affirmed the advantage of the competitive cost of Philippine labor, with the added benefit of English-speaking skills that enable easier training and a smoother work atmosphere. ♦ [www.rcbc.com](http://www.rcbc.com)

# An interview with Helen Y. Dee

Chairperson, Yuchengco Group of Companies (YGC)

**What is YGC's take on Fitch Ratings saying that the Philippines is the only banking market in the Asia Pacific region that registered a positive outlook for 2016? What opportunities does this present to YGC?**

Investor interest in the country continues to improve, given our healthy investment grade and progressive credit rating. These are all anchored on prudent monetary policy and strong domestic drivers of growth. The government must continue strengthening its governance standards to attract higher domestic and foreign investments.

For YGC, a boost in investor confidence will give us the needed infusion to expand and engage more in the growth areas of our economy.

**With current Philippine economic credit fundamentals, how does ASEAN economic integration affect YGC as a local business?**

In our more expansive economic landscape, the key to success is to remain competitive. As a conglomerate, YGC has dealings in various sectors that stand to benefit most from the ASEAN integration.

In the education sector, our school — Mapua Institute of Technology — continues to invest in improving its standing among respected local and international accreditation bodies. We promote a higher level of competency among our students as we maintain rewarding partnerships with corporate and educational institutions across the globe. We also continue to establish strong educational linkages, not only to strengthen our program offerings but also to make the institution and its subsidiaries international centers of excellence.

We also have growth in the construction sector, as EEI Corp., one of the leading global construction services providers

in the Philippines, expects substantial opportunities to come to fruition, assuming the implementation of all its infrastructure projects.

In the energy sector, another YGC firm — PetroEnergy Resources — is taking the lead in investing in renewable energy development and operations around the Philippines.

Our banking unit, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., is also heavily engaged in providing funds to meaningful projects. Its most recent partnership with Helios Solar Energy Corp. resulted in the construction of Southeast Asia's largest solar farm, located in Negros Occidental in the Visayas.

**Given that Japan is now the Philippines' single largest source of official development assistance, and Japanese businesses are among the country's biggest investors, how does the recent renewal and celebration of ties between the Philippines and Japan affect YGC?**

The Philippines and Japan have nurtured a healthy business relationship for many decades. This relationship is set to become even stronger as our two countries renew pledges of support.

This development will make our partnership with Japan even more crucial for YGC's growth and competitiveness. We have already gained the trust and confidence of the Japanese market. RCBC is the leading financial institution among Japanese firms in the Philippine Economic Zone Authority because we help promote direct investments and business relationships between Philippine and Japanese entrepreneurs and companies.

**YGC's collaborations with its Japanese partners have yielded a remarkable increase in investments in the past. Are there any new col-**



Helen Y. Dee, Chairperson of Yuchengco Group of Companies (YGC)

**laborations and partnerships to watch out for?**

RCBC and Resona Bank of Japan have spearheaded a campaign to entice more Japanese small and medium enterprises to invest in the Philippines. To date, 55 Japanese firms have established their facilities in the Philippines, following the tie-up agreement the banks entered in 2012. The Philippine potential for investments is huge given our competitive cost of labor, high-growth consumption market and English-speaking population.

**As a thriving and successful organization, what are YGC's business strategies and plans for the coming year? What can we expect from YGC in the near future?**

We at the YGC are positioning ourselves advantageously to leverage our strengths in many growth areas of our econ-

omy. The group will intensify the way we provide services addressed to meet needs at every stage of a person's life. Aside from the introduction of new products and other strategic and innovative approaches, we will also be focusing on the environment by continually investing on clean and renewable energy sources — such as wind and geothermal power. A clean environment is one of the most pressing challenges that industries face today and one that will have a bearing on the quality of life and the future of our children.

Of course, aside from this, our companies will continue to play significant roles in many industries, particularly in the areas of banking and finance, insurance, construction and real estate, education, information technology and automotive services. ♦ [www.ygc.com](http://www.ygc.com)

## YUCHENGCO GROUP OF COMPANIES

The Power of Synergy

**AY Foundation, Inc.**  
**Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation**  
RCBC Bankard Services Corporation  
RCBC Capital Corporation  
RCBC Forex Brokers Corporation  
RCBC International Finance, Ltd.  
RCBC Telemoney Europe  
RCBC Leasing and Finance Corporation  
**RCBC Realty Corporation**  
**RCBC Savings Bank**  
RCBC Securities, Inc.

**Malayan Insurance Company, Inc.**  
**Bankers Assurance Corporation**  
First Nationwide Assurance Corporation  
Lex Services Inc.  
Malayan International Insurance Corporation, Ltd.  
MICO Equities, Inc.

**Sun Life Grepa Financial, Inc.**  
**House of Investments, Inc.**  
**EEI Corporation**  
GPL Holdings, Inc.  
Greyhounds Security & Investigation Agency Corporation  
**HI-Eisai Pharmaceutical, Inc.**  
Honda Cars Kalookan, Inc.  
Honda Cars Quezon City Group  
iPeople Inc.  
Isuzu Manila Group  
La Funeraria Paz-Sucat, Inc.  
Landev Corporation  
Malayan Colleges Laguna  
Malayan High School of Science  
**Manila Memorial Park Cemetery, Inc.**  
**Mapua Institute of Technology**  
Mapua Information Technology Center, Inc.  
Mapua Techserv, Inc.  
Pan Pacific Computer Center, Inc.  
Pan Malayan Express, Inc.  
**Pan Malayan Management & Investment Corporation**  
Philippine Integrated Advertising Agency, Inc.  
Petroenergy Resources Corporation  
YGC Corporate Services, Inc.  
Yuchengco Museum  
Zamboanga Industrial Finance Corporation

*And over 20 other affiliates and subsidiaries*

RCBC Plaza

# RCBC tees off to strengthen Japanese corporate relations

Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation (RCBC) recently celebrated its partnership with its Japanese clients in the Philippines with a successful golf tournament at The Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmarinas, Cavite, south of Manila. The event, dubbed the 11th Annual Japanese Corporate Executive Invitational Golf Tournament, served as an opportunity for the bank and its officers to show their appreciation for the trust and support that RCBC enjoys in the Japanese business community.

Speaking at the event, RCBC's Vice Chairman, Cesar E. A. Virata, expressed gratitude and hopes for the future to the bank's Japanese corporate allies, saying: "Thank you very much for your enduring support for our financial services in growing your businesses. We look forward to continuing our mutually beneficial partnerships through more projects and tie-ups with other ASEAN institutions for many more years to come."

The tournament's participants represented top Japanese corporations operating in the country's



Valued Japanese clients give all-out support to the RCBC-sponsored golf tournament.

special economic zones. These included CCT Construction, Fujitans Philippines, Mitsuba, Rohm Electronics, Hayakawa Electronics, Ishida Philippines Grating and JCB International.

After a full day of playing the greens, the tournament culminated in an awards ceremony that recognized the sterling play of the

golfers. To make the tournament even more rewarding to its participants, RCBC gave away high-end home appliances and devices such as LED TVs and smartphones as raffle prizes.

Long considered a gentleman's game, golf fosters affinity and camaraderie and that is why it has been an enduring activity for

RCBC and its valued Japanese clients. It is one of the many ways the bank has shown its commitment to help clients find success in the Philippine market. RCBC continues to expand and strengthen its Japan Desk, with its dedicated team of relationship managers and Japanese consultants. ♦ [www.rcbc.com](http://www.rcbc.com)



(From left) FSVP Yasuhiro Matsumoto, Global & Ecozone Segment Head; Yasuhito Yazawa of Yumex Phil. Inc.; Toru Yazawa of Fujitans Phil. Inc.; Masahiro Yoshida of ROHM Electronics Phil.



(From left) Angelito C. Cruz, Koichi Hirakawa of Les Gants Phil. Inc.; Nobuo Eguchi of Mitsuba Phil. Corp.; Arata Nishide of ROHM Electronics Phil.

# Malayan Insurance and Tokio Marine mark 52 years partnership

Malayan Insurance, YGC's non-life insurance arm and one of the leading insurance companies in the Philippines, is celebrating the 52nd anniversary of its long-standing partnership with Tokio Marine Holdings, a leader in Japan's non-life insurance market, this year. Started in 1964, the partnership has enabled Malayan Insurance and Tokio Marine to provide for the non-life insurance requirements of Japanese companies operat-

## MALAYAN INSURANCE

A YGC Member

## TOKIO MARINE

ing in the Philippines.

"It is truly humbling to be able to build and grow mutually productive relationships with our Japanese neighbors,"

said Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco, founder and honorary chairman of YGC. "To have our products and services be patronized in the international

corporate landscape is rewarding, and inspires us to work harder in pushing the limits in doing business." ♦ [www.malayan.com](http://www.malayan.com)