

## Coffee body holds roadshow

The Philippine Coffee Board Inc., the highest policy-making body in the coffee sector, began a roadshow series aimed at making the Philippines recover lost ground in the global coffee market and reviving coffee plantations to meet both local and foreign requirements.

The roadshow, dubbed "Pilipinas! Gising at Magkape" (PGAM) Program, was kicked off with the South Luzon coffee stakeholders in Amadeo, Cavite last March 19, followed by a partners' meeting in Bukidnon last March 25.

The next meetings are set for April 17 in Benguet State University and on April 23 in Bacolod City. Interested participants can email [philcoffeeboard@gmail.com](mailto:philcoffeeboard@gmail.com) or text 0915-576-7886 for more information.

To touch base with all coffee stakeholders around the country, the coffee board divided the archipelago into five areas: North Luzon, South Luzon, Visayas, Northeast Mindanao and Southwest Mindanao under specific area directors who are also its trustees: Manny Torrejon, Dr. Andy Mojica, Nicolas Matti, Teresa Capellan and Joel Lumagbas.

"We need to get in touch with all Filipino coffee farmers so we can move in one direction to attain self-sufficiency in coffee," said PCB co-chairperson Pacita Juan. "You may text us your information so we will know where you are located" she added.

The Philippines consumes over 65,000 metric tons of coffee but produces only 30,000 MT, with the balance being imported from Vietnam and Indonesia. The PCB was tapped by the DA to pursue the coffee self sufficiency program to reduce the import bill by P3 billion a year, from coffee alone.

Aside from extending technical assistance in coffee production, the coffee board also promotes and markets Philippine coffee under the Kape Isla seal, which was launched as an annual "Coffee Break" festival at Ayala Center every October. Kape Isla now has a showroom café in Serendra (across Market! Market!) where regular coffee seminars are being held.

- Rose de la Cruz