

Part Two of a “SorsoGolden Province of Economic Opportunity” Series

By Lolo Bobby M. Reyes of Sorsogon City

{xtypo_quote} Why would a tourist visit Sorsogon? – [Rivera Jim Joseph](#) {/xtypo_quote}

Thus, a Sorsogonon who goes by the screen name of [Rivera Jim Joseph](#) asked the question that he posted in the “Sorsogonon Freeminds,” a closed group in the Facebook. This writer promised to answer his question by publishing an article that summarizes what he has been saying that Sorsogon Province could be the personification of a tourism-oriented paradise in the Pacific Rim. Sorsogon can be the model of true environmentally-sound development, with all proposed infrastructures geared to protect Mother Earth and help combat Global Warming (Climate Change).

To date, very few tourists, especially those coming from foreign shores, will want to visit Sorsogon Province

or even Bicolandia where it is located and/or the adjacent Samar-Leyte Region of the Philippines

. While admittedly Sorsogon, Bicolandia and Leyte-Samar Islands

are some of the most-beautiful places in the world, very few domestic-and-foreign tourists will visit them. There are no international or domestic flights landing in the two Sorsogon airports, which remain undeveloped (unfinished) despite decades of budgetary appropriation in the national-and-provincial budgets. The whole of Bicolandia and Leyte-Samar do not have any international airport either.

Very few foreign tourists would spend an additional day landing in the Manila International Airport and commuting by another domestic flight to Legazpi City (in the adjacent Albay Province) and then taking a bus or a car to Sorsogon City or any of the province’s 14 other towns, which would entail anywhere from one to two or more hours. And then spending another day in going back to Manila before leaving for their home country. Many tourists from the United States

like to spend only a maximum of 13 days in a two-week vacation that they usually get from their employers. Travel time should only take two of the 13 days, as they like to spend the 14th

day already at their home preparing to report to work the next day. If you double the travel time, very few vacationers will go for it.

Editor’s Note: To read Part One of this Series, please click on this hyperlink: [Bringing Home the Bacon to the Poor Towns of Sorsogon and Not Just to a City](#)

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URL: <http://www.mabuhayradio.com/noy-bicol-column/bringing-home-the-bacon-to-the-poor-to-wns-of-sorsogon-and-not-just-to-a-city>

To sell Sorsogon Province as a tourist destination, the first step is to finish the long-proposed international airport in Bulan town, the original runway of which was constructed by the Japanese Imperial Air Force during World War II. Then build the other required roads connecting for instance Bulan to the adjacent Magallanes town. Then finish the Sorsogon-Bacon

Airport

as a domestic commuter hub and at the same time build infrastructures that will highlight the comfort and convenience for tourists, aside from guaranteed peace and order for all citizens and visitors alike.

Some of the proposed unfinished roads (and other infrastructures) in Sorsogon Province are described in this article, [Why Select Magallanes Town as the Site of a World-class Movie Studio with a Revived Shipyard for Making Galleon Replicas and Sailboats?](#)

URL: <http://www.mabuhayradio.com/history/why-select-magallanes-town-as-the-site-of-a-world-class-movie-studio-with-a-revived-shipyard-for-making-galleon-replicas-and-sailboats>

Need to Build “Las Vegas-Caribbean of the Orient” Resorts in Sorsogon

A side from finishing an ideal state-of-the-art international airport in the Bulan-Magallanes Corridor (as this writer has dubbed the area in the adjacent towns of Bulan and Magallanes), support infrastructures have to be built. I described the projects that have to be launched and buildings to be constructed in the above-stated essay about Magallanes town.

But why copy “Las Vegas (Nevada), the 'sin city' of the world,” as a Sorsoganon asked in the magellan2021@groups.facebook.com ?

Here is what I answered: Las Vegas is the “Entertainment Capital of the World” and all travel agencies, airlines and tourists know immediately what the resorts are if one advertises them as the “Las Vegas-Caribbean of the Orient” people-oriented travel paradise in the Pacific Rim

. Therefore, it would not require more efforts to describe what we are building in the Bicol-Leyte-Samar Socio-Economic Development (BLeSSED) Regions, with Sorsogon as the pilot province.

To make them socially relevant and morally defensible, the proposed “Cultural and Gaming Resorts” in Sorsogon Province and in the BLeSSED Regions will only accept foreign currency to play in their gaming tables and slot machines. Besides, the resorts are meant to be our

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version of “ Scene City” and become the scenes of family-oriented vacations, school reunions, conventions, conferences, fiestas, fairs and festivals.

Metropolitan Las Vegas (Nevada) is just 340 square kilometers (sq. km.) with a population of almost 2.0-million. But it is out in the desert and as such it needs so much air-conditioning facilities and eventually it will have to truck in potable supply of water.

Now picture a “Las Vegas of the Orient” that is 2,119 sq. km. in size, with the Pacific Ocean on its right and China Sea on its left, with a 35,000-hectare Sorsogon Bay and numerous beaches, an active volcano (Bulusan) with a lake, second-growth tropical forests and almost 50 rivers running through it. Imagine Las Vegas (Nevada) with numerous white-sand beaches, marinas and deep-sea fishing grounds like in Miami (Florida) and other tourism destinations in the Caribbean . Visualize a Las Vegas-like "Entertainment Capital of the Philippines and Southeast Asia" with a Seaworld-like attraction as in San Diego (California) with about 20 world-class golf courses dotting the entire province, aside from Spanish-built churches, houses and edifices. Now envision it as a Mecca of Medicine, complete with medical-tourism facilities where medical professionals – from United States-licensed surgeons to dentists – can do their work at more-than half the cost of comparable medical treatments in the United States , Canada and/or Europe.

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Now see Sorsogon as the first organic province of the Philippines and the country’s center of natural-product medicine. Please read details in this article, [How Sorsogon Can Be the Botanical \(and Natural-product Medicine\) Capital of the Philippines, If Not of Southeast Asia](#)

URL: <http://www.mabuhayradio.com/health-and-medicine/how-sorsogon-can-be-the-botanical-and-natural-product-medicine-capital-of-the-philippines-if-not-of-southeast-asia>

Now enhance the idea of a Las Vegas-Caribbean-like resort with a movie studio, replicas of the Spanish galleons (used in the 1519-1522 expedition commanded by Ferdinand Magellan) and modern sailboats sailing on its waters (as built by a revived Spanish-era shipyard in Magallanes town), a Universal Studio-type of an attraction adjacent state-of-the-art performing-arts centers like those found in Branson, Missouri. Then throw in a couple of Disneyland-like theme parks. Some people may even ask if such a Vacation Paradise is possible on Planet Earth in an area just six-times bigger than Las Vegas (Nevada).

Yes, in 25 years or less, Sorsogon can be that vacation paradise in the Pacific Rim if its people will come up with a political will in the May 2013 local elections.

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(To be continued in Part III . . .) # # #

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